# Today’s piece was prepared by Heather Barnett, MS4, based on a BBC News story News [Holly Greenhow: Girl with cerebral palsy makes 'big improvement](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-39387720)

# This article tells the story of Holly Greenhow, an 11-year-old British girl with cerebral palsy (CP) who underwent stem cell injection. The BBC article and video describe dramatic functional improvement in motor and language skills, as well as better sleep and vision.

# The article acknowledges that stem cell treatment has not been clinically tested, that there may be undetermined risks, that Holly is also receiving other treatments, and that potential benefit hasn’t been clinical proven, thus costing Holly’s family £10,000 out of pocket.

# Despite mention of these limitations and an appropriate statement to the reader not to draw conclusions from this case, the article’s overall message focuses on a positive outcome, particularly in the video, which shows footage of Holly, with her mother commenting, but without any orientation toward scientific evidence.

# For parents raising significantly impaired children with CP, stem cell treatment may seem like a "miracle cure." In seeking help, parents may discount or fail to appreciate the significant risks of untested therapies. Readily available but unscientific testimonies such as this one, aired by respected news sources like the BBC, may mislead hopeful, but vulnerable, parents to misunderstand and to pursue unorthodox or untested treatments without having a balanced framework of understanding risks, expense, and limitations, and such drive or conviction can interfere with the clinician-family relationship.

# RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES AND PROVIDERS ON CEREBRAL PALSY:

# [Stem Cell Transplant](http://ucp.org/resources/from-the-medical-director-s-desk/stem-cell-therapy/) *Discussion from United Cerebral Palsy of background and links to sources on further understanding of where the science stands currently*

# [The Potential for Stem Cell Therapies to Have an Impact on CP: Opportunities and Limitations](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=waEioADP9Ps&feature=c4-overview&list=UUAt0LZXFJ7F4kcXyeMRaW1g) *YouTube recording of a 2013 discussion sponsored by the respected Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology (for physicians and other healthcare and research professionals)*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!