Thanks again for your dedication to the Back to Baby Basics Project! We hope to be in touch with you again soon!

Mairin Augustine

Many of you have met graduate student Mairin during your visit to Penn State when your baby was 18-months old. Mairin received her M.S. in Psychology from Lehigh University in 2011, and is currently completing her first year at Penn State. In her spare time, she enjoys singing and spending time with friends.

Our Undergraduate Research Assistants

We could not do our study without the assistance of our undergraduates. The students who work in our lab are majoring in a number of different areas such as psychology, pre-med, biology and human development. The majority of our students plan to go to either graduate school, nursing school, social work or medical school.

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Happy New Year! We would like to update you on the status of the Back to Baby Basics project.

We finished the last 18-month visit in December. 95 families completed the study, with 91 families completing every visit. We have enjoyed getting to know the B2BB families and seeing how your babies develop over time!

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, Dr. Stifter submitted a grant in late summer to do a follow-up study of our B2BB families when the children are around pre-school age. We recently received positive feedback from the grant agency, and were encouraged to submit a more detailed version to them. We hope to contact you soon with more details! In the meantime, please give us a call or send us an email if your contact information changes.

Winter Safety Tips

How does your family keep safe in the winter? Here are some tips from the B2BB team:

- Avoid colds and flu by washing hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Rather than coughing or sneezing into your hand, use a tissue (if possible) or your upper sleeve/elbow.

- Keep an eye on children playing in the cold. Dress them in layers of warm material with room for movement in clothes and boots. Keep hydrated and rested with water breaks. It is also a good idea to use sunscreen—snow can reflect up to 85% of sunlight!

- Keep a “winter kit” in your vehicle in case of rough winter weather. This may include a shovel, rock salt, ice scraper, blankets, extra gloves, water, and/or nonperishable snacks.

- Warm your home safely. Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, or check the batteries in existing detectors. Keep space heaters out of reach of children and at least 3 feet from other objects such as drapes, bedding, or furniture. Instruct your children on a safe distance from fireplaces and other heat sources. Discuss fire safety with your family and form an exit plan should a fire occur.

Enjoy your winter season!

Sources: cdc.gov, kidshealth.org, tlc.howstuffworks.com, rd.com

Preliminary Findings

Over the past several months, we have looked at your questionnaire responses and the recordings from your laboratory visits. Below are some of our findings!

As babies get older, they respond differently to unfamiliar people or situations compared to when they were younger. If you recall when you came to the lab when your baby was 6 and 12 months of age we looked at his or her response to a person putting on 4 different masks. At 6 months, most of the infants did not respond negatively to the masks. However, at 12 months one-third of the babies cried and another 10% showed clear signs of wariness. Interestingly, 5% responded with smiles and reaching! The next step will be to see if these different responses to the masks are related to your child’s willingness to play with the tunnel, jump off the stairs or pet the gorilla mask at 18 months.

Thank you for your continued participation in our study! Without you, none of this would have been possible.