

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Anna Farneski; [afarnesk@ramapo.edu](mailto:afarnesk@ramapo.edu)

June 28, 2010

**Children and Parent Volunteers Needed for New  
Child Development Lab at Ramapo College**

(MAHWAH, NJ) - Ramapo College of New Jersey's School of Social Science and Human Services (SSHS) is seeking volunteers to participate in studies at its new Child Development Lab. Through the lab, faculty and students conduct research that explores how children solve problems, perceive actions, coordinate motor skills, interact with caregivers, and use objects, which furthers the understanding of children's cognitive, perceptual, and motor skill development

The lab opened in late 2009 and had approximately 70 participants. It is funded by the SSHS, the Ramapo College Foundation, a Teaching, Learning and Technology Roundtable grant from the Office of the Provost.

Currently, the lab is examining how children cope with "fitting tasks" to help understand the exploratory behaviors that children perform in fitting objects through small and large openings. Fitting is a multi-step process involving prospective planning, decision-making, and linking several small routines into a unified action. In a typical study session, children are presented with table-top games that require reaching, grasping and fitting. Children's decisions are observed and compared to actual possibilities for action. Other methods such as parental reports, psychophysics and questionnaires are used to give researchers an in-depth understanding of what information children know and use to make decisions, and how caregivers can have a role in how children make decisions.

SSHS is currently conducting the studies with infants and children between 1 and 8 years of age. Studies last between 45 and 60 minutes and can be scheduled for day, evening, or weekend sessions. Both children and parents enjoy the experience and receive a small gift for participation. Any information collected is kept strictly confidential. If you are interested in participating with your child, please contact Assistant Professor of Psychology Shaziela Ishak at [sishak@ramapo.edu](mailto:sishak@ramapo.edu) or call (201) 684-7418 to set up an appointment.

###