

# Infant social development study

Your child can help change the future for kids with autism



As a part of our Autism Center of Excellence grant, the team at Marcus Autism Center is studying newborns to learn more about how a child's brain grows and develops.

## What is the purpose of this study?

By observing how babies interact with the world, how their brains form and how they learn to talk, we hope to discover new ways to identify and treat infants at risk for autism. We're particularly looking at the following components of a child's development:

- Eye movement in infancy may give us insight into early diagnosis of autism. The technology used during this study includes cameras that focus on a child's eye movements. As the child watches short, age-appropriate videos, our cameras record which part of the screen the child is watching. Typically developing children and children at risk for autism tend to focus on different parts of the video images.
- Social engagement with caregivers is a key factor in speech development. By recording children as they begin to talk during the first two years of life, our research tests whether social interaction in early infancy predicts speech and language outcomes.

- An infant's brain develops rapidly in the first months of life. We want to examine how brain development may differ between typical infants and infants who are later diagnosed with autism using a safe, noninvasive MRI.

## What you need to know:

- We're recruiting pregnant moms and newborns under 2 months old to take part in our research study.
- You can participate whether or not your family has a history of autism.
- You will receive feedback on your child's development from leading experts.

Visit [marcus.org/study](https://marcus.org/study) or call 404-785-7600 to learn more or enroll.



### Who can participate?

To participate in the study:

- You must be pregnant or have a child 2 months old or younger.
- Your baby must have an older biological sibling.
- You must live within 35 miles of Marcus Autism Center.



### What are the benefits?

- Throughout the study, expert clinicians will monitor your baby's progress, and give support and direction.
- If your baby shows signs of autism, your baby will be assigned to a treatment study that teaches important skills to help your child.
- All parents will receive information about their child's growth, development and milestones.

There is no cost to take part in the study. Families will be compensated for their time and participation.

### What is involved?

If you agree to participate in the study, your baby will be enrolled from birth until 36 months old. In the study, your baby will:

- Be seen at Marcus Autism Center 10 to 13 times over three years so that we can track changes in your baby's development. If needed, we can assist you with transportation.
- Receive developmental and language testing by expert clinicians.
- Watch short videos of people, objects and activities on a computer screen.
- Receive an MRI at three of the visits, allowing us to take pictures of your baby's brain while she is sleeping naturally.

### We will ask you to:

- Make day-long audio recordings of your child once every month in your home using a small recording device worn in a specially designed romper.
- Complete surveys and interviews about your baby's development and behavior at different times throughout the study.

You can decide which parts of the study you want to take part in and you may withdraw at any time.

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