



Gesell Developmental Observation (GDO) Study

Fact Sheet: June 2010

Background

Early childhood personnel from around the country were recruited in 2008-2010 to participate in a national study to collect normative and exploratory data on Gesell Institute's early childhood assessment, the **Gesell Developmental Observation (GDO) ©2007**. The GDO, based on the original schedules developed by Arnold Gesell, PhD, MD at Yale University in the 1940's and revised many times since at the Institute, is currently used by thousands of preschool and elementary schools across the country to determine a child's stage of development. In the 1980s, the GDO was administered to nearly 20% of all Kindergarten children each year. It consists of many familiar performance items—block building; copying shapes and forms; writing name, letters, and numbers; interview questions about the child's personal life; complete a man drawing; language and comprehension questions; and so forth.

Design

The study design includes the following components and timeline:

- Recruitment of current users: Spring 2008 through February 2010
- Free training via conference call for participants: Fall 2008 through February 2010
- GDO administration and data collection: Fall 2008 through February 2010
- Compensation to teachers/administrators at \$10.00 per completed set of 4 forms (GDO, Pilot Questions, Teacher Questionnaire, Parent Questionnaire)
- Data entry, scoring, preparation and analysis: Spring 2009 through Summer 2010
- Anticipated dissemination of revised GDO with new data and scoring rubrics: Fall 2010

Sample

Data were collected from a nationally diverse sample of children pulled from each region of the country. Children were initially targeted across eight different age groups: 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0, 5.5, 6.0. A total of 1600 children were targeted for study participation, though due to lack of available data in the 2.5 age band, the final target was 1,400 GDO assessments across 7 age bands. A total of 1,334 GDOs were submitted from across the country. Altogether, 61 sites collected data and submitted 4,864 child, parent, and teacher forms in total. The sample consists of young children from 15 different ethnic groups who speak 29 languages in addition to English, across 23 U.S. states.

Please refer to our "Study Outcomes FAQ" for information about the current data and resulting new products: <http://www.gesellinstitute.org/gdofaq.html>.

Additional information, data, and study results will be available on-line in the study technical report, currently under development and expected for dissemination in 2010-2011.

For additional questions about the GDO Study, please contact Program Coordinator Andrea Sambrook at 203-777-3481 x706 or andrea@gesellinstitute.org.