

Parenting and families

Doctoral Study

The Thomas Coram Research Unit (TCRU) is an internationally renowned, dynamic and multi-disciplinary research unit based at the Institute of Education, University of London. It offers high quality doctoral and post-doctoral supervision. Within the Unit there is a substantial team of researchers with expertise in the field of parenting and families. For 2009-10, this team would welcome applications on any topic relevant to the interests detailed below.

Marjorie Smith heads the supervisory team. She is a psychologist with interests in parenting and child outcomes, parenting in difficult circumstances, family change and disruption, stepfamilies, parental control and discipline, childhood injuries, stress in children and child well being, and measures and assessment of parenting.

Janet Boddy is a psychologist with a particular interest in research on parenting and in services to support parents and families. Her interests include the relationship of parenting to early childhood health, including studies of childhood eating and child growth.

Julia Brannen is a sociologist and methodologist with expertise in mixed methods, biographical and international comparative approaches. Over 30 years, she has directed national and cross-national research on the family lives of mothers, fathers, children and young people, grandparents and great grandparents. Current research includes the food practices of working families and a study of migrant and nonmigrant fathers over the generations.

Charlie Owen has conducted research into fathers, grandparents and foster carers, including private fostering, and into families of mixed ethnicities. He has a particular expertise in the quantitative analysis of large datasets but has experience with a wide range of methods.

June Statham has undertaken a wide range of research relating to family support services and the needs of disadvantaged or vulnerable children.

Ian St James-Roberts is a psychologist interested in the contribution of parenting to the development of infant crying and sleeping behaviours, and problems with self-regulation.

Valerie Wigfall has undertaken research on family support services, particularly for families with young children, including evaluation of Sure Start programmes, and more recently studies of professional collaboration in children's centres and extended schools.

Funding your doctoral studies

TCRU welcomes applications from students with a strong academic background (first or upper second class degree), who are self-funding or who wish to apply for support from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and other funding bodies.

Currently, the Institute of Education is awarded an annual quota of 1+3 (4 year) studentship grants by the ESRC. In order to meet the ESRC application deadline in early 2010, we would like to hear from interested doctoral students **as soon as possible**.

For further information about the Thomas Coram Research Unit, please visit our website: www.ioe.ac.uk/tcru. The ESRC website provides details of the ESRC and joint ESRC/MRC Studentship schemes: www.esrc.ac.uk.

If you would like more information or would like to informally discuss the possibility of joining TCRU as a doctoral student, please contact Janet Boddy via email: j.boddy@ioe.ac.uk.