



# Early Growth & Development Study

Welcome to the winter 2014 EGDS newsletter! As we continue into our 11th year of the study, we would like to share a few project updates and quotes from study participants who graciously offered to share their views.

## Research Highlights

In 2013, our research team published 17 manuscripts in scientific journals, and gave 25 research presentations at professional conferences on findings from our study. Some of these conferences focused on child development while others focused on adoption. We also presented at international conferences as far away as Spain and France! A few of the presentation titles are listed below:

- ☛ "Openness in Domestic Infant Adoption: A Longitudinal Examination of Adoptive Parents, Birth Parents and Adoptees from Research and Practice," presented at the 5th Annual New Worlds of Adoption Conference, at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- ☛ "Stressful Family Environments During Infancy and Child Sleep Trajectories from 18 months to 6 years," presented at the Behavior Genetics Association meeting, in Marseille, France.
- ☛ "Adoptive and Birth Parent Ratings of Openness in the First 6 Years Post-Placement," presented at the International Conference on Adoption Research, in Bilbao, Spain.

Our work continues to get very positive reviews and is seen as ground-breaking in the field of child development. We could not have done this important work without your help! We always use anonymous data in our papers and presentations, and the information is grouped across hundreds of participants, so your identities and responses are fully protected.

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## Site Spotlight: University of Oregon

We are excited to share with you that the Early Growth & Development Study is now affiliated with the University of Oregon's Prevention Science Institute! Dr. Leslie Leve, one of the Principal Investigators of this study, joined the University of Oregon in July. This new partnership with the Prevention Science Institute will provide support to our study and will help to bring some of our exciting findings to the attention of the general public and those interested in children and families. Other than our contact information, you shouldn't notice any changes to the study. Here's our new contact information:

Early Growth & Development Study  
Prevention Science Institute  
6217 University of Oregon  
Eugene, OR 97403-6217  
P: 866.203.5165 (toll free)  
F: 541.346.9636

Thank you for your continued support and for being an essential part of our study! You can learn more about the work of the Prevention Science Institute at the University of Oregon at [www.psi.uoregon.edu](http://www.psi.uoregon.edu).

"The study does many things, some aimed at understanding the child through adoption and some aimed at the parents as they deal with life after adoption. The study does a great job focusing on the mental welfare of both parties and if used as a tool, it can help in many ways... I feel satisfied and happy that my participation in the study will have an impact on ongoing and future research as it relates to adoption. I strongly feel every step of the way during and after the adoption has been very fortunate and amazing since this journey began... I think the study has allowed me to feel connected to the adoption as time passes and I think that has been very important." – *Birth Father*

# Staff Spotlight: Rachel Kovensky



Hello! I am a recent addition to the Early Growth & Development Study's dynamic team and have been working with Tracy VanVlack as she transitions into her next exciting step in life! I have really enjoyed getting to know the team and starting my work with the incredible individuals and families involved in the study! I hold a degree in Family & Human Services from the University of Oregon and have experience working with children, youth, and families. Prior to my work with EGDS, I spent 3 years working as a case manager in public health. I have also volunteered my time working with children, youth, and families in Uganda, India, and Cambodia. I love to spend my time hiking and camping in the outdoors, traveling to new places, and spending time with family and friends. I'm excited to be on board, and am looking forward to working with you in the future!

Best,  
*Rachel, Family Contact Specialist*  
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866.203.5165

Visit our newly designed website for up-to-date study information!  
[www.egdstudy.org](http://www.egdstudy.org)

Some of you may have participated in a recent survey from the Donaldson Adoption Institute about the role of the internet and social media in adoption. The results from that survey are now in, and a summary can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1cq9N5t>

“The EGD Study has been very encouraging for our family. It has given us time to reflect and think about our adoption story as well as access to studies and data that affect our family. Our adopted daughter has really thrived and enjoyed the study. It has given her a chance to feel honored by being adopted (really! She loves when the “adoption study people” come play with her). It’s also given me a sense of support and community in the adoption world. We’re very glad we have been a part of it for several years.”  
- *Adoptive Parent*

## The Same Questions, Again?!

Many of you have noticed that we often ask the same or very similar questions each time we interview you. We realize that this can be frustrating at times, and we appreciate your patience! We are not trying to be redundant; there are important scientific reasons why we repeat the same questions. We are interested in how children and their families change and develop over time. Some children change quite a lot as they develop, whereas others remain very similar to how they were when they were babies. It is important to try to understand the reasons behind these transitions, especially when we are interested in helping youth achieve their greatest potential. By asking families the exact same questions year after year, we can gain a better understanding of how children and families progress over time, and learn why some children change a lot while others do not.