

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**TALARIS RESEARCH INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES  
"BRINGING BABY HOME" RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY  
ACCLAIMED FAMILY RESEARCHER DR. JOHN GOTTMAN**

Talaris provides four-year, \$2.3 million grant to launch program  
to prepare new parents and help infants

Seattle, WA. (March 18, 2003) – When a baby arrives, everything changes and these changes often have profound effects on new parents, marriages and even the newly arrived infant.

Recognizing the increased interpersonal, social and economic pressure families experience - especially fragile families with low to poverty level household incomes - the Talaris Research Institute announced that its first sponsored initiative with renowned researcher Dr. John Gottman will focus on learning more about the changes couples experience as they become parents, and discovering ways to help parents make the transition with greater ease and success.

The research initiative is called "Bringing Baby Home" and is expected to produce an educational program for expectant parents that can be placed in more than 2,500 hospitals across the United States. The study is funded by a four year, \$2.3 million grant by Talaris and a grant by the Kirilin Foundation.

"The stark reality is that new parents are required to immediately adapt to the enormous task of the round-the-clock care of a newborn infant," said Dr. John Gottman. "Not surprisingly, up to 70 percent of couples experience stress, profound conflict and a decrease in marital satisfaction during this time, all of which affect their baby's care. Our goal is to systematically provide information and skills that can help free new parents of some of this stress and consequently improve the likelihood of having an emotionally healthy child."

More than 165 different couples are participating in the ground-breaking research and are required to complete an initial research interview prior to the birth of their child. In this interview expectant parents discuss their hopes, worries and expectations following the arrival of the baby. During the course of the study, couples are randomly chosen to receive a two-day couples' workshop either before

the birth of their child or at the end of the study. Additionally, some couples will be randomly chosen to also participate in support groups. As a part of the study, there will be five follow-up visits with the family when each couple's baby is 3 months, 1, 2, 2½ and 3 years old.

“It is astonishing that our society requires more than 30 hours of specified and formal training to receive a license to drive a car, yet we do not require a single hour of training to become a parent,” said Jolene McCaw, Talaris Research Institute Co-Chair, Board of Directors. “Is it any wonder that during this critical time for parents and newborns that many parents feel vastly under prepared and experience stress across the spectrum of their personal relationships? We believe Dr. Gottman’s research will result in useful and clearly communicated information that will be important to those participating in the study. The potential longer-term benefit for literally thousands of others is significant.”

The “Bringing Baby Home” research program is striving to create an information base that spans ethnicity and culture. Currently, the study is seeking an additional 50 African-American or bi-racial couples and, as more funding becomes available, will seek out single parent participants. Interested couples should contact Elizabeth Schoettle at 206-832-0300 ext. 312 or email [elizabeths@gottmanresearch.com](mailto:elizabeths@gottmanresearch.com).

The program is being conducted in cooperation with Seattle’s Swedish Hospital and will be administered by hospital staff. Swedish is modifying its standard birth preparation program to include the two-day couples’ workshop and/or a support group that is a part of the research program.

“Initially, soon-to-be parents show interest in the program out of concern for their newborn, but they quickly recognize that this is about providing tools and skills that strengthen their marriage and that creates a much healthier environment for children,” said Carolyn Pirak, Facilitator and Family Life Educator at Swedish Hospital. “This program is so powerful for the participants, and potentially thousands of others, because it is based on real research and is not just the latest ‘ten-step’ improvement program. It is extremely exciting because the methods behind the skills we teach have been proven out and that makes the participants much more willing to take them into their daily lives.”

The “Bringing Baby Home” project is the first research project to result from Talaris’ previously announced relationship with John Gottman. Dr. Gottman is well known for his work in family relationships, involving the study of emotions, physiology, and communication. In 1997, Dr. Gottman published the acclaimed book, *Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child* in which he described to parents the importance of equipping children with the emotional skills they need to succeed in school and life. This specific area of Dr. Gottman’s work was of particular interest to Talaris and planted the initial seeds of the partnership that has resulted in the launch of the “Bringing Baby Home” project.

### **About Talaris Research Institute**

Talaris Research Institute, [www.talaris.org](http://www.talaris.org), is a non-profit institute for advanced study based in Seattle. Talaris’ mission is to advance knowledge of early brain development for all who nurture children. Dedicated to discovering how children think, feel and learn, Talaris combines the science of learning with the practice of learning. After careful analysis of a large array of scientific information, Talaris translates research into easy-to-understand tools and information to parents, caregivers, childcare providers, educators, healthcare providers, and the corporate community. Talaris Research Institute is funded by Apex Foundation, Bruce and Jolene McCaw's family foundation.

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