Meet Nic Timpson

Dr Nic Timpson has been appointed as our new lead researcher (principal investigator) and will work alongside Professor George Davey Smith, the scientific director of Children of the 90s. Nic’s area of research is human genes and the role they play in health and disease. The research question he would most like Children of the 90s to answer is ‘How do measures of our body composition, which predict disease later in life, actually exert their effect?’ When not working, Nic likes to spend time with his family or on his bike.

Middle-aged women and eating disorders

We looked at over 5,320 mothers in Children of the 90s and discovered that 3% of them had had an eating disorder in the previous 12 months and 15% had had one at some point in their life. Less than a third of the affected women said they had sought help or received treatment. This is the first time that eating disorders have been looked at in a large number of women in their 40s and 50s and the research received lots of media attention from Grazia to The Guardian.

Happy dads and resilient kids

We looked at lots of information that over 10,000 study parents and carers have given us about themselves and their study child and found that dads who adjusted well to parenthood were less likely to have children with behavioural problems at the age of 11, highlighting the importance of fathers providing children with strong emotional and psychological support.

Insomnia and depression

Based on all the data we’ve gathered from study mothers about themselves and their study child from pregnancy onwards, we’ve discovered that more than a third (36%) of teenagers whose mothers suffered from postnatal depression experienced sleep problems at the age of 18, compared to only one in five (22%) teenagers whose mothers didn’t suffer from postnatal depression. This shows that maternal depression can have long-term implications for both the mother and child’s health and wellbeing.

It’s all in the genes

By looking at 4,382 mother-child pairs as part of a worldwide study of over 150,000 people, we’ve found that small genetic differences between people can affect a person’s early growth and their chances of developing medical conditions such as type 2 diabetes or heart disease in later life. This provides a vital clue to what happens over a person’s life to affect their health.
In the last year alone, nearly 2,000 participants have attended Focus@24+. Using state-of-the-art technology we have collected information on each person’s bones, heart, liver, lungs, thought processes and well-being and taken blood and urine samples to help us with our ongoing research.

Thank you if you are one of the 3,500 participants who’s been to Focus@24+ since June 2015!

Focus@24+ finishes this summer and we would love to see you this summer if you haven’t attended yet. Appointments are now only four and a half hours long, so you can come see us in a morning or afternoon. Book online at www.childrenofthe90s.ac.uk/focus24/ or call us on 0117 331 0010.

We know it can be hard to find time to attend Focus clinics, so we’ve put on more weekend and evening appointments. Please contact us to find a time that works best for you.

Based on the 3,500 participants who have attended Focus@24+ already, we’ve discovered that:

- **2 in 10** drink alcohol once a month or less
- **4 in 10** are free and single
- **6 in 10** have five or more close friends
- **6 in 10** have never smoked a cigarette
- **8 in 10** work full or part-time
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- **8 in 10** work full or part-time
- **2 in 10** drink alcohol once a month or less

**Fun Focus Facts**

Male participants are on average 179.8m tall (same height as Brad Pitt - 180m)

Female participants are on average 165.8m tall (same height as Marilyn Monroe - 166m)

**WHAT YOU SAY YOU LIKE ABOUT FOCUS@24+**

- Wide selection of food/drinks.
- Scans/pictures to take home.
- Finding out the ‘why’ behind each test.
- The cognitive tests were a fun challenge.
- Easy to arrange, staff were great.
- It feels good contributing to an important research study like Children of the 90s.
- The 3D body scanner was the best part!
- The questions in the psychology interview were interesting.
- Relaxed atmosphere.

**GET IN TOUCH**

If you haven’t received your invitation to Focus@24+ yet, it could be because we have out-of-date contact details for you. If you’ve moved recently, please let us know so we can update your details.

- [www.childrenofthe90s.ac.uk/update-your-details/](http://www.childrenofthe90s.ac.uk/update-your-details/)
- 0117 331 0010
- info@childrenofthe90s.ac.uk
It’s a winner!

More than 4,000 participants have completed our latest questionnaire and received a £10 shopping voucher as a thank you. Three participants have also won an iPad Air 2 in our questionnaire prize draw.

Keep an eye out for your next questionnaire in November 2017.

Focus@24+
In Pictures...

Since June 2015, we’ve seen more than 3,500 participants at Focus@24+.
Can you help us make it to 4,000?

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In January this year we were delighted to welcome the 500th baby into the COCO90s study. Zoe and her eldest son Lance talked to the local press about what it is like to be part of COCO90s just before Austin was born. Since then we have heard from lots more participants and recruited 648 children, putting us on target to have 1,000 COCO90s by 2019.

**Fun Facts**

Are you...
- pregnant?
- already enrolled in COCO90s and expecting another child?
- already a parent?

Then please get in touch and let us know. We are interested in all your children and it is never too late to be part of COCO90s.

**What’s New?**

**IN THE UK EVERY YEAR AROUND 48,000 CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN TWO AND FIVE WHO HAVE DIFFICULTY TALKING ARE REFERRED TO NHS SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY SERVICES. THIS COSTS THE NHS £24 MILLION PER YEAR.**

To do this, we will ask parents questions about feeding and sucking and we will carry out speech tests with 350 two-, three- and four-year-olds over the next two years.

We have been awarded money to work with a speech therapist to study whether there is a link between how babies are fed, whether they suck a dummy/hand and how their speech develops.

However, the effect of different types of feeding on speech development has not been looked at in as much detail.

**Children with speech difficulties are more at risk of mental health problems and more likely to struggle at school.**

When a baby is born parents make different choices about feeding their baby. Some babies also like to have a dummy/hand and how their speech develops.

Studies have found that breastfeeding is linked to better language and learning in later childhood, while others have found that dummy sucking has the opposite effect.

To find out more, please contact the COCO90s team by texting COCO90NL, and your name and date of birth to 07772 102649 and we will send you an information pack.

**Meet the Team**

Meet the COCO90s team.

**Coffee Mornings**

We run occasional themed coffee mornings for COCO90s families, with free food and drink and fun activities for the kids. Keep an eye on our Facebook page and your email for details of the next one. We’d love to see you there!

**Children of the Children of the 90s**

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**Pitter Patter**

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**Fun Facts**

- Nearly 95% of our five-year-olds say their child always or usually looks forward to going to school.
- 97% are happy with the progress their child is making at school.
- Nearly a quarter of five-year-olds in COCO90s watch three or more hours of TV on a weekday; this increases to just over half at the weekends.
- More than 41% of them spend 1-2 hours playing on them on a weekday. At weekends 20% spend over three hours a day playing on them.
- Just over two thirds of our five-year-olds have access to a tablet, Smartphone or games console.
- We have collected 125 placentas from COCO90s participants, weighing in at a total of 71kg.
- 41% of them say their child always or usually looks forward to going to school.
- 97% are happy with the progress their child is making at school.

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In 2016 we were shortlisted for UK Biobank of the Year.

Our research was quoted in the government’s childhood obesity strategy, which in turn has led to the ‘sugar tax’ on sugary drinks that will be introduced in April 2018.

Stephen Hammond MP quoted our research about premature babies in Parliament. He wants parents of premature babies to be allowed to let their children start school in the school year they were due to be born in rather than the one in which they were actually born.

Our research on air pollution and asthma was included in the landmark report ‘Every Breath we Take’ by the Royal College of Physicians. See page 5 for more on our current research into air pollution.

The law on data protection will be changing on 25 May 2018. This could mean changes to how we store, share and delete your data. We don’t know yet what all the implications of the new law will be but as soon as we do, we’ll tell you.

You can download this newsletter as a pdf from our website at www.childrenofthe90s.ac.uk/newsletters-leaflets. If you would like it in another format (audio, braille, large print or another language), please let us know.

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