

Family Life

P R O J E C T



WINTER 2007

Don't worry...spring is on the way!... By the time this newsletter reaches you, the appearance of daffodils will not be far off...at least, that is, if you are one of our North Carolina families. Those in Pennsylvania may have to wait a bit longer. We look forward to seeing you soon! If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us toll free at **1-800-727-9384**. Also, if you change your address or phone number, PLEASE LET US KNOW!

STUDY UPDATE

Dear Families,

The Family Life Project is now nearly halfway through it's third year of conducting home visits and childcare visits with you and your children. Three years is a long time for families to stay involved with a research project, and we're very grateful to you for your continued participation. We know that you have busy lives, and we can't thank you enough for sharing your valuable time with us and allowing us to get to know your children. We have now finished our 2 year old home and childcare visits, and many of you have already participated in the 3 year old visits as well. For those of you who have not had the 3 year old visit yet, you can expect that the activities and questions will be similar to those in the 2 year old visit. We find that in general children are more cooperative with our activities now that they are mostly over the bumpiness that comes with being 2! Many children seem to delight in showing us what they know and telling us about their interests. More of them attend daycare or pre-school now, and most of the time we have been able to visit them in these settings in addition to in your homes. This has helped us learn about the childcare options available to families our area.

You probably have noticed that the people that visit you and call you are starting to look or sound familiar. We think it says a great deal about our study and about the families we work with that our staff seems to truly enjoy their jobs, and they choose to stay with us for a long time. Thanks to all of you for helping to make their jobs so rewarding and interesting, and for helping us to answer important questions about family life in rural and small town America.

Best Regards,

Lynne Vernon Feagans, PhD
Principal Investigator
North Carolina site

Martha Cox, PhD
Principal Investigator
North Carolina site

Nan Crouter, PhD
Principal Investigator
Pennsylvania site

Family Life Project Refunded

You may remember that the current grant that pays for the Family Life Project runs out in September 2007, after the youngest child in the study turns 3 years old. Many of you have been asking us about the future of the study, and for a long time we haven't been able to tell you anything definite about whether we'll get another grant to continue visiting your homes as the children approach school age. Well, we're excited to tell you that we recently learned that the government agency that pays for our research likes what we're learning so far, and they agreed to fund us to continue to see your children grow and develop between the ages of 4 and 8! People are really interested in the issues faced by families with young children, especially those that live in more rural areas of our country. Now we'll be able to learn a great deal about how families and children manage the transition from preschool to elementary school, and how family life changes as children grow up and start spending more time away from home. We're excited to get started! You'll hear from us when your child turns 4!

Family Life PROJECT



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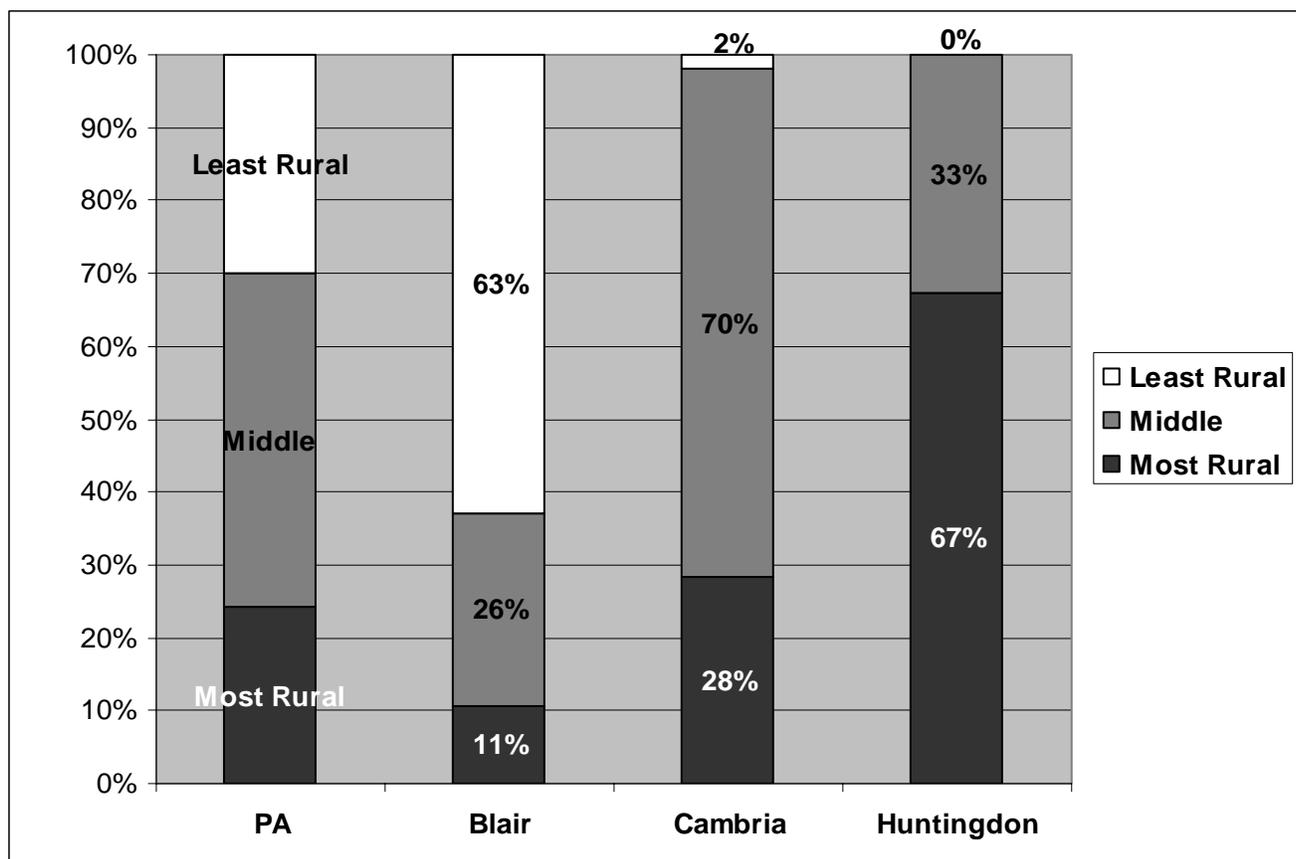
City living or non-city living?

A primary interest of the Family Life Project is that of child development and family processes in non-urban or small city locations. We thought you might be interested to hear what kinds of settings are most common in the 3 Pennsylvania counties. The graph at the bottom of the page shows how things break down for all the PA families, and for each of the counties individually. As we expected Cambria county and Huntingdon county have a higher percentage of people who live in more rural settings than Blair county. Blair county residents are able to tell us more about the issues related to raising a family in small cities such as Altoona and Ebensburg.

What happens to study families who move?

Over the past 3 years the combined sites in North Carolina and Pennsylvania have seen over 50 families that have moved out of their home counties into other surrounding areas. Our staff has gotten to know other areas of the state as we often travel up to 3 hours each way to visit them. We have even traveled to places such as Michigan and Delaware on occasion! Thanks for keeping us up to date on these and other major changes in your life.

Figure showing different percentages of families living in more and less rural areas involved in the FLP study.



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FROM THE VISITORS

You have been kind enough to let us spend time with your family and now we would like to share with you the influence this has on us.

We know that participating in FLP home visits can be a fun experience for you and your children, but have you ever wondered what the visitors have to say about their experience? We are very grateful for your full participation over the past few years, now take a moment to read what the visiting staff has to share about their experiences with you in the home...



Photo from left to right: Katie Raimer, Amy Adams, Brandy Lowe, Myra DeLuca, Cathy Jantzer

“I enjoy learning about successful parenting techniques from our families as well as seeing the growth and development of children whom I’ve visited at an earlier age.” -Chris Carney

“I enjoy it largely because I have young children myself (one who is the same age as the children we’re following in the study). I like that what we’re doing applies to my life, both professionally and personally-every day, I am reminded that I’m not alone in the difficult, yet unbelievably rewarding and fulfilling job of parenting!” -Amy Adams

“I love to see the children grow up. It’s so much fun to see all the new and exciting things each child learns from one visit to the next.” -Heidi Manfred

“I love meeting the families and watching their children grow up. I hope that we’ll continue our visits with them for many years to come.” -Cathy Jantzer

“One of the best parts of working for the Family Life Project is being able to visit the children and see them as they grow and develop their personalities and perfect new skills. The children are so much fun to work with as they get older and I am very thankful to the children’s parents for allowing me to be a part of their child’s life - if only for a few short hours.” -Myra DeLuca

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Kids in some parts of Mexico make clay animal figures called animalitos, which means “little animals.” You can create animalitos, too. Buy modeling clay or make some using the recipe below.

You will need

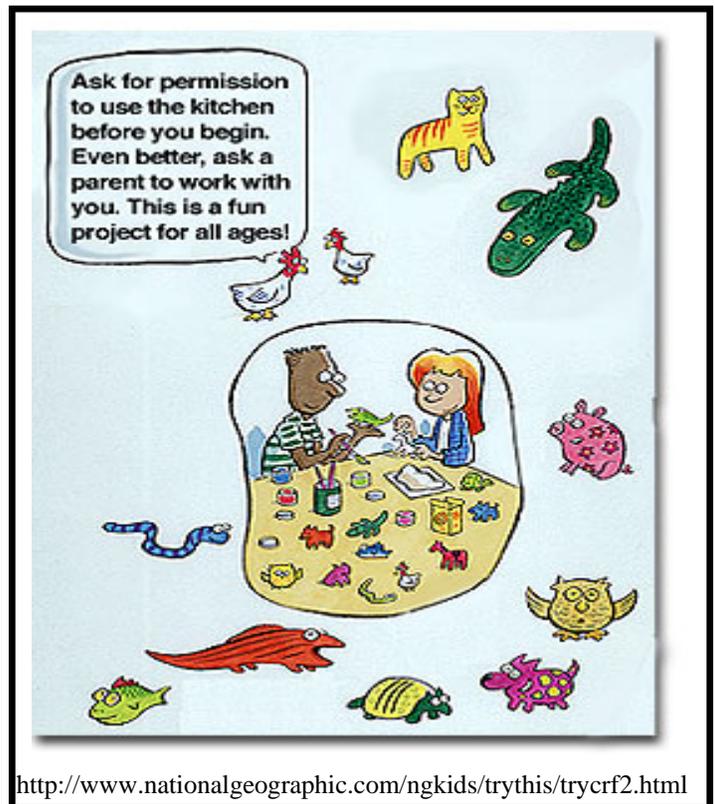
- 2 cups (470 milliliters) of baking soda
- 1 cup (240 milliliters) corn starch
- 1 1/4 cups (300 milliliters) of water
- 2-quart (1.9-liter) saucepan
- Wax paper
- Poster or acrylic paints
- Colored felt-tip markers

Here's how

1. Stir the baking soda, cornstarch, and water together in the saucepan. Heat for a few minutes on a medium setting, stirring constantly until the mixture is the thickness of mashed potatoes.
2. Remove the pan from the heat and scrape the mixture onto a piece of wax paper. You've made a kind of clay! Allow it to cool for at least ten minutes.
3. With your hands, roll the cool clay into a ball, then flatten the ball on the wax paper. Keep rolling and flattening the clay until it is smooth.
4. Look at pictures of animals to get an idea of their shapes and features. Start with a lump of clay about the size of a robin's egg. Mold the clay into a simplified animal body shape.
5. Gently pinch out pieces of clay to form the animal's head, ears, legs, tail, and other features.
6. Allow the animalitos to dry overnight or until they are hard. Then add markings and details with paint and colored markers.

Tips

- Make your animalitos very simple.
- Keep unused clay from drying out by sealing it inside a plastic bag and putting it in the refrigerator.



<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngkids/trythis/trycrf2.html>

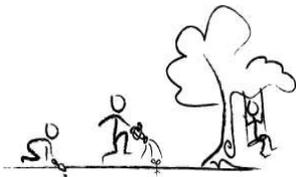
**Has your contact information changed?
Please remember to call us at**

1-800-727-9384

**with any changes to your address or phone number
so that you don't miss your next visit. We look forward to seeing you
again!**

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1-800-727-9384