

Study-level documentation

Project history:

The Social Distancing and Development Study (SDDS) aimed to examine how changes in sleep, parenting style, social interactions, screen use and activities affect young children's language and cognitive development since the Spring 2020 UK lockdown.

This longitudinal study followed a cohort of nearly 900 children aged 8 to 36 months of age, enrolled in an online study at the onset or during the Spring 2020 UK lockdown, to capture changes in their environment and measure their impact on children's vocabulary size and executive function. Since Spring 2020, we have collected data at three additional timepoints: T2 – End of the Spring 2020 lockdown, T3 – November 2020 lockdown, and T4 – One-year follow-up.

The team is comprised of five experts in the key areas investigated in this project: Dr Nayeli Gonzalez-Gomez (Principal Investigator; Oxford Brookes University), Dr Catherine Davies (Co-Investigator; University of Leeds), Dr Teodora Gliga (Co-Investigator; University of East Anglia), Dr Alexandra Hendry (Co-Investigator; University of Oxford) and Dr Michelle McGillion (Co-Investigator; University of Warwick). These experts are assisted by a Postgraduate Research Assistant, Shannon Gibson (Oxford Brookes University).

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To date, two publications have been produced:

Davies, C., Hendry, A., Gibson, S. P., Gliga, T., McGillion, M., & Gonzalez-Gomez, N. (2021). Early childhood education and care (ECEC) during COVID-19 boosts growth in language and executive function. *Infant and Child Development*, e2241.

Hendry, A., Gibson, S. P., Davies, C., Gliga, T., McGillion, M., & Gonzalez-Gomez, N. (in press). Not all babies are in the same boat: Exploring the effects of socioeconomic status, parental attitudes, and activities during the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic on early Executive Functions. *Infancy*.

Dataset contents:

coviddataset_ECECandSESEFpapers contains the data used to produce these two publications. This includes questionnaire data from 892 participants across multiple timepoints and 33 variables. These variables measure cognitive executive function skills (6), regulation skills (6), vocabulary development (8), child screen use and activities (6), access to ECEC (2), and demographics (5). Please see data_dictionary for more information on each variable.

Data collection process:

Families with 8-to-36-month-old children were recruited across the UK at the onset or mid-Spring 2020 lockdown. These participants were recruited through babylab research databases, and online advertisements on research-related websites and social media groups. Participants

completed questionnaires about their socio-demographic characteristics, use of ECEC and informal childcare, and their child's vocabulary and executive function skill development. Participants were then invited to complete subsequent questionnaires at three additional timepoints to assess their development over time and measure additional variables including child screen use and the types of activities engaged in during lockdown.

Measures used

Socioeconomic status was measured using a composite score for four indices: 1) Household income, 2) Parental education, 3) Index of Multiple Deprivation decile group, 4) Parents' occupational prestige.

Parents were asked to report the duration (full or half days) and frequency (days per week) for informal childcare (i.e. childcare from a member of the extended family) and formal childcare (i.e. nursery, childcare setting or nanny) across the different lockdown periods.

The Oxford Communicative Development Inventory (O-CDI; Hamilton, Plunkett, & Schafer, 2000) was used to assess vocabulary development.

The Early Executive Functions Questionnaire (EEFQ; Hendry & Holmboe, 2021) was used to measure cognitive executive functions and regulation skills.

Parents reported the types of activities that they did with their child, such as, reading, singing, and screen use, during the lockdown period. These questions were based on a home activities measure developed to investigate the impact of lockdown on language development in different countries (Kartushina et al., 2021) and a screen-use measure developed to study changes in screen use during lockdown across different countries (Bergmann et al., 2021).