

In an effort to understand the Lookit participant experience a bit better and hear directly from users how and why they engage with Lookit we sent out a 19-question survey to all participants from the last 6 months. A total of 37 people responded. Here is a summary of our findings:

Overall Summary:

In general participants are really excited to participate in Lookit studies and appreciate the incentives for doing so. Facebook presents itself as an easily accessible and popular hub for information regarding children, parenting, opportunities for income, and activities for children.

General Experiences

The majority of participants from the last 6 months participated in *Your Baby the Physicist* and *Flurps and Zazzes* (58.3%). *Look and Listen* and *Baby Laughter Games* were the second and third most participated in studies (33% and 36% respectively). These responses make sense considering these are the main studies that have been active on Lookit in the past few months.

To our surprise, the majority of respondents (32; 82%) indicated that they had not participated in studies in-person at a lab. This finding is important because it indicates to a small degree that Lookit is reaching participant populations that do not regularly participate in traditional developmental psychology research. Whether these particular respondents represent demographic pools that are not already overrepresented in developmental psychology research has yet to be determined.

When asked explicitly how their experience on Lookit was, most of the positive responses included phrases like “great”, “fun”, and “easy”, and “positive” (~25/35). Most of the critical feedback highlighted technical/visual issues (*too many screens to click through at the beginning, could not get the camera to work, etc.*) or the long duration of the studies. Several participants thought some of the studies were too long to hold an infant’s attention (6; 17%).

Finally, when asked whether or not they told any other families about Lookit there was a mix of answers. Many people reported some form of “No” (10; 29%). Others, responded that they had and generally their friends were either interested and wanted to learn more or were hesitant. A few people said they shared on Facebook about it and were able to recruit friends to participate with their kids.

Making Studies More Rewarding

One of the huge things that Lookit is working to do is make the studies more engaging and rewarding for participants. In order to recruit large groups of people having robust incentives that align with the project’s goals are necessary.

To assess this we asked participants to respond whether they strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree/disagree, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree to a variety of statements including: “I’m interested in developmental psychology research”, “I want to learn about my

child's individual development", "I like the incentives (giftcards, etc.)", "It's something fun for me and my kids to do", and "I believe in Lookit's mission/just want to help". Fortunately, most respondents strongly agreed across all statements (ranging from 17-24 responses in the strongly agree category). There were 2 responses in each category that strongly disagreed with these statements.

To gauge how important certain incentives are for participation, users were asked how more or less interested they would be in the implementation of different ideas regarding compensation or scheduling. For the most part it seems that participants are much less or a little less interested in participating if there is no compensation (28 responses). On the other hand, 31 people reported being much more interested or a bit more interested if \$10 was offered instead of \$5. Six respondents reported that offering \$10 instead of \$5 did not really change their interest. Receiving baby gear was not reported as being something that would really change participant interest but many people reported receiving the gift card the same day as study completion would make them a bit more interested. Furthermore, people seemed a bit more interested in participating if they received information about their kid's development, although it would be interesting to follow-up and identify what exactly people have in mind when answering that question. Finally, having a study last 20 minutes instead of 10 garnered a strong response from 4 people, saying that they would be much less interested, and a neutral response from a majority of people (17). Nobody reported being much more interested in a study lasting 20 minutes instead of 10.

In terms of compensation a large percentage of people (83%) report being interested in receiving a \$10 Amazon gift card. Although, a lot of people reported Amazon gift card as a top choice, one respondent highlighted the difficulty of using Amazon gift cards for those living outside the United States. The next most popular compensation item was a KiwiCrate activity kit (56.8%). The third response that received over half of the votes was \$10 transferred via Venmo or Paypal. This option, if implemented would address the desire to get compensation to participants as soon as possible, which as indicated above is something they are interested in.

To gauge interest in ideas that the Lookit researchers have been considering to implement we asked participants how likely they think these ideas would improve their experience on Lookit. In general most of the ideas were reported as not really improving the experience. Participants were somewhat interested in being able to ask researchers specific developmental psychology questions and this idea received the most support.

To conclude this section we asked participants explicitly if they had any advice for making participation more fun and rewarding. Some highlights from the responses include: 1) offering donations to schools via PTA, 2) finding a way to make the narrations more engaging, 3) provide links at the end of the study to the research articles published and 4) offering more science gifts to the kids (such as a Junior Scientist Certificate). Additionally, one parent highlighted an important point, *"Sometimes my toddler is very screamy and that is the biggest thing stopping us from participating more. I don't know if we just push through it or if it's not good data. If there*

was a little more info on what behaviors are okay to keep working through and when to quit and try again that would help me feel more comfortable!" More guidance into what behaviors are okay and what data should be kept is important. A huge takeaway is that a lot of participants are really excited to participate in studies and the incentives are a huge driving factor. In fact, parents want to engage in more studies but often there are none available for the age of their kid's or they have already done them.

Spreading the Word

In order to probe into the issues revolving around recruiting families online we asked Lookit users to report how they first heard about Lookit, what the best ways to reach them regarding Lookit studies would be and where they connect with parents online. Most people reported hearing about Lookit via a Facebook ad or post (10; 27%). The second and third most frequent responses was through an online parent group/listserv (7; 18.9%), a friend/family member (7; 18.9%), or another development lab (6; 16%). The other responses ranged from different websites like Lookit itself, reddit, parent groups and one person was unsure.

Most or nearly half of the respondents reported being very likely to sign up for Lookit after coming across a Facebook post about Lookit shared by a friend (15), hearing about Lookit from a friend directly (22), visiting the Lookit website (20), and receiving an email from Lookit (15). Respondents reported being somewhat likely to sign up after coming across an ad on Facebook (15) or reading about Lookit or a Lookit study on a parenting blog (16). Interestingly, although only 5 reported being very likely to join Lookit after seeing an ad on Facebook, most individuals reported that Facebook was how they heard about Lookit. About 70% of respondents reported that they connected with other parents online through Facebook.

Facebook and Reddit were the most popular responses, when asked what online groups/websites do participants go to for support and information related to parenting. And again when asked where they find out about activities for their kids to do, most of them reported Facebook as being a primary resource.

Most respondents estimated that they could reach about 1-5 families in their networks and 64% of respondents were interested in a referral program for additional gift cards. Not surprisingly, when asked where they would go to recruit 50 different 7-month-olds to participate in a short online study, most responded that posting/sharing on Facebook was the best way that they could accomplish this.