



310 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06511

www.gesellinstitute.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jennifer Pelton

E-mail: Jennifer@gesellinstitute.org

Voice: 203-777-3481 ext.718

Head Start in New Haven, CT leads the nation with Gesell Early Screener

New Haven, CT (September 1, 2011) – Gesell Institute of Child Development recently presold 40 of their new Gesell Early Screener (GES) kits, a developmental screening instrument, to the New Haven Public Schools Head Start Program. This screening tool will serve approximately 47 teachers in 6 Head Start schools across the district. The New Haven Public School system is the first in the nation to purchase and use the GES on a widespread scale.

The Gesell Early Screener is a screening instrument for 3- to 6-year olds that is supported with technical data from the 2010 sample Gesell Institute collected in their nation-wide study of developmental and academic tasks from the Gesell Developmental Observation, such as block building, copying shapes and numeracy tasks. The GES also utilizes the same Teacher (TQ) and Parent Questionnaires (PQ) as the GDO-R, and provides input about a child's behavior and experiences at home and at school. The TQ and PQ complement the newly updated GDO-R assessment system, as well as the new GES by providing valuable insight from the individuals who know the growing child best. Parents and educators can now work together to develop a set of shared developmentally appropriate expectations to meet the individual needs of each child.

Director of Research and Education at Gesell Institute, Andrea Sambrook, commented "The GES was borne from a rigorous study of measures of children's development with a nation-wide sample of culturally and geographically diverse children. We are confident that the Early Screener will fulfill an important requirement of teachers to quickly screen many children while still respecting the developmental process that underlies their preparedness for formal learning."

The GES takes less than 20 minutes to administer and score, and requires no advanced training or experience. This quick and efficient screener provides a swift, concise snapshot of a child's development. Scored objectively, the GES results in tiered scoring rubrics which correspond to three performance levels. The tiered levels indicate whether a child meets developmental expectations for their age, if their skills are emerging, or if mild concerns may be present and should be further examined.

Ms. Claudia McNeil, New Haven's Head Start Coordinator and New Haven Early Childhood Council member, told Executive Director of Gesell Institute, Dr. Marcy Guddemi, "Using the GES will be wonderful because we only have to use one instrument now with our students instead of multiple assessments to get the same results." Marina Pappas, Director of the Parent-Teacher Connection Program in New Haven also agrees. Pappas said, "It eliminates the need to administer multiple assessment tools. Plus, the children really enjoy it."

Gesell Institute's updated technical study meets the rigorous standards set by the federal government and by the American Psychological Association to appropriately meet the early learning needs of children. Any institution that decides to purchase and implement either the GDO-R or GES is endorsing not only respect for child development, but a method of child study that dates back to Dr. Arnold Gesell's historic work at Yale University at the turn of the Twentieth Century. Data from Gesell Institute's 2008-2010 nation-wide Gesell Developmental Observation Study confirms (and reassures many) that children are not reaching developmental

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milestones sooner or faster, but rather in much the same way as they have always done since Arnold Gesell began collecting data in the early part of the Twentieth Century.

Gesell Institute of Child Development is an independent non-profit organization located on Yale University's campus in New Haven, CT. The Institute has been associated with how children grow and learn since 1950. The work of Arnold Gesell, PhD, MD, (1888-1961) had a profound influence on the field of child development. Based on Gesell's pioneering work documenting child growth and development during the first half the Twentieth Century, Gesell programs and publications helped parents and educators understand the ages and stages of childhood; and still do to this day. In addition to their two assessments, Gesell Institute's professional development opportunities and educational workshops cover a broad range of topics regarding child behavior, healthy growth and development, and positive learning outcomes. For additional information and resources, please visit www.gesellinstitute.org and www.gesellinstituteworkshops.org.

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