

Launch of standardised tool to assess cognitive and language development in two year olds

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A new paper published in *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health* co-authored by a University of Warwick researcher provides standardised

scores for The Parent Report of Children's Abilities Revised (PARCA-R) questionnaire. The PARCA-R is recommended for routine use in the UK to screen for cognitive and language developmental delay in children born preterm and can be completed by parents in 10 to 15 minutes. A new website has also been launched (www.parca-r.info) with an online version of the questionnaire and a pre-programmed calculator for deriving the standardised scores.

Researchers at the University of Warwick collaborated with colleagues at Leicester, Oxford, Birmingham and University College London to standardise the PARCA-R as part of research funded by Action Medical Research. Anonymised data from over 6,000 PARCA-R questionnaires completed by parents of two-year old children in three previous studies were used as a standardisation sample. This sample was representative of the UK population in terms of sex, gestational age, multiple birth, ethnicity and socio-economic status. Anonymised data from three further studies were used to assess external validity of the standardised scores.

Standardisation of the PARCA-R will enable it to be used to quantify a child's developmental level relative to the UK population of two-year olds, and identify advanced or delayed development. It is freely available for parents to use and has been translated into 14 languages, but standardised scores have, so far, only been developed for the original English version in the UK population. Developmental assessment can be costly to administer and the PARCA-R provides a reliable, cost-effective alternative that could eventually be extended for use in low- and middle-income countries.

Professor Dieter Wolke, from the University of Warwick Department of Psychology, said: "Over the last 15 years my colleagues and I adapted a research tool and tested its suitability for easy screening of cognitive and language [developmental delay](#) of two year olds in the community. We

now publish the norms—how well a particular child does in relation to all children in the UK on cognition or [language](#) at a particular age—for the PARCA-R and make it freely available to clinicians and [parents](#)."

More information: Samantha Johnson et al, Standardisation of the Parent Report of Children's Abilities–Revised (PARCA-R): a norm-referenced assessment of cognitive and language development at age 2 years, *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health* (2019). [DOI: 10.1016/S2352-4642\(19\)30189-0](#)

Provided by University of Warwick

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