As you already know, the aim of our study is to find out how children learn to relate to other people in the first years of life. We are particularly interested to learn why some children have difficulties settling into playgroups and nursery schools. To do this, we are studying families in the Cardiff area who are expecting their first child. We are very interested to learn more about factors that influence children’s temperament and behaviour, even before they are born. At this stage in the study, we hope to learn more about the influence of:

- The parents’ own backgrounds and situations, and their feelings about having a baby
- Your health and your partner’s health, and any medical problems you might experience during pregnancy
- Your baby’s genes, which might influence his or her temperament

Your Background and Your Current Situation

We would like to visit you at home to interview you and your partner separately about your feelings about having a baby. We will be asking you about your background, as well as your current situation at home and at work.

Your Health

As part of the interview, we will be asking you about your health and any problems you might currently be experiencing. We will also be asking you to give consent for us to have access to the medical records of your pregnancy and your child’s birth. This will allow us to learn whether children’s development is affected by things that happen in pregnancy and during the birth.

Genetic Factors

Our research team is very interested to know more about the genes that influence children’s temperament and behaviour. Every child is a unique individual, and that is partly due to the genes that have been passed on from each parent. Genes are like maps inside our bodies that hold information. For example, it is well known that the colour of our eyes depends on our genes. More recently we have learnt much more about how health and behaviour are influenced by genes. This study provides an important opportunity to learn more about the ways in which genes affect the way infants behave and their ability to cope with new situations.

To do this, we are asking you and your partner to provide samples of DNA, using a mouth wash. The genetic samples will be analysed anonymously. No records will be generated that directly link your name, your partner’s name, or your child’s name to the genetic samples. They will only be analysed for the purpose of this study, and will never be analysed for any other purpose. We will analyse the samples for genes that affect infants’ temperament and behaviour, and not for any other purpose. They will not be kept as part of your medical record. All samples will be destroyed at the end of the study.

All the information you provide during the interview will be analysed anonymously, and your name will never be associated with anything you have told us. We will be contacting you again about six months after your child is born. You can decide at that point whether or not you would like to continue participating in the study.