

# All Our Families Study

*Understanding Development Across the Lifecourse*

Fall 2023

## Greetings, participants!

Here we are entering another fall, another school year! As your families enter different developmental ages, the kinds of activities you do together evolves. This can be an exciting stage as your children develop new skills, independence, and responsibility. I hope your summer enabled some rest, and you created some new memories.

This summer brought concerns with the wildfires, resulting in smoky days in Calgary, and for some it disrupted vacation plans. I hope that you and your families were able to navigate the disruption and remain safe. The influence of the changing climate is talked about at many tables, and perhaps your family is engaging in these conversations. You may know that climate anxiety can be a stress for youth, and resources to aid in discussion can be found from organizations such as the [David Suzuki Foundation](#) and [The Nature Conservancy](#).



For All Our Families, this summer was spent preparing the data from your recent surveys for analysis. As always, we are grateful for the time you have given us for this study, and we were delighted with the time many of you took to add comments. We were very pleased to be able to include the prize draws this past spring as additional incentive and recognition to you, our participants.

One of the exciting upcoming areas of research is to better understand the qualities that help families flourish. Many of you expressed resilience during the pandemic with your skills in navigating such a challenging event, and we also know there is more to your well being. As we learn more, we will share our findings with you.

We appreciated hearing your thoughts about what keeps you in the study, and what you would like to read more about. Many of you expressed an interest in learning more about the research and we will be looking at ways to make this happen.

In this newsletter, we have some 'fun facts' from the 12-14 year maternal and youth surveys and will profile some recent publications using All Our Families data. We have some exciting staff news to share, as well as brief participant survey results from our last newsletter.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and wish you a happy and safe fall.

Warmly,

Suzanne

## Let's Connect!

If you have any questions about this newsletter or want to connect about something else, we would love to hear from you!

Email: [allourfamilies@ucalgary.ca](mailto:allourfamilies@ucalgary.ca)

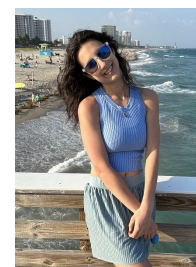
Twitter: [@allourfamilies](https://twitter.com/allourfamilies)

Facebook: [@allourfamiliesstudy](https://www.facebook.com/allourfamiliesstudy)

Website: <https://ucalgary.ca/allourfamilies>

**Summer Student Presentation**

Our summer student, Rowan Chetner has completed her studentship this August and capped off her project with a poster presentation at the **ACHRI/Owerko Centre Summer Student Research Symposium**, entitled *Gender-Differentiated Associations between Maternal Personality and Child Externalizing Behaviour*. Using All Our Families data, Rowan’s project focused on mom’s personality traits and both *if and how* they impact children differently in regard to sex/gender. You can read more about Rowan’s findings in **Research to Real Life** below. Congratulations, Rowan and good luck in your studies!



**Farewell to a Team Member**

With bittersweet feelings, All Our Families said goodbye to Nadia DiMarzo as she left us to start medical school this past July. Nadia came to us as a high school volunteer in 2018 and has been an integral part of the study team as our study research assistant. Many of you know her from her participant follow up calls and emails, but Nadia shared her many other talents with the team through data entry, report writing, documentation, and presentations. Best of luck Nadia, and you will be missed!



**New Study Volunteer**

Sarrah Husain was a Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies practicum student with All Our Families in 2022 and has now joined us as a volunteer. She is passionate about helping people and has volunteered for local organizations that strive to make a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities, including the Independent Living Resource Centre of Calgary and Taking Strides. In the future, she hopes to continue working with individuals of all abilities. In her free time, Sarrah enjoys doing a variety of sports, reading, binge watching TV shows, and trying new food.



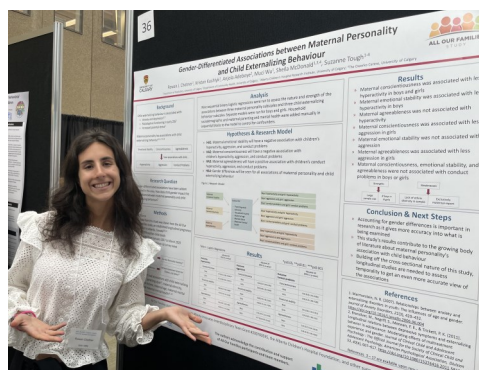
**New Practicum Student**

My name is Angie Uy and I am entering my 4th year at the University of Calgary studying towards a Bachelors of Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies with a Minor in Health and Society, and I hope to pursue my Masters of Community Health Sciences in Epidemiology post undergrad. I am also currently one of the Students Union Cumming School of Medicine Representatives! My interests including studying the health disparities within socioeconomic and marginalized populations, and sexual health accessibility. In my free time I enjoy going to the gym, gaming and going out with friends on the weekends.



**Research to Real Life**

**Gender-Differentiated Associations between Maternal Personality and Child Externalizing Behaviour – Rowan Chetner**



Rowan’s presentation at the ACHRI Student symposium was entitled *Gender-Differentiated Associations between Maternal Personality and Child Externalizing Behaviour*. Externalizing behaviours are problem behaviours directed outwardly, such as physical aggression, destruction, cheating and stealing. Using All Our Families data, Rowan’s project focused on mom’s personality traits and both *if and how* they impact boys and girls differently. This work showed that even when we take parenting style into consideration, maternal qualities of **conscientiousness** (the trait of being careful and diligent), **agreeability** and **stability** can be of added benefit to children. The behaviours most likely to be protected against were hyperactivity in boys and aggression in girls.

## Predictors of Preadolescent Children’s Recreational Screen Time Duration during the COVID-19 Pandemic – Dr. Brae McArthur

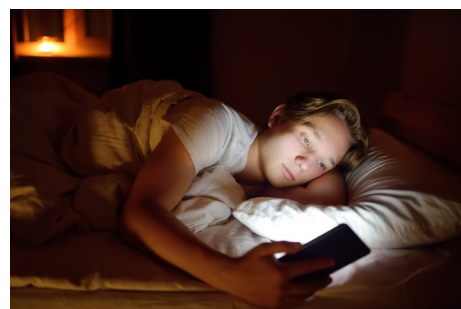
Dr. Brae Anne McArthur is the Director of the Psychology Clinic and an Instructor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Calgary. Her program of research focuses on understanding individual and family level risk and resiliency factors that influence child development and mental health. Dr. McArthur recently published [Predictors of Preadolescent Children’s Recreational Screen Time Duration during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) in the *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*. The goal of this paper was to look at how duration of screen time was influenced by a number of factors, including:

- Socio-demographic, such as age and ethnicity
- Family stressors related to the pandemic, such as mother’s stress and financial concerns
- *Content* and *context* of screen use, such as streaming, gaming, social media and co-viewing
- Parental management of children’s screen use, such as monitoring and providing limits to usage
- Children’s daily routines, such as sleep, physical and recreational activities

Dr. McArthur used data from both the maternal and the child COVID-19 Impact surveys, sent out and completed between July and August of 2020. Dr. McArthur examined the data that mothers reported on the impact of COVID-19 in their life, and on their child’s screen time, as well the children’s self-report of their daily routines and their own screen use activities.

Some highlights from Dr. McArthur’s research:

- Recreational screen time during the pandemic was, on average, 3.2 hours per day and the highest for males, children from historically minoritized ethnic groups, and within families experiencing higher level of stress.
- Lower screen time use was reported when mothers set device limits, and close to 90% of mothers reported they were **aware** or **mostly aware** of their child’s screen usage.
- 85% of the mothers reported they set limits on their children’s device use.
- Children had lower overall screen time when 1) using screens to connect with others through social networks, and 2) when they were involved in higher levels of physical activities or other non-device activities.



Top reported screen activities include watching or streaming movies and videos, and playing video games. Dr. McArthur found that females used screens to text or use social media more than males, whereas males played more video games than females. Roughly one-quarter of the children reported that they were often alone while they used their devices for playing or streaming (i.e., solitary screen use).

Dr. McArthur’s paper supports guidelines and recommendations that for youth, screens are best used for connecting with others and shared activity, as well as encouraging more physical and other activities that do not involve screen use.

## Study Updates

### 12-14 Year Surveys

Thank you to all participants who completed the 12-14 year survey, closed this past July. The information you give continues to provide invaluable insights to the challenges and successes that families experience. We received completed surveys from 65% of our moms. Among those moms who consented for their child to participate, over 90% of those youths completed the surveys.



Although we cannot predict any unexpected events (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic created rare opportunity to collect valuable data from you), **it is our goal to give you a break from our routine surveys**. In this time the team will continue to use the data you have provided as well as organize and plan for the next maternal and child surveys. We will continue to look at screen time, mental health in adolescence, relationships, lifestyle and flourishing in the next surveys. We will keep you updated through newsletters and the website.

We were also pleased to award the draw prizes to 16 lucky participants. Five moms won a \$200 prepaid Mastercard, 10 youth won a \$100 Apple Store gift card, and one lucky mom won the Grand Prize of an Apple iPad!

From one Apple Store gift card winner:

*Being part of a research study is really cool. I like knowing that this started with questions for my Mom when I was a baby and has now moved to asking both of us to answer questions.*

– AOF youth participant



A draw winner shared this lovely photo of her and her family with us.



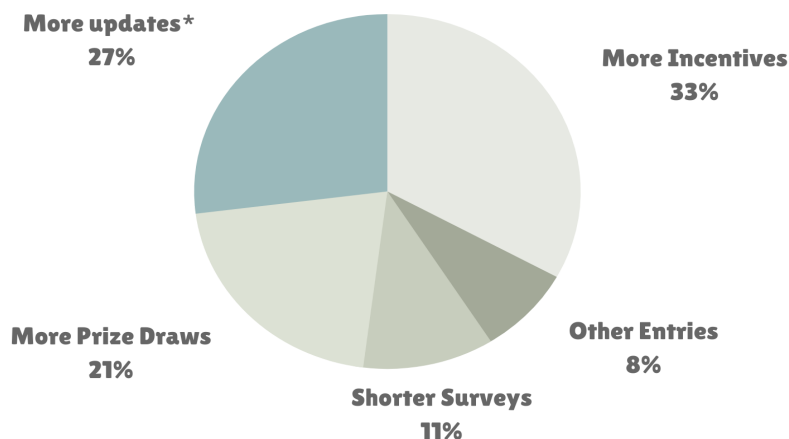
Check out this great photo of another draw winner with their sibling.

*The study received permission from these families to share these photos and quotes.*

## Brief Participant Survey Results & Research Day

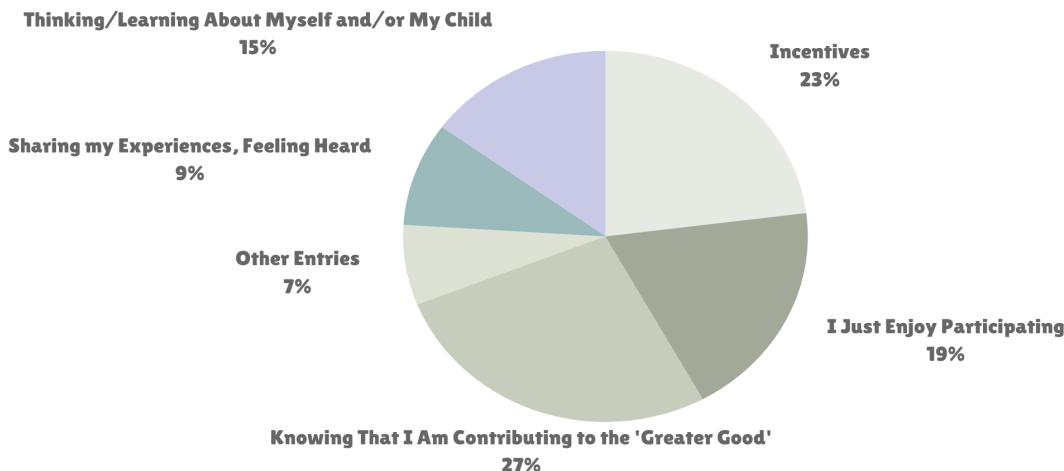
In our last newsletter, we posted a short participant survey for you to tell us what keeps you engaged in the study, and what more we can do to maintain your continued participation. We were so pleased with the results. We had close to 100 responses!

### What would keep you more engaged?



\*About scientific outcomes from the study OR an event to showcase the data that participants could attend (e.g. Research Day)

### What keeps you in the study?





Many of you indicated you would like to attend a Research Day. To that end, we are planning to host an in-person event; we will showcase the research outcomes over time, and you will have the opportunity to meet us in person and talk about the study. We are targeting the spring of 2024 – more details to come.

Below are a couple of the comments that were shared:

- *I think having such a huge data base of information over such a long period of time is going to create so many amazing opportunities for research studies in the future. I can see my child still being part of this study when she is a senior citizen. Just thinking about what could be done with data following my child from birth to adulthood (I hope the study continues that long) makes us keep participating.*
- *My child loves that she gets her own gift card for doing her portion of the surveys.*
- *It's a nice way to follow my son's growth and progress. He also enjoys participating in the kid's surveys, it's a nice way for us to connect and share a bond.*
- *I'd love updates about the project, what the research is being used for, ways that it may have helped others. I like the incentives, but they aren't the primary motivator for me. I really like that I've been doing this since my son (now 13) was born, it's sort of a "thread" through time.*
- *I'll admit it is also nice to know that other parents are going through challenges like postpartum depression etc. My son also likes the idea that he can participate in something and get a gift certificate for it.*
- *I am very happy with the amount of surveys for my child and myself, along with the incentives. I am fully engaged and do not think you need to change anything.*

## Fun Facts from the AOF 12-14 Year Surveys

