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Birmingham Families Needed for Study

Posted on Friday 19th February 2010

Birmingham families with youngsters aged six and below are being called on by the University of Birmingham to take part in new studies into children's development. Researchers are looking for volunteer youngsters to help them find out more about some of today's most common childhood conditions, including obesity and autism, as well as about how language and thinking develop in children.

Volunteers will visit the Infant and Child Laboratory (ICL) at the university's main Edgbaston campus, where studies will take place in a safe and friendly environment, with parents present at all times. Children take part in fun and engaging games or tasks, similar to everyday activities. They will then be awarded a 'Young Scientist' certificate and a small present.

The Lab's team of experts, whose previous research has featured on ITV's my Child Won't Eat programme, hope the centre will play a key role in discovering more about some of the issues that concern children and families across the UK.

Dr Sotaro Kita (the spokesperson of the ICL) said: "One of the many projects in the laboratory is designed to identify early markers for conditions such as autism that may allow for more effective interventions. To do so, we are carefully studying not only children who are at risk for developing autism but also typically developing children.

"We would like the wider community to be part of such groundbreaking work and we hope this will be of great interest to families in the region."

Anyone interested in participating in the studies should contact the Infant and Child Laboratory on 0121 414 7219 or visit: **www.icl.bham.ac.uk (http://www.icl.bham.ac.uk/)**

For further information please contact Anna Dingley, University of Birmingham Press Officer, on 0121 415 8134/07769 952763, email: **a.j.dingley@bham.ac.uk (mailto:a.j.dingley@bham.ac.uk)**

Notes to Editor

The University of Birmingham has more than 28,000 students from the UK and around the world and around 6,000 staff. With an annual turnover of £441 million, the University is one of the largest employers in the West Midlands and its activities contribute £779 million to the region. For more than 100 years research at the University of Birmingham has contributed to the advancement of knowledge and its application on a national and international scale. Following the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) Birmingham was placed as the 12th university in the UK based on 'research power'. For more information please visit **www.bham.ac.uk (http://www.bham.ac.uk/)**

The Infant and Child Laboratory is based in the School of Psychology. In the recent RAE Psychology was positioned second in its units of assessments. More than 80 per cent of activity was judged to be at an internationally excellent standard and 25 per cent of activity was judged 'world leading', while teaching is also excellent with a score of 23 out of 24 in the QAA Quality Assessment Review of teaching.

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