

Project ISLAND

Summer 2025 updates

We are almost at the end of the second year of the Project ISLaND research study and it has been a very busy year! We have been receiving lots of videos and questionnaires from parents and caregivers about their child's language and development, so a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has continued to participate. As we close our data collection for the second year, we have at least one questionnaire returned for 145 children and communication videos uploaded for 126 children. If you haven't quite had time yet—it is not too late though!

You may have noticed that we added some new sections into our questionnaires this year, including topics of sleep, neurodevelopmental conditions in the family, regression and sibling relationships. This has helped us to gain a broader understanding as to some of the experiences of the families in the study, and we will be sending updates about these findings in due course.

TIMELINE UPDATE

We have now completed the second year of the study, which makes us around half way through data collection. We will be reaching out at two further yearly timepoints, for updates on your child's communication and development.



CALLING NEW STEERING GROUP MEMBERS

We are excited to be expanding our steering group and welcome parents/caregivers and professionals to register their interest.

Our ISLaND steering group helps to shape the direction of our research. The group is made up of parents, professionals and people with lived experience. We hold meetings up to three times a year (~9 hours total per year) and offer vouchers to compensate you for your time.

If you would to register your interest, please use this link: https://bit.ly/ISLaND_PPI or scan the QR code here



WAVE 1 FINDINGS

We will be sending families an easy-read summary of each paper, as well as the option to read the full paper. The first summary you will receive will be titled '*Sub-groups of spoken language and broader communication skills in a large heterogeneous cohort of minimally verbal school-age children: Evidence of discrepant profiles.*' This will be the first paper published with findings from Wave 1, and identifies skill-matched subgroups within our cohort of minimally verbal children.

We have several other papers in the pipeline but are keen to wait for full peer review before we send anything out!

VOUCHERS



We are continuing to offer a £25 voucher at each stage of the study. We are offering the choice between Amazon or Love2Shop and ordering vouchers to participants' email addresses.

For anyone who has not chosen or received a voucher, please do get in touch on pals.island@ucl.ac.uk, let us know your voucher preference and we can arrange this for you.



GOODBYE MOLLIE / HELLO LAUREN

After two years as a Research Assistant on the project, Mollie will be leaving to start a PhD at the University of Surrey, looking into predictors of autism in children with genetic syndromes.



"Working on the Project ISLaND study has given me an incredible experience to learn so much and meet so many wonderful families. I have truly enjoyed every moment and intend to stay involved with the study as it progresses."

We are excited to introduce a new team member, Lauren McGuinness, who will be joining Project ISLaND as a Postdoctoral Researcher.



Lauren has recently completed her PhD at the University of Kent and is interested in conversational abilities and pragmatic language in neurotypical and autistic children. We look forward to welcoming Lauren to the team!

THANK YOU

As we approach two years of Project ISLaND, we want to express our gratitude to parents and caregivers who have participated. We understand that you are often juggling many commitments, so we really appreciate the time and effort you have put into contributing towards the study.