



### **RESEARCH NEWSLETTER**

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[Informing Mothers about the Benefits of Conversing with Infants: Experimental Evidence](#)

[from Ghana](#)

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**Abstract:** Despite the well-established importance of verbal engagement for infant language and cognitive development, many parents in low-income contexts do not converse with their infants regularly.

We report on a randomized field experiment evaluating a low-cost intervention that aims to raise verbal engagement with infants by showing recent or expectant mothers a 3-minute informational video and giving them a themed wall calendar. Six to eight months later, mothers selected for the intervention report greater belief in the benefits of verbally engaging with infants, more frequent parent-infant conversations, and that their infants have more advanced language and cognitive skills.

We measure positive but noisy effects on parental verbal inputs in a day-long recording and on surveyor-observed infant cognitive skills. The intervention could be delivered to expectant mothers through existing health clinics at very low marginal cost so could be a highly cost-effective early childhood development policy in low-income contexts.

[Read the full paper »](#) [https://www.povertyactionlab.org/sites/default/files/research-paper/WP4596\\_Informing-Mothers-about-the-Benefits-of-Conversing-with-Infants-in-Ghana\\_Dupas-et-al\\_May2023.pdf](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/sites/default/files/research-paper/WP4596_Informing-Mothers-about-the-Benefits-of-Conversing-with-Infants-in-Ghana_Dupas-et-al_May2023.pdf)