



ASU Toddler Emotional Development Project

Spring '08

Newsletter of the Infant and Toddler Emotional Development Project

Principal Investigators: Drs Tracy Spinrad & Nancy Eisenberg



Happy 2008!

It was so great to see your families at our last visit! Because it's sometimes hard to get to ASU when you have busy lives at home, we were able to see more children than if we had asked you to travel to ASU again. Thank you for opening your homes to us! We had a great time!

We were able to visit 150 families this way! The follow-up survey for you and your child's teacher to complete is now available online which we hope will make the process easier for everyone. We hope your year is beginning wonderfully!



Feedback From Teachers!

Some of you may be wondering why we are interested in getting feedback from your child's teacher. We think it is important to find out how your child behaves in a number of contexts, including home and school.

In our study, we've asked teachers about your child's development as well as about the teachers' own views on emotions and their relationship with your child. We hope to show that teachers' beliefs about these areas are important for your child's success! More information on our findings should be available soon!

Electronic Surveys!

We've finally put our questionnaires online! (But if you prefer paper, feel free to contact us.)

Parent Survey website:

<http://www.asu.edu/ssfd/se/parents>

Teacher Survey website:

<http://www.asu.edu/ssfd/se/teacher>

Understanding Shyness

When your child was 6 and 12 months of age, we asked you questions such as, "how long could your baby look at books and pictures" and other questions about his/her attention. Did you wonder if that ability related to your toddler's personality? Well, we've looked at how this relates to shyness and found some interesting results!

Babies who spent more time paying attention to books, pictures, or other toys, tend to be less shy as toddlers. Additionally, girls (but *not* boys) who laughed frequently during everyday activities predicted less shyness many months later.

Natalie Eggum, a graduate student working with Drs. Eisenberg and Spinrad, helped analyze these data and was chosen to participate and present these results at the International Conference on Infant Studies. This conference will be held in Canada in March. You can check out the society's website at www.isisweb.org

News Flash!

Nancy Eisenberg won a prestigious career award from the American Psychological Association acknowledging her numerous contributions to the field of psychology!

Congratulations to one of our graduate research assistants, Karissa, who is recently engaged! Also, Bridget, another graduate research assistant, is expecting her 6th child this summer!

Additionally,

Another member of our research team, Claire, had a baby! Her beautiful baby boy, Joshua Luc was born on November 1, 2007. He was a healthy 8 lbs 2 oz and 20.5 inches. You can see his smiling face below.



Does Your Child Act Differently Depending on Context?

You may remember us asking you questions about your child such as "does your child prefer to watch rather than join other children playing?" or "can your child easily stop an activity when he/she is told 'no'?" This told us about your child's ability to control his/her attention and behavior.

When you came to visit us, we gave your child some tasks to complete such as, seeing how long he/she could wait before eating a candy set in front of them or seeing how they acted when they entered a room with new toys and interesting objects.

We compared your responses on the surveys to how your child behaved in our research room, this allowed us 1) to make sure that our measurements were valid and 2) to see if children behaved the same in our research room as they do at home. We found that your responses initially agreed with many of our observations. However, once the kids were preschoolers, there were differences in terms of how you and your child's caregiver or teacher reported your child's shyness.

Meet Our International Doctorate Student!

Maša Vidmar is a visiting Fulbright scholar from Slovenia—a small country in the heart of the European Union. The Fulbright program is a very prestigious U.S. international exchange program offering opportunities for students, scholars, and professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and teaching in elementary and secondary schools worldwide.



Bullying

Since school is becoming an increasingly important place for your child, it is important to be aware of the role "bullying" may play in your child's life. Bullying is considered being physically or verbally abusive towards another child by means of taunting, teasing, or excluding others. Researchers are finding that bullying is starting at much earlier ages. Gary Ladd, a distinguished professor at Arizona State University, has been following the same children for over a decade to study peer relationships and bullying. Kids who are bullied suffered from this maltreatment, especially if they are bullied over many years. Parents and teachers should play an active role in preventing bullying at school. Teachers can help by conducting surveys or having drop boxes for children to write down any problems they may be having with other students. He also notes that interventions are important, such as teaching children positive peer interaction skills. Ladd also stresses the importance of having a strong support system; for example, having one or two good friends can really decrease the likelihood of being bullied.

Recent Toy Recalls

Lead paint awareness has caused many toys to be recalled due to federal standards violation.

- A recent recall of this type is a small yellow hand rake with "Backyard and beyond Garden Tools" printed on the tag.



- Battat recalls Magnabuild Magnetic Building System sets due to health risks if these items are swallowed.

- Trek recalls 2005, 2006, and 2007 model MT220 girl's bikes due to frame failures.



- Also, OKK recalls these toy racing cars because of a lead paint violation.

- Family Dollar recalls Magnetic Dart Boards since ingested magnets could cause intestinal or aspiration hazards.



- Curious George plush dolls were recalled by Marvel Toys due to possible lead paint exposure.

All of us on the research team would like to thank you again for your support!

If you would like more information on anything from this newsletter or the study, please contact Dr. Tracy Spinrad (tspinrad@asu.edu; 480-727-7925),

Dr. Nancy Eisenberg (nancy.eisenberg@asu.edu; 480-965-6217),

or the Project Director, Anne Kupfer (anne.kupfer@asu.edu; 480-965-7014).

Some funny times with your families...

We asked kids to point to pictures of different objects or actions. One child was asked to "show me lying down." Rather than pointing to the picture, he laid down on the floor and asked, "like this?"

We also had fun with animals! In one case, we were doing a grocery store activity and the family dog tried to eat our plastic food. In addition, when we watched one of our video taped visits, we noticed one cat continually trying to jump into the scene to get on film!



Another funny part of our visits occurred when some of the boys tried to "impress" our beautiful, female research assistants.

FREE Places to Go with Your Family

1. Take your kids to the library. All of the area libraries have story times for the younger kids and programs/events for the older ones.
2. Home Depot has monthly classes for kids that allow them to build something. They get to learn how to use tools, get free materials, and leave with a masterpiece.
3. Go to festivals where the kids can be exposed to different cultures, like the Matsuri Festival (Japan), Aloha Festival (Hawaii), or Highland Games (Scotland).

