



Newsletter

January 2008

STAR Update



4½ year STAR visits are underway. Thank you to all the STAR parents who have made the project a success in the last year and continue to dedicate their time to its success this year. We could not do it without you!

Adverse Weather

Since winter is upon us there may be a chance for inclement weather. We will run visits as long as the University is open. You can check UNCG's website www.uncg.edu or call 336-334-4400 for the university's status of operation. Please use your judgment during inclement weather, if you feel uncomfortable traveling please call our office and reschedule your visit.



Meet the Staff

Korinne Chiu

Korinne Chiu is the project coordinator for STAR. Korinne received her master's degree in Psychology in 2007 at Wake Forest University and has experience in developmental psychology research and early childhood intervention. In addition to working as STAR project coordinator, Korinne is currently taking courses in statistics and public health. She also enjoys the arts, hiking and biking.

Investigator Spotlight



Investigator Spotlight: Dr. Esther Leerkes

Dr. Esther Leerkes is one of the primary investigators on the STAR Project.

Dr. Leerkes teaches both graduate and undergraduate courses addressing research in child development and parent-child relations. In her research, Dr. Leerkes focuses on social and emotional development within the family system.

Recently, Dr. Leerkes and Regan Burney, a STAR graduate student, published an article on parenting efficacy, how confident parents feel about meeting their child's needs, in the journal *Infancy*. Measures were taken before birth and after birth for both parents. They found that social support predicted parenting efficacy in fathers whereas confidence in child rearing before birth predicted parenting efficacy in mothers.

In addition to her work with the STAR Project, Dr. Leerkes is involved with other research projects. She is an investigator for the Infant Parent Project which is funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and looks at how families transition into parenthood. Participants for this study are 133 mothers and 90 fathers in Guilford County whose children have been followed from before birth to 17 months.

In our next issue - Dr. Stuart Marcovitch

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Welcome to STAR ➤ STAR Investigator Spotlight ➤ Meet the Experimenter
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Future of STAR...What's next? ➤ 6 Ideas Children Learn ➤ Smelly Play dough ➤ STAR Research ➤ Keep in Touch



6 Ways Children learn

1. *Seeing* different people, places and things
2. *Hearing* a story read by you and talking with and around them
3. *Smelling* different scents like flowers or foods
4. *Touching* different surfaces that are hard, soft, scratchy, & smooth
5. *Tasting* different foods such as salty, sweet, sour, & bitter
6. *Feeling* that they are loved

Smelly Play Dough

Materials:

- 2 Cups Flour
- 1 Cup Salt
- 1-1 1/2 Cup Water
- 1 Packet of Kool Aid mix
- 2 Bowls
- 1 Spoon

Mix the flour and salt in a bowl. Mix the water and Kool Aid pack separately in a bowl. Pour the Kool Aid/water mixture into the flour/salt mixture and begin stirring. Once the mixture is too thick to stir, dust your child's hands with flour and have your child mix the play dough with their hands until the mixture is completely combined. Add more water or flour to achieve a play dough consistency.



STAR Research



Several of our graduate students are conducting research with the information that we get during the visits with your child. Here are some of the up and coming research topics we are investigating thanks to your participation.

-Jackie Nelson is examining the relationship between how children understand emotions and how emotions are expressed by the child and their family. She is using information from some of the games we play with puppets and some of the information that mothers provide us with.

- Irina Mokrova is examining the relationship between children's motivation levels during tasks and parenting practices. She is looking at how children play differently from one another on one of the puzzle tasks as well as information from parents.



Keep in touch!

Please contact Pam Dover with address or phone number changes. You can reach her by e-mail pldover@uncg.edu or by phone 336-334-4574. If you have moved out of the Greensboro area contact us for ways you can still participate in the project. Thanks!

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Family Research Center
STAR Project
248 Stone Bldg.
P.O. Box 26170
Greensboro, NC 27402

