

Stockton University's Children's Learning Lab

Winter 2020 Newsletter



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Did You Know?



The brain doesn't reach full maturity until you're 25 years old! (Wallis, 2013)



Contact Us!

Website:

<https://stockton.edu/childrens-learning-lab/>

E-Mail:

Childrenslearninglab@outlook.com



Meet Our Team!

We are a children's cognition lab interested in examining children's developing concepts of a number of different domains.

If you have questions about any information presented in this newsletter, feel free to reach out via our lab email!



A special and huge thank you to everyone who has managed to participate in the success of our research!

Interested in participating in our studies?

We are actively recruiting children ages 4, 7, 9, and 10 (see more information on page 3)

- ❄️ Fill out our [Parent Interest Form](#)
- ❄️ After filling out the form, we will be in touch to set up an appointment.
- ❄️ As of now, all studies are remote, so anyone (who has a child that falls within the age group that we are testing) is able to sign up to participate!





Studies We Are Currently Working On

Food Origins Study

The Origins study is based on natural foods, artifacts/ processed foods and children's (between ages 3 and 5) understanding of their origin. In the study, we show children foods and non-foods, (e.g. apple, banana, fork, a pair of glasses, cookies, etc.) and we ask the child whether they think it is grown in a garden or made in a factory. This will allow us to see how children think about the origin of these items. Currently, we are in the stages of testing children and obtaining our data.



Social Dilemma Study

This study examined whether community agreement or disagreement of unconventional behaviors changed individuals assessments of these same behaviors. Nine- and 10-year-olds were told about different unconventional behaviors (e.g., talking back to teachers or calling someone a mean name) that either occurred in their local community or in a made-up country where these behaviors were okay to do. They were then asked to rate how right or wrong it was and how they felt about it. We're currently testing this and look forward to sharing our results when we're done!



Illness and Contagion Study

With the COVID-19 epidemic's massive disruption on society, we are examining whether it has an impact on children's understanding of how illnesses are transmitted. We are interested in children's concepts of contagion and contamination of COVID-19, a contagious non-COVID-19 illness (e.g., flu) and a non contagious illness (e.g., asthma). In the study, we show children ages 4, 7, and 10 two cartoon characters while telling them about different behaviors they did. For example, characters who sneezed and touched a door knob, were simply playing on a swing, washed their hands for 20 seconds, or ate too much cake. After being told the scenario, children are asked in separate questions, which character they believed had or could transmit each of the illnesses. We are still collecting data and look forward to sharing with the results when we are done!



Recently Completed Study

Transformation Study

This study examined whether children and adults think about the properties of category membership differently than they do for non-foods, or is it just based on where they come from; for example things that are natural versus things that are human-made. We tested this by presenting 16 short stories to 4- and 5-year-olds, 6- and 7-year-olds, and adults about friends that took the insides out, crushed, and melted natural foods, processed foods, non-item natural kinds and artifacts. Participants were then asked whether the item stayed the same or was not the same after the transformation. It was shown that foods are more likely to stay the same after the transformation, as compared to non-food items. In addition, there were age-related changes with older participations more likely to believe that items stayed the same after the transformation than younger ones. Overall we found children and adults use different methods in determining when foods and non-foods are no longer the same thing and interestingly, we reason about foods differently than non-foods. This is important for ensuring the use of proper methods when teaching children about food safety!





The Children's Learning Lab at a Glance

Celebrate our accomplishments with us!

September 2019

Children's Learning Lab comes to Stockton University!

October 2019

RA's Stephanie, Devon, and Tania begin working for the lab and work begins

November- December 2019

Testing for transformation study and social dilemma study begins

January 2020

RA Reem and Veronica join the lab

March 2020

Food Origin study is underway and RA Kaylee has joined the lab

April 2020

After months of work, the transformation study has finally been completed-- with compelling results (see page 3)

May 2020

Tania is promoted to Lab Coordinator and Veronica to Assistant Lab Coordinator. RA Devon graduates. RA Isabella joins the lab

May 2020

Work on the Illness and Contagion Study has commenced

September 2020

RA's Ethan, Michaela, and Reet join the lab

October 2020

After months of work done by RA Veronica, the CLL Website goes live! (find the link on page 1!)

November 2020

Virtual testing for the Origin study begins





What We Did During Quarantine

Besides the zoom calls with each other and our colleagues, here is how we kept busy!

"I learned how to embroider, baked so many desserts, and started my own little garden!"

-RA Reet



"My boyfriend and I did a lot of cooking, baking, reading, watching movies and TV shows, going to low-populated beaches, and having picnics!"

-RA Ethan



"We added a new member to the family, Pumpkin the Kitty! I also did crafts, journaling, watched the sunset as much as I could!"

-RA Michaela



"I spent a lot of time outside with my sister, taking walks, hanging out with my cat, and drawing!"

-RA Stephanie

"I read a bunch and learned to cook (and failed a lot at baking!). I spent a whole lot of time with my niece and nephews and faceted my other family very often!"

-RA Tania



"I baked a ton of bread, cooked a lot, hung out with my sisters and my cat, Poe, and did a ton of reading!"

-RA Kaylee



"I spent a lot of time studying for the GRE's (with the help of my cat Daytona, she spent many hours napping on my notes). I spent a lot of time with my boyfriend hiking. My roommates and I adopted a cat named Nina!"

-RA Veronica

"I picked up a daily routine of walking my dog around the neighborhood. My family and I watched a lot of movies, did a ton of work on our new house, and completed random crafts. I also began playing softball again!"

-RA Isabella



"Most nights, I went to the beach to watch the sunset. I got into painting again, cooking, biking, and working out. I enjoy having virtual game nights on zoom with my friends!"

-RA Reem



"I've been doing some creative cooking, took lots of walks on the beach, bought a lava lamp and twinkling lights to help bring a chill atmosphere, started making my own laundry detergent & using shampoo/conditioner bars (all to use less plastic)!"

-Dr. Girgis



COVID-19 Resources:

NJ Covid Info Hub:

<https://covid19.nj.gov>

Call (General COVID-19 Questions): 2-1-1

Call (Medical COVID-19 Questions): 1-800-962-1253

NJ Department of Health:

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>

NJ Mental Health Cares:

<https://www.njmentalhealthcares.org>

For parent specific resources, visit:

<https://stockton.edu/childrens-learning-lab/get-involved/parents.html>

Through this link, you can find resources on how to help children cope with change, how to be a parent (and be a new parent) during a pandemic, and much more!

Remember, don't be afraid to seek help.