

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

Early Development and Learning Lab
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Lincoln, NE 68588-0172



EDLL Kids Corner
Coloring Page!

Early Development and Learning Lab Newsletter

Toddler Sleep Study Update

By Amanda Prokasky

Greetings! We hope you had a safe and relaxing summer, and that this newsletter finds you well. We have seen a lot of changes in the EDL Lab with the start of the new academic year, including saying goodbye to three of our research assistants, who have moved on to additional graduate training at other institutions. In addition, we have said hello to three new graduate students and many more undergraduate volunteers in our lab- you can read all about them in the student spotlight section of this newsletter. In other news, we have just begun year 4 in our five-year study of toddler sleep, and we are still recruiting new 2 ½-year-olds to participate. We are also on the lookout for 2 ½ to 3 ½-year-olds who may not be eligible to participate in our study (e.g. siblings of former participants in the sleep study), but would be willing to serve as “practice” children while we train our new lab members. If you have or know of a child in this age range and would be willing to allow our students to practice some of the home or lab tasks, please give me a call at 402-472-8982. As always, we sincerely thank all of our current and former participants, without you we wouldn't have jobs!

Amanda is the EDLL project coordinator and a graduate student in Child, Youth, and Family Studies.

UNL To Host Educational Neuroscience Conference

For more information visit:

www.edneuroconference.unl.edu



**EDUCATIONAL
NEUROSCIENCE**
CONFERENCE 2015

CREATING PATHWAYS BETWEEN THE BRAIN & STUDENT SUCCESS

OCT 15 & 16 → WICK ALUMNI CENTER



Educational neuroscience connects teachers, administrators and researchers at the crossroads of the classroom and the brain. This emerging field relies on a two-way conversation to advance research and application for student success.

Join the discussion October 15-16 for the 2015 Educational Neuroscience Conference at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Wick Alumni Center.

The conference features five nationally renowned speakers who will present findings from their research and practice. Other highlights include a regional research symposium, panel discussion, the poster session and networking reception.

Our Lab Members' Latest Publications

- **Title:** Temperament and Preschool Children's Peer Interactions
- **By:** Ibrahim H. Acar, Kathleen Moritz Rudasill, Victoria Molfese, Julia Torquati, and Amanda Prokasky
- **Journal:** Early Education and Development, Vol. 26, Iss. 4, 2015



Early Development and Learning Lab

Writing For The Fun Of It

By Dr. Victoria Molfese

We usually think that the word literacy refers to reading, but writing is also a component of literacy. Children as young as 12 months old can grasp a crayon and make marks on paper. At about 18 months, children often begin to scribble, and two-year-olds can use pencils, crayons, and markers to make drawings on paper. The writing of children 3 to 5 years old can include the letters of their names along with random letters and drawings. Our work with preschool children shows that they are very interested in engaging in writing activities and enjoy learning to write their names. Children's names are special to them and being able to write their names seems to be a major milestone. It is important to understand that young children are capable of writing more than their names. Engaging young children in activities involving writing the names of family members, pets, favorite foods with simple names (e.g., PBJ, cake, egg) and activities (e.g., zoo, store, pool) can work to strengthen the link between spoken letters, written sounds, and words.

The writing materials can be very simple – a piece of blank paper plus a stubby pencil, crayon or marker work just fine for very young children. Older children may be interested in writing with a regular non-mechanical pencil with a rubber grip to help them hold the pencil, although some children are only interested in regular pencils. Young children who like to draw pictures can be helped to label their pictures with simple words. We have found that preschool children also enjoy writing letters that are spoken to them. We usually start with simple high-frequency letters (e, t and a) and with letters in the child's name. Home writing activities such as these have been found to be very important for the development of reading skills.

Writing, along with reading story books, story telling, singing songs, and identifying word in their environments (stop, exit, elevator), logos (Target, McDonalds, Pepsi), and symbols (restroom, handicapped parking, restaurant), are activities that young children enjoy and that promotes early literacy skills.

Kids Events in Lincoln Fall 2015

Compiled By Nicole Adams

U-pick Orchard and Fall Activates

Tue-Sun - 10:00 am-6:00 pm

Martin's Hillside Orchard,
2024 Ashland Road, Ceresco, NE

Sundays with the Scientist - The Antarctic Time Machine

Morrill Hall

October 11, 1:30-4:30 pm

Sundays with the Scientist- Veterinary Science

Morrill Hall

November 15, 1:30-4:30 pm

Fossil Day!

Morrill Hall

Thursday, October 22, 5:00-8:00 pm

Wild Fall Festival

Pioneers Park Nature Center

Friday Oct, 9; 5:00-8:00 pm

- \$3/person. Food is also available for purchase.

Lincoln Children's Zoo - Last day open for the regular season is October 18.

Boo at the Zoo:

Lincoln Children's Zoo

October 26-30th

Family Story Time- Lincoln Libraries

Visit <http://lincolnlibraries.org/kids/storytimes/> for times and locations



• **The Early Development and Learning Lab** is always looking for participants for ongoing research projects. In addition to the toddler sleep study, there may be additional projects for which we will need participants.

• If you are interested in continuing your participation and involvement with the EDLL, feel free to give us a call at 402-472-8982. We look forward to hearing from you!

Student Spotlight: Drew White

Hello, my name is Drew White and I am grateful and excited to be working with the members of this lab this year! I am in my third year in UNL's School Psychology PhD program. Prior to joining my current program, I attended Florida State University's Educational Specialist program, also in School Psychology. My research interests primarily focus on the development of self-regulatory skills during early childhood, and how those skills translate to success or difficulties in academic settings as children age. I live in Omaha with my wife (an elementary music teacher) and I like to spend my free time cheering for the Huskers or catching up on old TV shows on Netflix.

Drew is a graduate student in School Psychology.

Student Spotlight: Colin McGinnis

Hi! My name is Colin McGinnis. I'm a first-year graduate student studying Cognition, Learning and Development in the Educational Psychology program. I graduated from the Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Science in Human Development. I have experience teaching at both the preschool and kindergarten level. I am interested in the relationships between students, parents, and teachers, as well as the factors related to a child's readiness for school. When I'm not involved in school activities, I enjoy cooking, riding my bike and walking my dogs.

Colin is a graduate student in Educational Psychology

Student Spotlight: Sam Pérez

I am a first-year Cognition, Learning and Development master's student at the Educational Psychology department. I graduated with a BA in General Psychology from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez. During my undergrad years, I volunteered as a research assistant in study validating the translation of two measures in Spanish, assessing school readiness assessment and cognitive ability testing with children ages 3-5. This experience was most likely what led me to choose my present field of study. I am interested in cognition, intelligence and learning differences in early childhood, particularly in relationship to temperamental traits. In my free time I very much enjoy reading (specifically historic fiction), taking pictures, puzzles, and finding new music. The most important of my hobbies is probably going to the movies much more often than I should.

Sam is a graduate student in Educational Psychology.

The EDLL Staff

Co-Directors

Dr. Victoria Molfese
Dr. Kathleen Moritz Rudasill
Dr. Dennis Molfese

Project Coordinator

Amanda Prokasky

Graduate Research Assistants

Scott Frohn
Jayden Nord
Nicole Adams
Amy Encinger
Sam Pérez
Colin McGinnis
Ibrahim Acar
Andrew Burdic
Jentry Barrett
Drew White

Undergraduate Research Assistants

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Jeanna Song | Melad Behar |
| Jack Gallagher | Molly Pantzlaff |
| Rachel Schroeter | Taylor Iverson |
| Brianna Hekrdle | Carrie Nieman |
| Rachel Eaton | Mary Cairns |
| Allison Lee | |



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