

Quality childcare leads to benefits at school age

August 26 2014, by David Ellis

(Medical Xpress)—Children who receive a quality childcare experience at age 2-3 are more likely to be attentive and better able to deal with their emotions as they start school, according to new research from the University of Adelaide.

In a study published in *The Journal of Pediatrics*, PhD student Angela Gialamas from the University's Better Start Child Health and *Development* Research Group, in the School of Population Health, found that higher quality relationships and activities in formal child care had lasting benefits by ages 4-5 and 6-7 years.

Using data from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children, Ms Gialamas examined the association between three aspects of child care quality - including provider and program characteristics of care; activities in child care; and the carer-child relationship at age 2-3 years - and [children](#)'s attention and emotional regulation at age 4-5 and 6-7 years.

"There is growing evidence that high-quality child care can contribute to children's learning, development and successful transition to [school](#)," Ms Gialamas says.

"Child care is a key caregiving setting, where learning how to relate to others and deal with emotions and behaviours takes place.

"With significant numbers of children attending formal child care, little

research has looked at the quality of care on children's ability to attend to and persist with tasks and handle their emotions as they start school," she says.

"The results of this research show that those children who experienced higher quality relationships and activities in formal child care were more attentive and better able to their regulate emotions as they started school, with beneficial effects extending to age 6-7 years."

The quality of child care was defined in the research as having scored highly in a measure of both activities and relationships.

Ms Gialamas says there is little research describing the quality of child care on children's development within the Australian context.

"This study could provide valuable evidence to inform government, [child care](#) providers and parents of the aspects of quality that contribute to children's development," she says.

More information: "Quality of Childcare Influences Children's Attentiveness and Emotional Regulation at School Entry."

Angela Gialamas, et al. *Journal of Pediatrics* [DOI: 10.1016/j.jpeds.2014.06.011](#)

Provided by University of Adelaide

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