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Context

• There is an increasing focus on early intervention and assessment

• Cross party interest in disadvantaged children and the impact of social deprivation on educational and social outcomes.

• Department of Health concerned with children’s engagement with health and ...

• Everyone interested in improving childhood “wellbeing” and the potential socio-economic impact.

• Recognised need for better methods
Need to consider children’s brains...

There are ever improving methods that allow researchers to detect the effects of risk factors on the early brain development of children.

...and that development is dynamic

Brain development must be understood within complex psychological, social and environmental contexts.

"Understanding development itself is the key to understanding developmental disorders" Karmiloff-Smith (1998)

"to trace back the origins of complex social behaviour requires a focus on developmental mechanisms, not static lesions or deficits" Pollock (2006)
Dealing in complexity

- The reality is that studying children requires a wide perspective, large scale studies, multiple methodologies and theoretical rigour.
- Child development is a confusing and complex thing...
- IRCD expertise spans the disciplines of Psychology, Neuroscience, Health, and Education. Our work is cited across a wider range of disciplines.
- We continue to expand by working with people across other disciplines to help understand these complexities.

Current themes

- Adapting methodologies to help explore real world problems
- Understanding biological, social and environmental effects on children's cognition, health, and wellbeing
- Understanding development itself.
Some of our current projects

- Longitudinal studies
  - DAISY study (NIH funded)
  - ELAS study (Eranda funded)

- Health related interventions
  - Hydration study (Nestle Funded)
  - Well London study (Wellcome funded)

Some projects in development:

- From infant brains to social gains
  - Pre-natal stress, genetic factors, and the development of early language across European populations
    ERC/ESRC £722k
  - Differences in infant brain responses to audio-visual speech congruence: relationships with attention, social interaction, and language outcomes.
    ESRC £99k
  - Using new technologies to engage parents from disadvantaged areas of East London in the assessment of the language and social development of their babies.
    Nuffield foundation £159k
  - Evaluating the impact of urban regeneration on health and health inequalities in adolescents and their parents.
    NIHR £2.6m
  - Britishness and the Olympics: children’s national identity through the journey of the 2012 games
    ESRC £468k
East London partners

- IHHD
- QMUL
- Newham hospital trust
- Homerton hospital trust
- Tower Hamlets children’s services

- More being developed

- See www.uel.ac.uk/IRCD/people for wider academic collaborators

IRCD contribution to interdisciplinary work@uel

- Provide in depth understanding of children’s cognitive and social development
- Provide the hard theoretical underpinnings to studies of the effect of social change on children
- Provide expertise in a range of methodological approaches
- Provide links to child development experts in the UK and overseas.
- Use our experience of assessing children from infancy through to adolescence
- Use our experience in running projects and gaining funding.


### Output quality

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### Future

- Develop UEL world reputation in social neuroscience and social deprivation
- Make people understand the importance of considering a wider range of methods and approaches
- Make “UEL working for children” a cross-university theme
- Become the “go-to” world centre for complex longitudinal studies of SES-related effects in childhood

[www.uel.ac.uk/IRCD](http://www.uel.ac.uk/IRCD)