

## Welcome to iCAN

Amy Ohmer



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Wrapping up the end of a very busy 2020, the International Children's Advisory Network, Inc. (iCAN), is proud to announce our year-end in review. Founded in 2014 by Dr. Charlie Thompson, iCAN, a registered 501(c)3, has grown to represent children ages 8-18 on four continents in over 29 (including one virtual) chapters. This unprecedented growth results from the strong partnerships between the American Academy of Pediatrics, Georgia Tech, other academic institutions, and a large number of hospitals and

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other committed stakeholders. Led by iCAN President and Chief Engineer of Pediatric Technologies at Georgia Tech, Ms. Leanne West, the goal remains unchanged. Shares Ms. West, “iCAN is here to ensure that every child, especially those living with rare, complicated, and chronic conditions, has a voice in medicine, technology, research, science, and innovation around the world. Through our global reach at iCAN, kids (and parents) can connect to share their experiences to better improve all facets of health-care.”

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In the spring, iCAN launched several exciting new initiatives such as the “Seal of Approval,” a program designed to share when materials or programs are kid reviewed and kid-approved. This unique seal shows that kids have provided their special brand of feedback to make it easier for other kids to understand the content.

During the summer months, iCAN created an exciting program known as “Young Adult Professionals” to better support youth beyond 18 years old and who want to continue to stay connected through internship opportunities, advocacy, research, or other community endeavors. Launched in conjunction with the 2020 iCAN Advocacy and Research Summit, this program offers ongoing opportunities for furthering education.

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Dr. Alison Parker and Dr. Tracy Scull, Research Scientists at Innovation Research & Training (iRT), have created *DigiKnowIt News*, an interactive, multimedia website designed to educate children about pediatric clinical trials and help them when deciding whether or not to participate in a future clinical trial (<http://digiknowit.com/>). They were recently awarded a grant from the National In-

stitute of Nursing Research (NINR) to create a DigiKnowIt News version specifically for teenagers and their parents.

Youth and parents from iCAN have provided feedback on *DigiKnowIt News* throughout the development process. iCAN will be helping Drs. Parker and Scull to set up virtual Advisory Panels with iCAN teens and parents to get feedback on the teen version of *DigiKnowIt News*. This feedback will be used to create a new version of *DigiKnowIt News* that is relatable and useful to teens and their parents.

iCAN is already planning for the upcoming 2021 Research and Advocacy Summit in Lyon, France, from July 12th - 16th. Sponsorship is open, and we are seeking a call for papers to showcase the work being done to support pediatric innovation. All are invited to attend, and more details may be found at [www.icanresearch.org](http://www.icanresearch.org)

*The author has no conflicts of interests to disclose.*

**NT**

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