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CONTACT:
Mary Kay Jezzini
SAGE Publicist
212-352-1404
publicity@sagepub.com

**DOES SOCIALIZING MAKE US SMARTER?
RESEARCH PUBLISHED IN *PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY BULLETIN* BY SAGE**

Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, and Singapore (February 15, 2008) — Humans are social animals; we spend much of our time with others in groups. We are also wise. It is not our size, speed, or strength that distinguishes us from other mammals, but our intelligence. How might these two features – being social and being smart – go together? Research published by SAGE in the February 2008 issue of *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* provides novel information about the relation between being social and being smart.

Article lead author Oscar Ybarra and his colleagues at the University of Michigan explored the possibility that social interaction improves mental functioning. In a series of related studies, they tested the participants' level of cognitive functioning, comparing it to the frequency of participants' social interactions. They found that people who engaged in social interaction displayed higher levels of cognitive performance than the control group. Social interaction aided intellectual performance.

"Social interaction," the authors suggest, "helps to exercise people's minds. People reap cognitive benefits from socializing." They speculate that social interaction "exercises" cognitive processes that are measured on intellectual tasks. "It is possible," the authors conclude, "that as people engage socially and mentally with others, they receive relatively immediate cognitive boosts."

The article, "Mental Exercising Through Simple Socializing: Social Interaction Promotes General Cognitive Functioning," written by Oscar Ybarra, Eugene Burnstein, Piotr Winkielman, Matthew C. Keller, Melvin Manis, Emily Chan, and Joel Rodriguez of the University of Michigan, and published by SAGE in the February issue of *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, is available at no charge for a limited time at <http://pspb.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/34/2/248>.

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