



Plymouth BabyLab

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER EDITION 2007

Research update

- Read on to see how your visits are helping to fuel our research!
- Learn about research looking into Bach flower remedies for toddler tantrums!
- Have you moved house? Update your details using the form on page 3.

Progress

Since the launch of our website and press campaign in the winter of 2006 lots of you have been to visit us and lots of little ones have left with baby scientist certificates. In the short time we have been operating we are pleased to report the following figures as an illustration of how are getting along.

335 parents

have Signed up to the Babyab...

395 Children

have been registered ...

81 BabyLab visits

have taken place in the last 6 months!

Of these 81 visits, this includes...

28 visits by toddlers

helping us with our study of word learning,

18 visits to our

study investigating early accent

acquisition, **17 visits**

to an affiliated study investigating the affect

of flower essence on toddler tantrums,

14 visits for our

research investigating infants ability to differentiate foreign accents,

3 visits by toddlers

helping us investigate syntax development

AND... 1 visit which

has helped our research into accent categorization!

These figures represent a fairly quite time in the BabyLab of late, however we are expecting an influx of projects starting in October so if you haven't already visited us, we may be contacting you in the Autumn.

Bilingual children

You have not been forgotten! So far we have not contacted many families of bilingual children because we are not quite ready to carry out research in this area yet, however bilingual children are unique and very interesting for researchers, therefore we will be contacting you in the near future.

Thank you

Thank you to all of you who have already visited us at The BabyLab, your input is of really great value to us and an equally big thank you to all of those who are still waiting to visit, your patience is most appreciated and we will be contacting you as soon as an appropriate study comes up.



Flower remedies for tantrums

As you may know, the bulk of research undertaken at the Babylab concerns language development. However, the Babylab has recently played host to a new research project being carried out by colleagues in the Holistic health Research group also based within the Psychology department at the University of Plymouth. This research

is looking into the effects of Bach flower remedies on toddler's tantrums. Previous work carried out by the group has found evidence of a positive effect of flower essences on psychological complaints such as anxiety and minor depression. Preliminary results from this study suggest that flower remedies may be effective in children too,

with about 70% of parents reporting some benefit. On average the research suggests that the number of tantrums reduced by 42% in children taking the essence. If your child is between 2-5 years, has moderate to severe tantrums, at least once a day you can sign up to the study by visiting their website and receive a free supply of flower essence.

www.holistichealthresearch.org

Have you seen our website ?

For detailed information on the study procedures, FAQ and more go to...

www.plymouthbabylab.org

Research currently underway

For those of you wondering what is going on at the Babylab at the moment, here are a few updates on projects that have taken place over the last few months. Researchers have been gathering data to investigate accents acquired by toddlers who grow up with parents with foreign accents. Considering that children in this age group spend an average of 80% of their time with parents you might expect that parents

accents would rub off on toddlers speech. Interestingly, this is not the case. Preliminary results suggest that children very quickly create their own rules, learning to filter out the differences in their parent's pronunciations of speech to produce pronunciation in keeping with the local area. In other research researchers are looking at whether 4-6 month old babies show a preference for the child's

native accent. Initial results suggest that babies prefer speech containing accents that are familiar to them. So far this has only been explored by comparing American and English accents, however researchers hope to continue the work by looking at whether babies can distinguish and show a preference for more regional English accents, such as Plymouth compared to a Welsh accent.

Spreading the word!

After a very long and thorough vetting procedure the Babylab has received ethical clearance from the NHS to distribute posters and fliers to new mums at maternity wards in Plymouth as well as through local GPs surgeries. We hope that

you will start to see our posters and fliers popping up near you. However, we are always looking for new ways to advertise and raise awareness of the project, therefore if you run or know of any groups who might display a poster or distribute our

fliers we would be delighted to hear from you. Equally, if you know of anybody who would like to sign up to become a Babylab participant please pass on our registration form overleaf or they can sign up through our website or by phone (see page 3 and 4.)



Talk to you baby campaign

Have you seen these posters? The National Literacy Trust are heading a campaign to highlight the importance of language and communication on child development. They explain that research shows that language development is a crucial first step in infants ability to think and learn, casting a significant impact on their overall educational experience. As well as encouraging a natural bond to form between parent and infants, language is also responsible for helping babies brains to develop at a an age when their brains will develop the most. Have you ever noticed that most buggies point forward? This is an example of just one consideration that the

National Literacy Trust campaign makes for maximizing communication with infants. The Trust is campaigning to try and reduce the price of pusher-facing buggies so that parents are better able to take advantage of times when babies are in environments that are naturally stimulating to them and parents are able to point to things out. The campaign started in January 2003, since then the Trust have developed a website where you can find lots of information, advice and free downloads, designed to help you encourage your child's language development. For further information go to; www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk

Talk To Your Baby

Talk to your baby or toddler as often as you can. This will help him or her become a good talker and learner, and be confident and happy. Learning to talk is one of the most important skills your child will achieve. It seems to happen naturally, but in fact you have a very important role to play.



Answer your baby's noises and babbles - he's talking to you!



Washing, dressing and mealtimes are great talking times



What can you see on the way to the shops?



Look at your baby when you talk together



Talk about the pictures in a favourite book



Listen, and give your toddler time to talk

© Illustrations by Pippa Stammers



For more information and resources visit

www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk



Talk To Your Baby is the early language campaign of the National Literacy Trust, encouraging parents to communicate more with children from birth to three.

New details to register? Got a friend to join?

Have you moved house, had another baby or changed your telephone number?

If yes then we would love to update your details. Please use the form opposite and return to us via email or by FREE post at the address given on page 4.

Friends You can also use the form to pass on to friends who are interested in signing up to the Babylab. This helps us a great deal as the more children we see, the better the reliability of our research.

Email If we have sent you this newsletter by post it probably means we do not have functioning email address for you. If you have one and can help us keep our costs down this way please let us know by emailing; info@plymouthbabylab.org

Register new details

I would like to change or update my details

I would like to sign up to the Babylab

Please tick.

Title.....Name.....

Address.....

.....Post code.....

Telephone number.....

Email.....

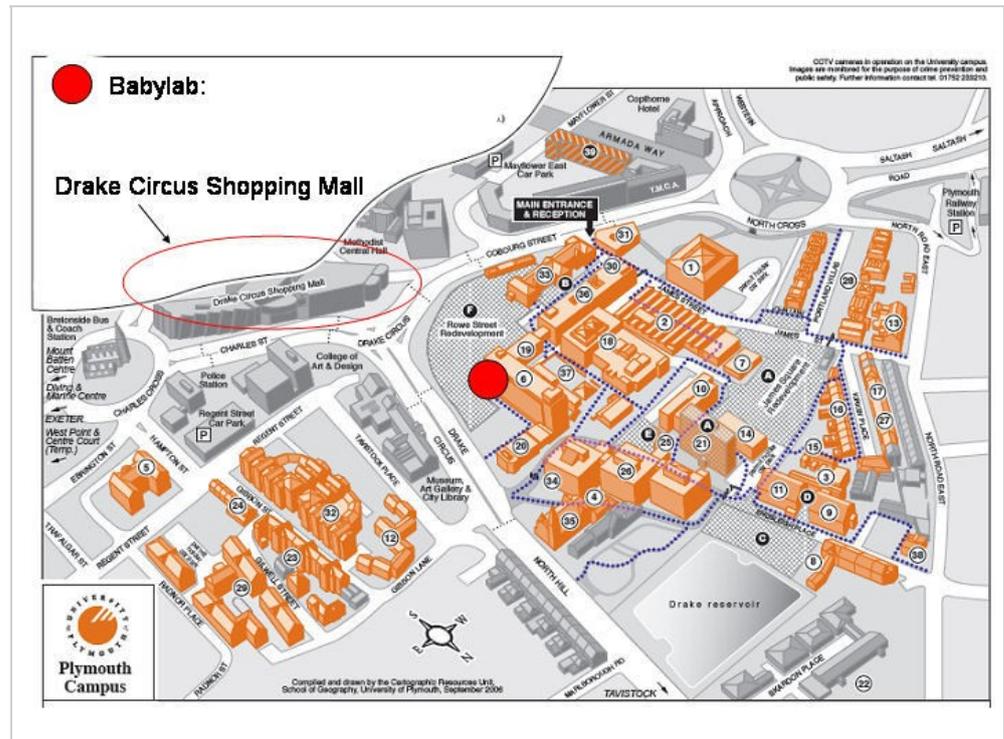
Childs name (if new to database).....

Childs date of birth.....

If you are new to us and wishing to sign up to the Babylab we will contact you soon for further registration details.

Directions to the Babylab

The Babylab is situated in the University's Link building, half way up Drake circus on the left hand side. This building has a bus shelter in front of it and a square patch of grass which you will need to walk around in order to enter at the North Hill entrance (currently hiding behind lots of building work.) You will be able to pick up signs directing you to the baby lab from this point. Once you have entered the building through the automatic doors you will see an elevator to your right and the Baby lab is on the first floor.



Just follow the yellow Babylab signs!



Please note you don't have to pay for a stamp if you are registering or changing your details.

Contact Us

Email info@plymouthbabylab.org

Telephone 01752 23 8209

Address
Babylab
FREEPOST PY271
Room A213
Portland Square,
Drake Circus,
Plymouth, Devon,
PL4 8ZZ

If you have any queries, concerns or you wish to withdraw from the Babylab at any point we are always happy to speak with you. If you ring us and are asked to leave a message please feel assured we will attempt to get back to you as soon as possible. There is also further information available through our website;

www.plymouthbabylab.org