

The Durham Child Health and Development Study Times

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We were refunded! As many of you have heard, *the Durham Child Health and Development Study* has been renewed to follow the same 180 families for another three years! We have spoken to and seen many of you in our lab already - if you have not yet heard from us, we will be in touch shortly! If any of your contact information has changed, please call our toll free number 1-866-561-8134 or email propper@email.unc.edu to let us know, so that we can contact you more easily.

STUDY UPDATE

It has been a little while since we have seen some of you – we hope that all is going well with you and your families! Since our last newsletter went out, we have made a few changes, but most things have stayed the same! Our toll free number has not changed (1-866-561-8134) and we are still located at the same lab in Durham (1804 Martin Luther King Parkway, Suite 109), but we now have a new website, www.durhamchildstudy.org. Please feel free to visit this website for updates and more information about our study!

A new (and exciting!) part of this phase of our study is that we are interested in contacting your child's teacher, in order to ask questions about his/her Kindergarten experience. Our study is not only interested in family and community factors related to your child's development, but we are also interested in his/her school experiences. You will hear from us in the spring of your child's Kindergarten year, to ask for your permission to contact your child's teacher for this purpose.

Included in this newsletter are short biographies of some of our investigators. Dr. Martha Cox continues to lead our project, and Dr. Peter Ornstein (a new DCHD face!) joins her as Co-Principal Investigator. Dr. Cathi Propper - who saw many of you in your homes when your child was 3 months old – is our new project director.

As always, you are welcome to contact us with any questions or updates that you might have, especially if your contact information changes. Thank you very much for your continued involvement in our study - we look forward to seeing you at your next visit!

Fun Spring Projects!

Milk Carton Bird Feeder

With the help of an adult, you can make your own bird feeder!

What you'll need:

- Small milk carton
- Stapler and staples
- Scissors
- Small twig or chopstick
- Non-toxic paints and paintbrush (optional)
- Hole punch
- Yarn or string



1. Completely open up the milk carton. Thoroughly wash and dry it.
2. Have an adult staple the top of the container closed. Then have them help you cut a section from the side of the carton, large enough for a small bird to stick its head through. Below the opening, stick a small branch or chopstick through the carton so the birds can perch on it when they eat.
3. If you want to paint the container, use the paints to make your designs. Let the paint dry completely
4. Have an adult poke a hole in the middle of the top of the carton using a hole punch. Then, thread a piece of yarn or string through it so you can hang it from a tree.
5. Add birdseed and hang the feeder.
6. Have fun watching the different birds that come to visit!

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The DCHD Faculty and Staff

There are many researchers involved in our study, including some from UNC-Chapel Hill, Duke University, NC State University, and UNC-Greensboro. Here are a few of them:



Martha J. Cox, PhD is the Principal Investigator of this study, and Director of the Center for Developmental Science. She has studied families for over 25 years and is the author of many books and articles. Her work has been cited in publications such as *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Parent Magazine*, *The New York Times*, and *Durham's Herald-Sun*.



Peter A. Ornstein, PhD is the new Co-Principal Investigator of this study, and Professor of Psychology at UNC-Chapel Hill. Dr. Ornstein's research concerns cognitive development, especially the development of young children's memory. He is currently interested in the school environment and the ways in which teachers might be able to help children develop memory strategies.

Where are they now? (a staff update)

Beth Paige left the DCHD study to pursue a Master's degree in school counseling at UNC-Chapel Hill. **Melissa Sauer** is also attending UNC-Chapel Hill, pursuing a Master's in Social Work (joining former scheduler, **Jessie Raffaele**, who will complete her social work degree this spring). **Hillary Langley** began the PhD program in Developmental Psychology at UNC-Chapel Hill, but will continue to see some of you at our lab in Durham!

And some new faces....

New DCHD staff members include **Tricia McGovern**, **Spencer Northey**, **Michael Crawford**, **Ingrid Schmidt**, **Cory Clark**, **Meredith Norman**, **Sarah Richardson**, and **Laura Kuhn**.

Cathi Propper, PhD received her degree in Developmental Psychology from Duke University in 2006 and has been the Director of this study since October 2007. She has worked at the Center for Developmental Science for the past 6 years and has been involved in the DCHDS during this time as a data collector, post-doctoral fellow, and research scientist. Her interests include understanding infant emotion development, as it is influenced by the parent-child relationship, from a behavioral and biological perspective.

Papers in Progress

Have you ever wondered whether your child behaves the way that she does because of her genes or because of her environment? The results of our studies have provided evidence that both are important! Dr. Cathi Propper and colleagues have found genes related to dopamine functioning are related to behavioral outcomes of children at 3 years of age and to their nervous system responses to stress at 1 year of age BUT ONLY if their mothers provide a certain style of caregiving. Another study led by Dr. Roger Mills-Koonce found that this story is even more complex. New research from this study has demonstrated that the abovementioned genes and caregiving styles do not just influence child development, but they also influence one another! Finally, Dr. Ashley Hill and colleagues found that the mother-child relationship influences the biological functioning of both children and mothers during stressful situations at 1 year of child age, suggesting that these relationships are just as important for parents as they are for children!

To see the full articles discussed above (and more!), please visit our website, or feel free to contact us for copies.