

The All Our Babies Study NEWSLETTER



ISSUE 11

May 2016

Welcome to the warm weather!



We have had a busy winter here in the All Our Babies Study team, and as we head into summer, we are excited to share with you some of the progress we've been making! This August all of the children in our study will have turned 5, and we will hopefully have received all of your questionnaires. Thank you for the time you have invested into answering the 5 year questionnaire, and now it is our turn! We dedicate a lot of time to entering, organizing and analyzing your answers to understand how well our families are doing. We share what we learn with other researchers and with program and community leaders to inform planning. Thank you for making this process possible and for continuing to answer our follow-up questionnaires!


As we finish the 5 year survey, some children in our study will be turning 8 years old! We have spent the past winter designing the new survey with input from you, teachers, community service providers and researchers.

And, based on what many of you have told us, we will be using an online format. If you would prefer paper we will still have that option available- just let us know. Watch for the survey in your email inbox around your child's 8th birthday!

We appreciate that as your children approach 8, they are no longer 'babies'. To better reflect the nature of the project, we are changing our name from the All Our Babies study to the All Our Families study. We will develop a new logo which we hope to unveil on our website and social media platforms as we launch the 8 year questionnaire this summer, so please visit our new website for updates!

One of our new studies is the Child and Family Resiliency Study, led by Drs. Dawn Kingston and Sheila McDonald. Those of you who participated in the Calgary Flood of 2013 survey will be invited to participate in this important study which is explained later in the newsletter.

We presented finding from All Our Babies to the Minister of Human Services, The Honorable Irfan Sabir. We shared what we have learned about breastfeeding, immunization, the importance of social support and maternal mental health, the benefits of early exposure to books and imitation games, the benefits of community resources, and strategies to identify children and families who would benefit from extra help. Getting this information to decision makers is a goal of our team! We remain very grateful for your continued commitment to helping us learn how to best to help families and children succeed. All the best for a wonderful Mother's Day and a great summer season!

-Suzanne Tough 

We are growing up too!

Ask your All Our Babies child, and they will probably tell you "I'm not a baby anymore!" Because our 'babies' are now approaching 8 years old, we realize we need to grow with your family.

We will be changing our name to All Our Families and over the next year, we will update our surveys, newsletters and our website. We are the same loyal group of researchers and students, and we are still the same study you signed up for when you were expecting your All Our Babies child.

Our new name reflects your growing children and the evolution of our research to grow with you. We are still dedicated to understanding how our children's needs and the needs of their families change as they grow.

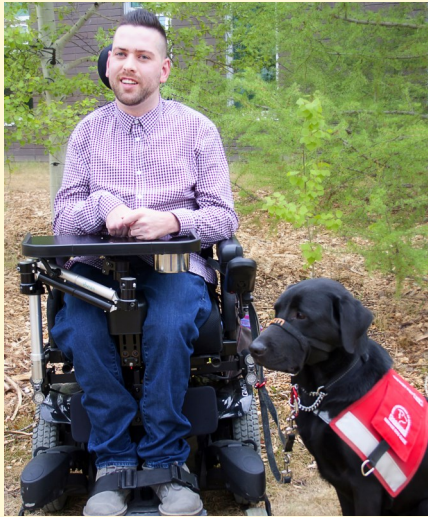


We are Online!

We are excited to announce our new All Our Babies website! Please visit us at allourbabiesstudy.com to see the latest updates on our study, meet our team members and see some of our latest research findings! Also, check us out on Facebook and Twitter.

Stay tuned for one of our exciting projects, where we will use our website, Facebook, and Twitter to stay in contact with you, our participants, and to try to reconnect with some of those we have lost contact with since 2008! We will update this site regularly as we begin our study on childhood resiliency and our 8 year questionnaire. So drop by, and send us a message as we would love to hear from you!





Meet David and Jim!

David joined the All Our Babies team in June of 2015 as an administrative assistant in our new lab at the Owerko Center. David holds a degree in Public Relations from Mount Royal University and spent four years working with Cerebral Palsy Kids and Families prior to joining the team.

David is accompanied by his four-legged friend, Jim, a two-year-old service dog from the Lion's Foundation of Canada. David recently went to Ontario to spend three intensive weeks training with Jim, who assists David with a multitude of tasks in the workplace and at home. Jim even helps David prepare questionnaires sometimes. So if your questionnaire was slightly ruffled when you received it, it might be because you were a lucky recipient of David and Jim's hard work!

If you come into the lab for a visit David is always available to answer any questions, so feel free to stop by and chat with him anytime.

What have we learned?

We realize that many of us are resilient and are able to bounce back from difficult experiences. We wondered what helps some mothers with depression and anxiety stay on track with helping their children and families to cope.



-We have found that for mothers with depression and anxiety, if they felt confident in their abilities as parents, their children did very well. This is important, because many community programs are available to help parents gain confidence and skills in managing young children.



-We now know that strong social support systems make a tremendous difference ..and they should be developed as early on in pregnancy as possible. Mothers who have friends and family they could count on helps infants and mothers thrive. This is something care providers and community programs can help with.



-It is also important to be optimistic. We found that if a mother has depression and/or anxiety, if she was able to have an optimistic outlook, then her children did better.

In summary, we have found that it is very important to support new parents, particularly if they experience poor mental health. If we can help these new mothers feel like they are good and effective parents, and help them to feel supported and balanced, then they and their children can thrive.

Child and Family Resiliency Study

Exposure to a natural disaster in childhood can have serious, long-lasting consequences, impacting mental health, development and learning, and chronic physical conditions. Although many children experience negative effects after a disaster, most do not, and what differentiates these groups is not well understood.

The current state of knowledge on child resilience is of limited value because most studies do not have information about how the children and families were doing before the disaster- which could influence how they are affected by an unexpected event. Some of the things that matter in difficult times are parent's mental health, the home environment, community resources, social support and socioeconomic status. We think that genetics may also play a role.

Because of your long term dedication to the All Our Babies study, we have a chance to really understand recovery following unexpected challenges such as the Alberta 2013 flood, and our recent economic downturn. The *Child and Family Resiliency project (led by Drs. McDonald and Kingston-shown at right)* will generate evidence to better understand child resilience in the midst of adversity and will share this information to inform policy and practice.



Keep in Touch - Help Keep Our Files Up to Date

Staying in touch with our participants is a key part of our work. When we lose touch with participants we lose some of our ability to answer important health questions. If you have moved, changed your phone number or have a new email address, please take a moment to let us

More Information

Check out **our website** for study result, publications, and other study information from Dr. Suzanne Tough, principal investigator of the study.

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