

SEASON'S GREETINGS

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN TEMPERAMENT PROJECT

A year (not) to forget

What a year 2020 has been! Despite the many unexpected challenges that COVID-19 has brought Australia and the world, the ATP study reached a number of important milestones, thanks to the dedication and commitment of our wonderful participants.



Generation 3 Update



Our **Life@1** data collection wrapped up earlier this year, with over **1000 interviews and web surveys completed**. This absolutely stellar effort marks both the end and beginning of a very important chapter. The Gen3 study officially started with Life@1 back in 2012 - now that we have finished collecting all this information we have been able to start analysing the data and writing up some interesting findings. Read on for more about one of these studies. Thank you to everyone who took part!

Our **Life@4** data collection is still in full swing, and we have another exciting study in the pipeline too. We recently received funding to establish a new study of Gen3 children in their middle years of primary school. We will be in contact with eligible families in 2021. We look forward to hearing about how your Gen3 children are growing and developing!

COVID-19 study

When the COVID-19 outbreak hit Australia, we were particularly interested to hear how the lockdown was impacting our participants with young children, most of whom reside in Victoria where the case numbers and restrictions were most severe. Information collected will directly inform health service and policy makers in the recovery process and in future planning should a health issue like this ever arise again. We were very appreciative that **73% of our Gen3 families** took time out of their challenging home situations to complete this short survey for us. Our team also developed several support sheets for parents and children which can be found on our [website](#).

If you or a family member would like information or support, you can contact your GP, [SANE Australia](#) or [Lifeline](#).



Latest Findings on Mental Health

Now more than ever, there is increasing interest in mental health from childhood to adulthood. Mental health issues are common, and longitudinal studies like the ATP are trying to improve our understanding of how mental health problems may affect us later in life and into the next generation.

We recently looked at the emotional bond Generation 2 parents felt that they had with their 1 year old Generation 3 child. This bond benefits both the parent and the infant, laying the foundation for child development and wellbeing. We explored whether forming this bond was more difficult in mothers who reported mental health difficulties before parenthood. We found that while some mothers with a history of anxiety and depression did feel they were not bonding as well as they could with their baby, when the bond was directly observed in our play session, we found no evidence of problem bonds. This is good news because although mothers reporting emotional health problems might feel they are not connecting well, in reality they are building the bonds needed to support the healthy emotional development of their children.



Hot Spot: ATP Participants

In light of what has been a challenging year, the ATP team wanted to share with you a special publication showcasing some of our wonderful Generation 3 families and all the positive experiences they have had with the ATP. For the publication, we chatted with some of our participants and asked them about their memories of participating in the study as well as what they have found most interesting. Below are some of the highlights! To read the full publication, please click [here](#).



"I like that it's something that continued on from the study that my parents put me in when I was younger. It's just exciting really. It's the passion that it's something that's been going for so long and that it is making a difference."

**LOUISE,
GEN2 PARTICIPANT**



Louise and David with their Gen3 children Charlie, Oliver, Harper and Poppy



Hannah (Gen3) with her mother, Erin (Gen2)

"I have always been interested in seeing what the results are and reading the newsletters on what your findings are."

**ERIN,
GEN2 PARTICIPANT**



Gen1 = original study parents; Gen2= original study children, now in their 30s; Gen3 = children of Gen2



Phillip (Gen2) with Evie (Gen3) & Lauren

"I am now answering the same sort of questionnaires that my mum was answering. And my mum and I now have these conversations about what the questionnaires were like and what I was like at the time. So it's been great having that conversation with mum and carrying it through."

**PHILLIP,
GEN2 PARTICIPANT**



Find us on Facebook

Regardless of whether you are involved in Gen3 or not, we encourage all participants and families to join our ATP community on Facebook: facebook.com/ATPGen3. Here we post lots of interesting articles and resources for all three generations of participants, as well as study updates

Stay in Touch

Each of you contributes a unique experience to the study, so we really want to stay in touch! If you move or any of your details change, please let us know. You can do this securely through our website:

www.melbournechildrens.com/atp/participants/update-your-details

Or via **phone** or **email**:

(03) 9345 4129

atp.nextgen@rch.org.au



Prize draw!

For your chance to win a **\$100 voucher**, all you need to do is update or confirm your contact details via our **website** by the 3rd of January 2021. One lucky Gen1 or Gen2 participant will be chosen at random. Good luck!

