University of Cambridge
Centre for Family Research
Annual report 2016-2017
Centre for Family Research

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Life has returned to normal at the Centre for Family Research following the excitement of our 50th anniversary year. We are as busy as ever visiting families, having meetings, holding seminars, analysing data, writing papers, and applying for grants. But that’s only half the story. Our 50th anniversary brought home just how much of what makes the CFR tick is invisible and intangible. It’s so much more than the process of doing research. It’s the coffee room chats, the close friendships not just within but also between the teams, the support of our exceptional administrators, Abby Scott and Hannah Tigg, the help offered from one researcher to another or to a student – these are the ties that bind us and make the CFR special. Several years ago, the Director of a research centre in the Natural Sciences told me with a certain degree of pride that he didn’t know anything about the personal lives of the members of his team. The implication was that it would be messy, bothersome and time-consuming to do so, and would detract from the important business of conducting research. I didn’t know what to say when I heard this. At the CFR we know (almost) everything about each other’s lives; the joys of new relationships, the sadness of those that do not last, our children’s achievements and difficulties, the challenges our young mothers face in trying to juggle work and family life, the responsibilities posed by elderly parents, and the sorrow of losing them. Maybe it’s because we study families that we are so fascinated by the families of our colleagues. Ultimately, the purpose of our research is to understand and support families and it seems to me that there’s no better place to start than with our own. So Friday morning coffee remains central to the CFR week. It has been a CFR institution for much longer than I have had the good fortune to be a member and I have no doubt that it will be central to the success of the next 50 years.
An important legacy of the 50th anniversary celebrations has been our involvement in public engagement activities. *Half of Me*, the play that resulted from an exciting collaboration between Tamasha Theatre Company, the playwright, Satinder Chohan, and the Centre for Family Research, and was performed at our anniversary event, went on tour this year to Luton, Coventry, Lancaster, Colchester and London. The play was informed by our research on children conceived by donor insemination. It tells the tale of a teenager who embarks on a quest to find her biological father, illustrating that the need to find out who we are and where we come from is an ancient theme. *Half of Me* was published as a book this year so that schools and youth theatre groups can make their own productions and increase understanding of the experiences of donor-conceived children.

*Half of Me* was also performed to great acclaim by Cambridge students at the Cambridge Festival of Ideas in October. The event, chaired by Vasanti Jadva, began with a short overview of our research on assisted reproduction families by Susan Golombok, and was followed by the play and a panel discussion with Fin Kennedy, Artistic Director of Tamasha, and Satinder Chohan as well as Tabitha Freeman, Susanna Graham and Sophie Zadeh from the Centre for Family Research. As one good thing often leads to another, we were approached by a New York based film-maker in the audience about collaborating on a series of films on new family forms for schools. This project is currently under discussion and hopefully will begin next year.

Alongside the *Half of Me* project, Vasanti Jadva worked with Fin Kennedy to help Central Saint Martins’ MA Dramatic Writing students create short plays inspired by our research. This generated 18 scripts, 5 of which were performed at London Writers' Week 2016.
Two of these scripts were used by Vasanti Jadva and Sophie Zadeh to engage secondary school children with our research, funded by the University of Cambridge Public Engagement Seed Fund. We invited secondary school pupils from 3 schools to Cambridge to see two plays, again performed by Cambridge students. The first play, 'Free' by Michael O’Neil, is about a young girl who finds a receipt detailing the amount of money her gay fathers paid for her surrogacy birth. The second play, 'I'm an IVF Baby' by Grace Davis, conveys two opposing views held by someone born through IVF. The pupils were asked about what they had learned from each play. We also held focus groups with them to gain a deeper understanding of how theatre can engage teenagers with our research, and whether or not it is a useful medium for raising awareness of diversity in family life.

This was a hugely successful project. In addition to the plays, the pupils visited a College - Clare or Corpus Christi - and learned about undergraduate life in Cambridge. The feedback speaks for itself. When asked what they had learned, pupils’ comments included: “That it doesn’t matter how you’re made, everyone’s special”, “I learned what IVF was as well as gained confidence to debate about controversial topics”, “I learned about a lot of different families and that it doesn’t matter how you are made, you are just the same as
everyone else” and “I’ve opened my mind to different viewpoints about families and what some people go through. I’ve learned about Cambridge and how it could benefit my future if I was to come here.” We were thrilled to receive a letter from the Assistant Head Teacher of one of the participating schools that had no previous contact with Cambridge saying, “The children have excelled in their learning since returning to school, particularly in their religious studies lessons where they have been looking at family life and fertility treatments. The dramatic performances were an excellent way of getting the children to think outside of the box, especially as they do not come into contact with as many varied family settings where they live. They also gained an invaluable insight into life at Cambridge University, inspiring many of them to want to achieve and be accepted by the very best universities that the UK can offer. Your hospitality on the day was outstanding and you could not have done anything to make us feel more welcomed and valued.”

We have also been involved in an art project this year. The artist, Elena Cologni, undertook a residency at the CFR funded by the Arts Council England. Inspired by the Centre’s Margaret Lowenfeld Library, and particularly by Margaret Lowenfeld’s Mosaic Test (1938) and accompanying book (1954), Elena Cologni developed a sculpture that she used in a series of encounters with mothers in different locations around the city of Cambridge. The test was originally developed by Margaret Lowenfeld for use in psychotherapy with children. Elena Cologni’s aim was to explore mother-child attachment in relation to place. Her exhibition, ......And Encounter, at Murray Edwards College in October marked the conclusion of the project and included the sculpture as well as traces of the project in the form of drawings, collages and constructions. The exhibition will move to the Freud Museum, London in 2018.
Our most recent public engagement activity, *Honest Conversations with new parents: Transitions, tensions and triumphs*, was held under the auspices of the ESRC Festival of Social Sciences. The afternoon event, held at St Catharine’s College, was a collaboration between the two CFR teams. It was spearheaded by Sarah Foley who obtained competitive funding for the event from the ESRC, and organised in collaboration with with Elian Fink, Susan Imrie and Kitty Jones, all recipients of ESRC funding. The afternoon was attended by around 50 new and expectant parents. Following lively and informative presentations from a panel of psychologists, parents and mental health professionals, the audience participated in a discussion of their experiences of pregnancy and parenthood.

Many courageously shared their deepest fears and concerns. It is to the credit of the organisers that the audience felt able to open up about the extremely personal and sensitive issues that were troubling them. In addition to providing a forum for honest conversations, information was provided about local sources of support. The feedback was extremely positive. Comments on what the participants found most useful included: "The opportunity to ask open and honest questions and receive responses that were not sugar-
coated", "Meeting other parents, the information sheet about local baby activities and the videos of babies communicating", and "I enjoyed the versatile comments from parents, educators and researchers. It gave me a good overview and understanding". The afternoon ended with tea and cake to enable participants to speak to each other informally and consult members of the panel individually. Babies and toddlers participated too. Although too young to have an opinion, they had their own play area at the front of the lecture theatre and sweetly (although sometimes a little noisily) reminded us of what the event was all about.

In line with our growing involvement with public engagement, we were delighted to welcome the acclaimed writer and psychologist, Dr Andrew Solomon, as a Distinguished Associate of the Centre. Dr Ana Cuevas Hernandez from the University of Colima, Mexico, joined us as a Visiting Scholar from September 2016 until July 2017. Ana studies single mother families in Mexico and wrote a book on this topic while at the Centre. In addition to her scholarly contributions, she taught us about Mexican cuisine. The photo below shows a Mexican cookery class in progress in Susan’s kitchen.
We had a diverse and stimulating set of seminars this year: *My transgender journey* by Jessica Lynn, US; *Sibling Interaction: Cause or Consequence* by Dr Alison Pike, University of Sussex; *Research outside of academia: How to be an asset in policy-related work* by Dr Amanda Aldercotte, the Equality Challenge Unit, London; *Family Estrangement: what do we know about the breakdown of relationships between family members?* by Dr Lucy Blake, Edge Hill University; *Lone mothers: family life and emotions in contemporary western Mexico* by Dr Ana Cuevas Hernández, University of Colima, Mexico; *Contact with Donor Siblings among Parents and Offspring: Understandings of Genes and Kinship* by Professor Margaret Nelson, Middlebury College, Vermont; *Clinical Work in Children's Social Care: Innovation, Ethics and Evaluation* by Dr Pamela Parker, Adoption Service, Cambridge; *Clinical experiences in working with transgender children and adults* by Dr Vickie Pasterski, Milan; *Uterine transplants; the latest new families* by Professor Martin Richards, Centre for Family Research.

Three new CFR babies were born this year. Many congratulations to Adelle Pushparatnam and Fred on the birth of Tiago on 15th December 2016, to Susanna Graham and Sam on the birth of Zebedee, a brother to Reuben and Lottie, on 7th April 2017, and to Wendy Browne and Woody on the birth of Audrey on 29th April 2017.
We also had our first gay wedding. Rory and Chris married in Dublin on 30th June 2017.

As always, a huge thank you goes to Abby Scott, our incomparable Administrator, who keeps the Centre running smoothly and calmly whatever crops up. And a very warm welcome to Hannah Tigg who joined us in January. It feels as if Hannah has been with us for much longer than 10 months which is testament to how quickly she has become part and parcel of the CFR.

Professor Susan Golombok

NEW FAMILIES RESEARCH TEAM
Professor Susan Golombok

The best news of the year came in July when we heard that our application for a £1.5 million Wellcome Trust Collaborator Award, 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Families: Parent-child relationships and children’s psychological wellbeing, had been successful. The development of the proposal was a genuinely collaborative effort between Vasanti Jadva (CI), Tabitha Freeman (CI), Sophie Zadeh, Susan Imrie and Susan Golombok (PI), and will allow us to examine new pathways to parenthood that did not exist, nor had even been imagined, at the turn of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. Our aim is to increase understanding of new family arrangements involving non-cohabiting co-parents who have met over the internet with the purpose of having children together, transgender parents who have had children through assisted reproduction, single fathers who have used surrogacy to become single fathers by choice, and couples who have had children using identifiable egg donors. We are very grateful to all of those who generously gave their time to comment on the proposal and write letters of support. The applicants celebrated in true CFR style with a champagne afternoon tea.

Celebratory tea
Our ESRC funded longitudinal study of adoptive families made terrific progress this year. Anja McConnachie was joined by Nadia Ayed and together they travelled the length and breadth of the United Kingdom to interview and observe gay, lesbian and heterosexual adoptive parents and their children in their homes. Data collection is nearing completion and we shall soon be in a position to find out how these families are faring as the children, whom we first met at around 6 years old, become teenagers. Also studying adoption, Pamela Jimenez Etcheverria travelled to Chile this summer to conduct the final assessments for her study of adopted and institutionalised children. This is the first study of its kind in Chile and is set to influence policy on looked-after children. Both Anja and Pamela were selected to attend the Rudd Adoption Centre Summer School at the University of Massachusetts Amherst which gave them a wonderful opportunity to learn about current research in the field of adoption and meet with adoption researchers from around the world.

The findings from the 6th phase of another of our longitudinal studies, the UK Longitudinal Study of Assisted Reproduction Families, was published this year by Elena Illioi, Vasanti Jadva, and Susan Golombok. We were delighted that the two papers from this phase of the study, when the children whom we have been studying from infancy reached age 14, were published in two of the top journals in the field, Developmental Psychology and the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry. We found that families created by donor insemination, egg donation and surrogacy continue to function well when the children research adolescence. We also showed that the earlier parents begin to tell children about their biological origins, the better the relationship between mothers and their children in their teenage years. This finding was apparent from data obtained independently from mothers and the children themselves which gives it greater weight than had it come from
the mothers alone. The study also provided the first opportunity for a representative sample of children born through a surrogacy arrangement to tell us what they thought about the circumstances of their birth. Contrary to the widespread assumption that the children would be unhappy about their origins, the teenagers either showed little interest in surrogacy or felt positive about it because it was an interesting fact about themselves. A paper on the children’s views by Sophie Zadeh and Elena Illioi is currently under review.

Also on the theme of surrogacy, Nishtha Lamba completed her PhD on the psychological wellbeing of Indian surrogates, following them up from pregnancy to 4-5 months after relinquishing the baby to the intended parents. Her viva will take place in December. Susan Imrie was awarded her PhD in July. Her thesis focused on the quality of parenting and the psychological adjustment of children conceived using identifiable egg donors in the UK.

Sooz with PhD cake
We continued the second phase of our study of families created by single mothers by choice as the children approached adolescence. Thanks to a Returning Carers’ grant awarded to Tabitha Freeman, Jo Lysons joined Tabitha and Sophie Zadeh in January to assist with data collection which has been going extremely well with most of the families from the initial phase agreeing to see us again. Kitty Jones also helped with data collection as part of her MPhil dissertation and, together with Sophie Zadeh, wrote a paper on children’s thoughts and feelings about their donor which was published in *Human Reproduction*. Kitty joined the team as a PhD student last October and is carrying out a fascinating study of stay-at-home fathers.

A study initiated this year by Susan Imrie and Sophie Zadeh, thanks to a Wellcome Trust Enhancement Award, focuses on families with transgender parents. As so little is known about these families, Susan and Sophie are working with the LGBT organisations *Gendered Intelligence* and *Stonewall* to recruit families with children of all ages. The emphasis is on families in which children have experienced a parent’s gender transition. With the help of two 3rd year undergraduates, Susie Bower-Brown and Kate Shaw, we have so far seen more than 20 families and hope to reach 40 in the coming months. The findings will provide important insights into the challenges faced by children in this growing family form.

Vasanti Jadva was involved for much of the year with a survey commissioned by *Stonewall*, Britain’s leading charity for lesbian, gay, bi and trans equality, on the experiences of 3,700 lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people in Britain’s schools. Although anti-LGBT bullying has decreased since 2012, the survey found that almost half of LGBT pupils still face bullying at school and 40% had been the target of online abuse because of their sexual
orientation or gender identity. Rates of poor mental health were found to be alarmingly high. More than two in five trans young people had tried to take their own life, and one in five lesbian, gay and bi pupils had done the same. The findings of this important survey are being disseminated widely to raise awareness of the difficulties faced by LGBT young people. Vasanti has also been conducting a survey of people’s experiences of surrogacy in the UK and abroad.

New members of the team include Tatiana Vilsbol who graduated from our PBS degree in June and joined the CFR over the summer to assist with our public engagement work. Dr Sophie Landa, a clinical psychologist at the Tavistock and Portman Gender Identity Disorder Service, and Dr Zeynep Gurtin, Senior Research Associate at the London Women’s Clinic, have joined us as Visiting Researchers.

We have been busy spreading the word about our research this year. Susan Golombok has given a number of Keynote and invited lectures including presentations at the University of Heidelberg, the University of Lausanne, and Gothenburg University. She was also invited to speak to professional organisations including the Family Law Bar Association, 5SAH Chambers London, CARE Fertility, Schroders, and to give the Inaugural Keynote Lecture of the East of England Branch of the British Psychological Society. In July, she attended the Annual Conference of British Psychological Society to collect the BPS Book Award for Modern Families: Parents and Children in New Family Forms.

Vasanti Jadva has given invited lectures to the British Fertility Society; Institut National d’Etudes Demographiques Paris; a conference on surrogacy in Paris; and the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society. Sophie Zadeh has spoken at De Montfort University; the LSE; the University of Lyon; and Aalborg University, Denmark. Susan Imrie
presented papers to the Society for Reproductive and Infant Psychology; the International Attachment Conference and the Society for Research in Child Development in the US. Pamela Jimenez Etcheverria also presented papers at the Society for Research in Child Development and the International Attachment Conference as well as the 2nd International Congress of Clinical and Health Psychology on Children and Adolescents and the 2nd International Congress on Adoption. Kitty Jones spoke at the International Attachment Conference; the British Psychological Society Developmental Section Conference; and the Cambridge ESRC Doctoral Training Centre student-led conference. Media reports on our research by Tabitha Freeman appeared in Die Zeit, CBC news, Canadian Living magazine, and Reuters. Vasanti Jadva’s work was reported on BBC news, the Guardian and the Independent. Interviews with Susan Golombok appeared in national newspapers and radio in Switzerland, Sweden, France and Denmark. Sophie Zadeh gave an excellent TEDx Cambridge talk “Assisted reproduction: An end to traditional family values?” which is available on the CFR website.

Susan’s Team 2016-17
This year we welcomed a new administrator, Hannah Tigg, and two new PhD students: Gabrielle McHarg, from North Carolina and Chengyi Xu, from China via Columbia University. Hannah’s cheerful approach to organizing and amazing flair for cake-making meant that she integrated very quickly into life at the Centre for Family Research, as have both Gabrielle and Chengyi. Gabrielle has taken on responsibility for seeing all the New Fathers and Mothers Study (NewFAMS) families that were previously seen by Sarah Foley (now busy writing up her thesis) and will be investigating whether individual differences in early prosocial behaviour in the NewFAMS toddlers (i.e., helping, sharing and empathic responses to infant distress) are related to variation in the frequency or nature of their TV viewing or other screen-time activities. As part of the literature review for her thesis, Gabrielle (together with former CFR PhD student, Naomi White) joined me in writing a review paper for a new special issue on the topic of early prosocial behaviour that will appear in Current Opinions in Psychology. This review addressed sibling influences on early prosocial behaviour (rather than potential effects of screen time), but I hope that the experience of writing was useful for Gabrielle and will give her the taste for getting her own work published quickly!

Chengyi is setting up a study in China to extend a previous Ellefson-Hughes collaborative cross-cultural study that showed that young adolescents living in Hong Kong perform much better than their UK counterparts on tests of executive function. Chengyi’s early findings from a pilot study of 120 Chinese children indicate that this HK-UK difference cannot simply be explained by differences in computer fluency, as the Chinese children, who
performed as well as their HK counterparts, were recruited from Qingdao, a coastal city in China’s eastern Shandong Province, a region that is very traditional and in which few children have their own computer. Chengyi’s research will therefore focus on parent-child relationships as a potential mediator of cultural contrasts in executive function. Based on her early findings, Chengyi was successful in gaining a full PhD scholarship from the Chinese Ministry of Education: many congratulations Chengyi!

This year also saw a very large number of undergraduate students joining us as research interns. First, as last year, two students from Bath University joined my team for the year: Eleanor Steel and Freya Koutsoubelis helped with the 24-month wave of the New Fathers and Mothers Study and will use data from the study for their final year dissertations.

Second, over the summer we were able to welcome a large number of student interns over the summer to assist with data collection and coding for the fourth wave of the New Fathers and Mothers Study. This venture proved extremely successful: from their many touching thank you cards it is clear that the students (who were paid at the rate set by the
British Psychological Society summer research assistant scheme) were not only extremely helpful in all manner of ways but also had a great time and discovered that they loved the life of research. Our thanks therefore go to the five Cambridge students who joined us: Megan Cheyney, Chloe Cliff, Jess Grimmel, Isla Kirk and Angelica Leach, as well as Annika Maus from Heidelberg, Michelle Lauer from Trieste, Sally Chi from Beijing in China and Eily Sullivan from Harvard. We are also grateful to the British Psychological Society which funded Megan Cheyney’s post and the Grindley Fund, which supported Jess Grimmel’s research placement. This year we also hosted a visiting scholar from the University of Warsaw in Poland, Joanna Smogorzewska, who made good use of her time here, gaining government funding for her research and finishing a book on children’s theory of mind. We also provided work experience for Kitty Bullard, a local GCSE student who has taken part in every wave of the Toddlers Up study, and who enjoyed her chance to be on the other side of the research camera for a week.

All five Cambridge students will continue to build on their summer work either as part of an MPhil (for Chloe Cliff) or as their third year dissertation and so we look forward to seeing much more of them and seeing some exciting results emerging from this summer’s hive of activity. These interns were also very helpful in ensuring that this year’s garden party for NewFAMS parents and children was as successful as ever. As last year, the garden party took place on a sunny afternoon in the gardens of Fitzwilliam College. Hot drinks and delicious college cake was available, thanks to a donation from the LEGO Foundation PEDaL Research Centre, and Annika Maus and a friend provided violin and piano music that enchanted the toddlers and added a very relaxing atmosphere to the afternoon.
Sadly for us, the academic year 2016-2017 was Dr Rory Devine’s last year at the CFR. In a very competitive field of 138 candidates, Rory was successful in gaining a permanent position as a Lecturer at Birmingham University; an outcome that will not surprise anyone who knows him: Rory has made a massive contribution to the CFR and the New FAMS team and obviously has a very bright future ahead of him. We are of course delighted for Rory and wish him all the best in his new academic home, but very much hope that he will continue to collaborate with the New Fathers and Mothers Study Team and with me in other new investigations.
To this end, I have included Rory as a co-Investigator in three separate grant applications currently under review. The first two of these have been submitted to the ESRC: one application is to continue the international NewFAMS study at ages 36 and 48 months and the other is to launch a new study to investigate individual differences in young children’s adjustment to becoming a sibling, with the sample to be recruited from the Rosie Maternity Hospital in Cambridge and two large maternity hospitals in Birmingham. The third application, currently at the outline stage, has been submitted to the Nuffield Foundation, which I hope will fund two post-docs to analyse quantitative and qualitative data to come from a large-scale trial of our school readiness questionnaire, the Brief Early Skills and Support Index (BESSI), that is being co-ordinated by Liverpool Child Poverty Action Group and Life Chances Commission and that should involve 9,000 young children followed over a 24-month period.

This year I have also become a co-investigator or collaborator in five further studies. The first of these, funded by the Nuffield Foundation and led by Professors Lynne Murray and Peter Cooper at Reading University (with Professors John Duncan and Ted Melhuish also
serving as co-investigators) is a shared picture-book reading intervention for families of 2- to 3-year-olds attending Children’s Centres in Reading. This intervention, developed by Murray and Cooper in their studies in South Africa, aims to help parents foster young children’s socio-emotional development and my role in this study concerns the assessment of both the quality of mother-child interactions and young children’s theory-of-mind skills. The second, funded by the NHS and headed by Professor Esther van Sluij at the Cambridge Institute of Public Health, is also an intervention study, which aims to use pedometers linked to a motivational website to encourage families of 9- to 12-year-old children in rural Norfolk to become more active. Here my role is to lead the design and analysis of assessments of family interaction quality, which will be coded from video observations of the Fictional Family Holiday paradigm. While the feasibility phase of the study showed how difficult recruitment is likely to be, both the intervention and the observations do appear to be working well for the families who are taking part. The third study, funded by the Templeton Foundation and led by Dr Duncan Astle at the Cambridge Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, is an investigation of the neuroscience of resilience in young learners. This study, which has been delayed in its start date for practical reasons, aims to explore the neurocognitive underpinnings of young children’s resilience in relation to the effects of adversity on learning and academic success. The fourth study, currently under review with the Templeton Foundation, is led by Dr Valdas Noreika and Dr Tristam Bekenstein and aims to investigate the neural basis of how children develop religious versus non-religious thinking.

The fifth study, led by Professor Manuel Eisner at the Cambridge Institute of Criminology (with Professor Paul Ramchandani from Education, Professor Pascoe Fearon from UCL, Professor Michael Dunne from Queensland University and Dr Aja Murray from Criminology also part of the core research team), is a feasibility and pilot study for a very
ambitious global birth-cohort study. This study, entitled the ‘Evidence for Better Lives Study’ (EBLS), aims to recruit 1,500 newborn infants from each of eight different countries: Jamaica, Ghana, South Africa, Romania, Vietnam, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan (with Mexico or Brazil also under current review). By tracking this birth cohort across the first five years of life and comparing their outcomes with those of a base-line cohort of five-year-olds recruited at the start of the study, this multi-site dual cohort study aims to examine at least two important questions. First, by addressing the 90:10 gap (most violence against children takes place in countries where there is very little empirical research), the EBLS aims to investigate international similarities and contrasts in the cognitive, family and societal factors that contribute to early problems of wellbeing and antisocial behaviour. Second, by comparing the main birth cohort with the base-line cohort, EBLS aims to investigate the impact in each country of government and NGO-led interventions to reduce children’s exposure to violence. This year, the Optimus Foundation funded feasibility work (site visits to engage local partners in each country and assess the research infrastructure in each site). It is now looking hopeful that the research consortium will secure funding from the Botnar Foundation for a pilot study in 2018, which will assess the equivalence of translated measures and identify problems and solutions surrounding recruitment and early assessment visits. While EBLS may have a long gestation, it’s always inspiring to think big in relation to important questions regarding achieving the Millennium Sustainable Development Goals of Reducing violence against children. To this end Prof Eisner is on the point of submitting a large grant application to the RCUK Global Challenges Research Fund: an exciting prospect for the future!

One of the publication highlights of the year for my team has been Why Siblings Matter, by Naomi White and Claire Hughes. This book is the latest in the Psychology Press
Series, Essays in Developmental Psychology and can be seen as a sequel to my earlier book, *Social Understanding, Social Lives*. Alongside chapters that are based on Naomi’s PhD work in the Toddlers Up study, it provides an overview of the now vibrant field of research on sibling relationships, including studies of the factors that underpin variation in children’s adjustment to becoming a sibling, cross-cultural comparisons of sibling relationships, an overview of the literature on sibling relationships in the context of disability or chronic illness and a concluding chapter that considers how societal changes in family forms and family size may affect children.

In writing *Why Siblings Matter* (a feat that involved careful co-ordination of time zones in the UK and in New Zealand, where Naomi is currently completing clinical training), our aim was to provide a resource for students, researchers and professionals working with families. At the same time, the book also provides a solid evidence base for a second book, *The Psychology of Siblings*, designed to be accessible to a broader audience of parents who
have or who are expecting a second or third child. I hope that this second book will be complete in early 2018. Also linked to this first book on siblings is a review paper by Hughes, McHarg and White, for *Current Opinions in Psychology*, which examines sibling influences on young children’s prosocial behaviour. As a first year PhD student, Gabrielle McHarg has done very well to see her name in print already; we have no doubt that there will be many more McHarg papers forthcoming!

Another publication highlight for 2017 is a clutch of four *Child Development* papers: a meta-analysis and three papers based on our ESRC funded comparison of pre-schoolers in the UK and in Hong Kong. In the meta-analysis, Devine and Hughes review the evidence for four widely-studied family predictors of individual differences in young children’s understanding of mind: socio-economic status, number of siblings, maternal mind-mindedness and mothers’ conversational use of mental state terms. Each of these is shown to have a weak but statistically significant and relatively universal link with variation in children’s false-belief understanding. Moderation analyses indicate that these associations hold up across different assessment methods (e.g., online versus offline measure of mind-mindedness) and sample characteristics, although the link between false belief understanding and number of siblings appears to be restricted to child (rather than infant or adult) siblings.

Two of the other *Child Development* papers build directly on this meta-analysis. In one, Hughes, Wang and Devine show that while, compared with their British counterparts, Hong Kong children and mothers show lower levels of false belief understanding and mind-mindedness, in both groups these two constructs are significantly related, even when a host of background variables are taken into account. That is, the link between maternal mind-mindedness and children’s false belief understanding appears equally strong in Western and
non-Western samples. In the second of these two papers, entitled ‘Let’s talk:...’, Devine and Hughes report that while variation children’s false belief understanding shows concurrent associations with variation in both mind-mindedness and mental state talk, improvements in false belief understanding across a 13-month period are only related to variation in mental state talk. In the fourth paper, entitled ‘For better, for worse....’ Hughes and Devine demonstrate the independence of parents’ positive and negative influences on young children’s executive functions. Specifically, supporting recent differentiated accounts of parenting, the models in this paper show that while some family factors (e.g., richness of the home learning environment, mean length of utterance for mothers’ speech) are associated with children’s general cognitive development, other factors, such as scaffolding of children’s goal-directed activity and (low levels of) criticism or hostility show specific associations with improvements in young children’s executive functions. In a related paper, published in Frontiers in Psychology, Devine, Bignardi and Hughes go on to show that variation in executive functions plays a mediating role in the association between parenting quality and children’s performance on standardized tests of early maths and reading skills.
Dr Gail Ewing

Most of Gail’s time was taken up with work on the Carer Support Needs Assessment Tool (CSNAT), a direct measure of the support needs of carers (family members and friends) in palliative and end-of-life home care that is used in both research and health practice contexts.

**CSNAT Stroke** Gail continued to work with the Stroke Programme team from the NIHR Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) Greater Manchester on their Cluster Randomised Controlled Trial which uses an adaptation of the original CSNAT. The trial aims to determine the clinical and cost effectiveness of the CSNAT–Stroke intervention for carers of stroke survivors, when compared to a control of standard Stroke Association practice. Data collection is ongoing and will extend through to 2018.

**CSNAT in general practice** Carers Trust Cambridgeshire provide wide ranging support to carers locally. This took a step further this year when Carers Trust Cambridgeshire began a new initiative to incorporate the CSNAT into their family carer prescription service. Gail delivered a training workshop for the staff involved in supporting carers and Helen Brown and Laura Green are taking this initiative into GP surgeries across Cambridgeshire to enhance support for carers in primary care.

**CSNAT MND** A new project (as co-PI with Professor Gunn Grande) has been funded by Marie Curie Research Fund and the Motor Neurone Disease Association, enabling tailored and coordinated support for family carers of people with MND through adaptation of a CSNAT intervention. The study will also examine the suitability and feasibility of the
CSNAT as a carer-held record to improve co-ordination of support. The study began in August at three MND centres in Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield.

CSNAT and the hospital discharge process Two years ago Marie Curie funded a study to explore whether and how family carers are currently supported during patient discharge at end-of-life and to assess perceived benefits, acceptability and feasibility of using the CSNAT approach in a hospital setting to support carers. The findings from this study were very positive about use of the CSNAT and have underpinned further feasibility work using the CSNAT as an intervention to assess and support carers during the discharge process and shortly after their return home.

International CSNAT Research Interest Group An exciting development this year was a meeting we hosted at the International Conference of the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC) to showcase different international research groups using the CSNAT in their research studies. We were delighted that different teams were able to join us for the workshop from around the world. The CSNAT was very well represented in both oral and poster presentations at the conference and was in the top 10 influencers by tweets at the EAPC 2017.

Recommendations for benchmark standards It has been an intensive year on the benchmarking study (funded by Hospice UK and NIHR CLAHRC Greater Manchester) on which Gail is co-PI with Gunn Grande. We delivered a report making 10 recommendations for organisational structures and processes that should be in place to assess and support carers during end-of-life care. We are developing a shorter summary for publication by Hospice UK. A National Carer Support Survey has also begun which will take the form of an
organisational audit to assess organisational structures and the state of current practice in identifying, assessing and supporting carers in EOLC services for adults across the UK.

**Support Needs Approach for Patients (SNAP) Tool.** Another strong interest is in the development and implementation of the SNAP tool led by Dr Morag Farquhar at UEA which has arisen out of work from the Living with Breathlessness (LWB) study. Gail is co-investigator along with Carole Gardener from the Department of Public Health and Primary Care. Qualitative work and a literature review was conducted last year to develop and refine the tool domains and ensure their acceptability and suitability. This work was presented at the Marie Curie Annual Research Conference in October 2017 and won the poster prize. Funding has been obtained from Marie Curie Research for a further study to pilot a Support Needs Approach for Patients (SNAP) with advanced COPD which began in March 2017. The SNAP tool, which is modelled on the CSNAT, is to enable delivery of person-centred care to patients with advanced non-cancer conditions.

**“I’m fine” study** Gail is very pleased to be collaborating on this novel study led by Dr Robbie Duschinsky and Carole Gardener from the Department of Public Health and Primary Care which has received funding from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) School for Primary Care Research. Patients and carers can be reluctant to say they need help and support, telling clinicians they are “fine” despite having unmet needs. Better understanding the processes and implications of assertions of “I’m fine” will support future work on interventions to support patients and carers to better engage in the management of their condition. This is a secondary analysis of the LWB dataset.

**UK CSNAT training workshops** There are regular requests to use the CSNAT in practice. As we know from our research studies on implementation of the CSNAT as an
intervention, this involves a significant change from current practice. As a result, we have found that it is crucial that services wishing to implement the CSNAT in practice take part in a training workshop. I have continued to deliver training workshops both face-to-face and through video conferencing. Interest in, and uptake of, the CSNAT is international. We have had enquiries from, and issued licences to, 98 university and practitioner teams in 2016 and to 107 in 2017 so far. For 2016/17 these include Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Scotland, Singapore, Sweden, Turkey, USA and Wales. We are now developing a database of translated versions of CSNAT.

The extent of interest in the CSNAT both nationally and internationally is considerable and while we have been able to support training workshops within the UK, we have been aware of the lack of training available outside the UK. The development of the CSNAT implementation toolkit which began last year has now been piloted with five different palliative care services in the UK and reviewed by the research team led by Professor Kelli Stajduhar at the University of Victoria who are conducting a trial of the CSNAT in Canada. We are aiming to launch the toolkit in Spring 2018. This will form a complete training and support package enabling services to plan, pilot, train and sustain person centred, holistic carer assessment and support using the CSNAT.

Dr Gail Ewing with Professor Gunn Grande at MCCC conference
Publications and Presentations

Dr Rory Devine

Peer Reviewed Papers


Devine, R.T., Bignardi, G., & Hughes, C. (2016). Executive function mediates the relations between parental behaviours and children’s early academic ability. Frontiers in Psychology, DOI:10.3389/fpsyg.201601902


Chapters in Edited Volumes


Talks and Presentations


Dr Gail Ewing

Articles


Book chapters


Conference presentations (published abstracts) 2016/2017.


Ewing G, Austin L, Grande G, McDonald R. Embedding Evidence Based Assessment and Support for Family Carers into Practice: Strategies for Success. European Journal of Palliative Care. Abstracts of the 15th World Congress of the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC). Madrid, Spain, 18-20 May 2017


Diffin J, Ewing G, Grande G. How Does Organisational Context and Staff Attitudes Impact on the Success of Implementing an Intervention to Identify and Address the Support Needs of Family
Carers? European Journal of Palliative Care. Abstracts of the 15th World Congress of the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC). Madrid, Spain, 18-20 May 2017


**Dr Elian Fink**

**Publications**


Elian Fink, Tjeert Olthof, Frits Goossens, Sandra van der Meijden & Sander Begeer (2017) Bullying related behaviour in adolescents with autism: Links with autism severity, and emotional and behavioural problems. *Autism*


**Conference presentations**

Elian Fink (September 2017) Harnessing new technology to better understand the family language environment, invited talk at the *Breaking Barriers: Innovations in Bio-Social Research Symposium*, Cambridge, UK


**Sarah Foley**

**Publications**

Hughes, C., Foley, S., White, N., & Devine, R.T. (accepted) School Readiness in Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: Psychometric Findings From a New Screening Tool, the Brief Early Skills and Support Index (BESSI). British Journal of Educational Presentations


Prizes

St Catharine’s Prize for Distinction in Research - recognize the achievements of third-year doctoral student in the Arts and Humanities, or the Social Sciences, or the Physical and Biological Sciences, awarded July 2017.

Dr Tabitha Freeman

Publications


Professor Susan Golombok

Publications


http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.fertnstert.2016.08.013


**Conference presentations**

“Modern Families”. Invited lecture to Annual Meeting of the Family Law Bar Association, Birmingham, October 2016.


“Surrogacy: The psychological perspective”. Invited presentation at symposium on “Surrogacy: Recent developments and interdisciplinary challenges”. University of Heidelberg, April, 2017.


“Children with LGBT parents: Findings from 40 years of research”. Public lecture at University of Gothenburg, September, 2017.


“Donor insemination families: 30 years of research”. Invited lecture at Donor Sperm Symposium, Aarhus, Denmark, November 2017.

**Dr Susanna Graham**

**Publications**


**Presentations**

Invited speaker at ‘Legal Status of Single Persons in Fertility Treatment in the UK’ workshop at The British Academy, London, UK, December 7 2106: ‘Choosing single motherhood? Single women negotiating fertility treatment and relatedness in the context of stratified reproduction’

Professor Claire Hughes

Publications

Devine, R.T. & Hughes, C. (2017). Let’s Talk: Parents’ Mental Talk (not Mind-Mindedness or Mindreading Capacity) predicts Children’s False Belief Understanding. Accepted for publication in *Child Development*.


Devine, R.T., Bignardi, G. & Hughes, C. (2016). Executive function mediates the relations between parental behaviours and children’s early academic ability. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7*, 1902

Peter Cooper; Lynne Murray, PhD; Susie Jennings, PhD; Alicia Mortimer, MSc; Amber Prout, MSc; Edward Melhish, PhD; Claire Hughes, DPhil; John Duncan, DPhil; Joni Holmes, PhD; Corinne Dishington. TRLS-D-17-00864 The Impact of Early-years Provision In Children’s Centres (EPICC) on child cognitive and socio-emotional development: study protocol for a randomised controlled trial.


White, N., & Hughes, C. (in revision) Sibling influences on Prosocial Behaviour in Early Adolescence.

**Talks, conference presentations and research trips.**


This invited talk was given as part of an expert panel review hosted by the Centre for Research on Play in Education, Development and Learning (PEDaL).

April 2017, Austin Texas: Biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development.

Hughes, C., & Devine, R.T., *How do parents help or harm children’s executive functions? Let me count the ways.*

Devine, R.T., & Hughes, C., *New Ways of Investigating Family Influences on Children’s Theory of Mind.*


This invited talk was given to the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, during a week-long visit to evaluate local and governmental support for Sri Lanka’s inclusion in a future global birth cohort study: Evidence for Better Lives, led by Prof Manuel Eisner at the Institute of Criminology. I am part of the research consortium, which also includes Dr Aja Murray (also in Criminology), Pasco Fearon (Developmental Psychopathology, UCL) and Michael Dunne (Social Epidemiology, Queensland University).

July 2017: Mann Island, Liverpool: *Ready Steady Go: Using the Brief Early Skills & Support Index (BESSI) to foster children’s school readiness.*

This invited talk was given to representatives from the six Local Authorities of Liverpool City Region (Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool City, Sefton, St Helens & Wirral) regarding a planned trial of the BESSI.
that is being co-ordinated by the Liverpool City Region Child Poverty Action Life Chances Commission.

September 2017: Erice, Sicily: *The multi-faceted nature of parental influences on pre-schoolers’ executive functions and academic success.*

This invited talk was given as part of a one-week Mind Brain Education international summer school on the topic of Neuroscience and Poverty, organized by Dr Sebastian Lipina from Buenos Aires in Argentina.

September 2017: The British Psychological Society, Stratford upon Avon

Presenting findings from NewFAMS and our UK-Hong Kong cross-cultural study at the Developmental Section conference.

**Dr Susan Imrie**

Conference talks


**Dr Vasanti Jadva**

Publications


Persaud, S., Freeman, T., Jadva, V., Slutsky, J., Kramer, W., Steele, M., Steele, H., & Golombok, S. (2017) Adolescents Conceived through Donor Insemination in Mother-Headed Families: A
Qualitative Study of Motivations and Experiences of Contacting and Meeting Same-donor Offspring. Children & Society. 31 (1), 13-22. DOI: 10.1111/chso.12158


**Invited talks**


**Pamela Jimenez Etcheverria**

**Presentations**


Etcheverria, P. (2017). The psychological development of adopted children aged 4 to 9 in Chile Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Austin, USA.


**Kitty Jones**

**Publications**

Presentations
The British Psychological Society Developmental Section Conference, 14th September 2017
The International Attachment Conference, 29th June 2017
Cambridge ESRC Doctoral Training Centre student-led conference, Friday 2nd December 2016

Nishtha Lamba

Publications

Presentations

Anja McConnachie

Presentations
The International Attachment Conference, 29th June 2017. "Children's Attachment Classifications in Adoptive Gay Father Families."

Gabrielle McHarg

Publications

Presentations
**Professor Martin Richards**

**Publications**


**Dr Keri Wong**

**Publications**


**Invited talk**


**Dr Sophie Zadeh**

**Publications**


Presentations


Le rôle des représentations sociales et des ressources symboliques dans le don de spermatozoïdes: le point de vue des enfants. Laboratoire GRePS Seminar, Université Lyon 2, France, March 2017.

Remembering and forgetting: Some contributions (and questions) from social representations theory. 5th Niels Bohr Lectures in Cultural Psychology. Aalborg University, Denmark, February 2017.

Active CFR Grants 2016-2017

XJAG/082
Grant holder: Dr Gail Ewing
Investigator: Dr Gail Ewing
Title: The CSNAT (Support for family carers of people with MND)
Sponsor: University of Manchester
Period: 1st July 2017 – 28th December 2018
Amount: £17,925.86

XJAG/081
Grant holder: Dr Gail Ewing
Investigator: Dr Gail Ewing
Title: The CSNAT online Project
Sponsor: Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
Period: 1st April 2016 – 31st December 2017
Amount: £24,596

XJAG/080
Grant holder: Dr Gail Ewing
Investigator: Dr Gail Ewing
Title: Research into Carers’ needs and a Strategy for Carer Support in Hospice Care
Sponsor: Hospice UK and Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
Period: 15th August 2016 – 14th October 2017
Amount: £16,070

XJAG/079
Grant holder: Dr Vasanti Jadva
Investigator: Dr Vasanti Jadva
Title: Anti-bullying survey
Sponsor: Stonewall Equality
Period: 1st October 2016 – 30th September 2018
Amount: £23,310.82

XJAG/078
Grant holder: Dr Gail Ewing
Investigator: Dr Gail Ewing
Title: Development of an implementation toolkit for practitioners using the Carer Support Needs Assessment Tool (CSNAT)
Sponsor: Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust FB NIHR
Period: 1st October 2015 – 30th November 2017
Amount: £23,556.87
XJAG/077
Grant holder: Professor Claire Hughes
Investigator: Professor Claire Hughes
Title: The impact of a family-based physical activity promotion programme on child physical activity: feasibility and pilot of the Families Reporting Every Step to Health (FRESH) intervention (15/01/19).
Sponsor: National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)
Period: 1st September 2016 – 31st October 2019
Amount: £10,236.96

XJAG/055 Enhancement
Grant holder: Professor Susan Golombok
Investigator: Professor Susan Golombok
Title: Future Families: The social and psychological outcomes of emerging assisted reproductive technologies for individuals, families and society.
Sponsor: Wellcome Trust
Period: January 2013 – Dec 2018
Amount: £150,016

XJAG/076
Grant holder: Dr Elian Fink
Investigator: Dr Elian Fink
Title: Baby talk and baby blues: harnessing technology to investigate mechanisms of influence of parental wellbeing on infants.
Sponsor: Wellcome Trust
Period: 1st August 2015 – 28th February 2018
Amount: £100,000

XJAG/75
Grant holder: Professor Susan Golombok (PI), Professor Michael Lamb (CI)
Investigator: Professor Susan Golombok
Title: Parenting and the Psychological development of children raised in adoptive gay father families: A follow up at early adolescence.
Sponsor: ESRC
Period: 1st October 2015 – 30th September 2018
Amount: £404,895

XJAG/074
Grant holder: Dr Sophie Zadeh
Investigator: Dr Sophie Zadeh
Title: Donor conception: What do the children think?
Sponsor: Wellcome Trust
Period: 1st October 2016 – 30th September 2017
Amount: £2,000
XJAG/73
Grant holder: Dr Gail Ewing
Investigator: Dr Gail Ewing
Title: Supporting family carers to enable patient discharge from acute care at end of life
Sponsor: University of Manchester (Marie Curie Cancer Care)
Period: 1st September 2014 – 31st August 2017
Amount: £8,755

XJAG/69
Grant holder: Dr Susanna Graham
Investigator: Dr Susanna Graham
Title: Motivations, experiences and future expectations of men donating their sperm
Sponsor: Wellcome Trust
Period: 1st October 2014 – currently being extended (maternity leave)
Amount: £148,640

XJAG/67
Grant holder: Professor Claire Hughes
Investigator: Professor Claire Hughes
Title: ORA Risky Beginnings
Sponsor: ESRC
Period: 1st October 2014 – 30th September 2017
Total amount: £1.5 million
Amount to CFR: £584,669

XJAG/55
Grant holder: Professor Susan Golombok
Investigator: Professor Susan Golombok
Title: Future Families: The social and psychological outcomes of emerging assisted reproductive technologies for individuals, families and society.
Sponsor: Wellcome Trust
Period: January 2013 – Dec 2018
Amount: £1,037,142