

# Early Development and Learning Lab Newsletter

Spring, 2015

## Sleep Study Update

By Amanda Prokasky

Greetings and Happy Spring! We hope that this newsletter finds you well, and you are enjoying the warmer weather as much as we are. The winter was so busy for us in the Early Development and Learning Lab that we weren't able to send out a winter newsletter, but now our testing has slowed down and we actually have time to go outside and "smell the roses" (and write a newsletter)! We have been extremely fortunate to have many people interested in participating in our study, in fact over 110 children has started our study, and over 60 have completed assessments at all three ages! In addition, we've welcomed eight new undergraduate students to our lab in the past few weeks to help out with data collection and entry of all the data we collected during the winter. That is all for now, we hope you enjoy this newsletter!

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

## Follow-Up to Children's Sleep Study

By Dr. Kathleen Rudasill

Helping children get ready for the transition to kindergarten is a primary goal among parents. One of the key components of kindergarten readiness is self-regulation – the ability to sit still, take turns, raise a hand, and listen to instructions – and it is related to the quality and quantity of a child's sleep. The Early Development and Learning Lab is planning a study of self-regulation and sleep as children in the toddler sleep study move toward kindergarten. What we would like to understand is how children's sleep and

self-regulation unfold in preschool and kindergarten classrooms, and how this relates to children's academic readiness. We will be recruiting children and families who have completed their participation in the toddler sleep study. Families who participate should be willing to allow us to: 1) come to their homes for a conversation and some assessments of their children's development, 2) come back to the lab for the children to engage in some activities with our lab group, and 3) contact their children's day care or pre-Kindergarten teacher to allow us to observe children's behaviors in the classroom. In all, we hope to observe children's behaviors in different settings and at different ages.

Look for communication from us about this follow-up study in the near future!

*Dr. Rudasill is Associate Professor of Educational Psychology.*

## College of Education and Human Sciences Awards

Dr. Kathy Rudasill has won the College of Education and Human Sciences 2015 Emerging Scholar Research/Creative Award. She has been studying how children's individual differences related to school success.

Dr. Victoria Molfese has won the College of Education and Human Sciences 2015 Distinguished Research/Creative Career Award. She has been studying the developmental processes in children from birth to age 13 year.

The awards will be given to Dr. Rudasill and Dr. Molfese on Friday, April 10 at the Sheldon Art Museum



# Early Development and Learning Lab

## Kids Events in Lincoln Spring 2015

*Lincoln Zoo opens for the season on April 1st*

*Sesame Street Live*

Pinnacle Bank Arena  
April 28th and 29th

*Lego Sunday*

Loren Corey Elseley Branch Library  
April 19th and May 10th from 2pm-4pm

*Story time*

- O St. Barnes and Noble  
April 4th and 18th at 11am

- Southpointe Barnes and Noble  
April 3rd at 11am

*Hand in Hand: Spring Song*

Pioneers Park Nature Center  
- Parent-child nature walk  
April 13th, 20th, and 27th, and May 4th, 11th, and 18th from 10-11:30am

*Music at the Museum*

The Lincoln Children's Museum  
- Children get to play instruments  
April 11th from 10am-1pm

*Science Saturday at the Lincoln Children's Museum*

April 25th from 10am-1pm

*Mother's Day Celebration at the Lincoln zoo*

- Moms receive a free train ride or admission  
May 10th from 10am-5pm

*Endangered Species Day at The Lincoln Zoo*

May 15th from 10am-2pm

## Keeping Healthy

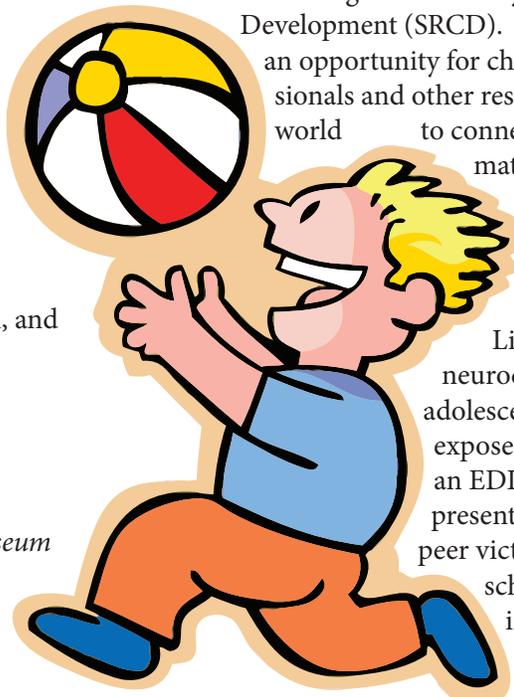
**By Dr. Victoria Molfese**

We may be getting to the end of flu season, but colds, ear infections, and sore throats can occur at any time. There has been a lot of talk about careful hand washing and covering our mouths when we sneeze or cough, but did you know that tooth brushes are also sources of infection? Beginning when babies first get their teeth and continuing with toddlers and young children, parents should have tooth brushing as part of their bed time routines. Use minimal or no tooth paste, and gently brush the teeth. If you baby or toddler wants to help, give them a chance to brush their teeth with help. When your child get sick, continue tooth brushing but disinfect or change to a new toothbrush when your child recovers. Sometimes repeated infections can arise from viruses or bacteria that remain on the toothbrush from when the child was ill.

## EDLL Staff Travel to International Conference on Child Development!

**By Amanda Prokasky**

From March 19-21, Dr. Kathy Moritz Rudasill and Dr. Victoria Molfese, directors of the Early Development and Learning Lab, and five EDLL graduate research assistants, travelled to Philadelphia, PA to attend the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD). This conference provides an opportunity for child development professionals and other researchers from around the world to connect and exchange information and ideas. Amanda Prokasky, project coordinator of the EDLL, presented with Dr. Dennis Molfese (UNL) and Dr. Linda Mayes (Yale) on the neurocognitive functioning in adolescents who were prenatally exposed to cocaine. Scott Frohn, an EDLL graduate researcher, presented two posters: one on peer victimization and out-of-school activity participation in adolescents with Dr. Eric Buhs (UNL), and another on peer victimization and behavior problems in Latino youth with Dr. Buhs and Chelsea Temmen (UNL). In addition, members of the lab attended presentations, poster sessions, and networking events to learn more about child development research taking place in the U.S. and the world.



## The Early Development and Learning Lab needs more participants!!

We are currently recruiting toddlers younger than 2½ years for our sleep study. If you know anyone else who may be interested, please pass along our contact information.

Thank you!

**Early Development and Learning Lab**  
www.cehs.unl.edu/edl | 402.472.8982

## Student Spotlight: Garth Hamilton

Hi! My name is Garth Hamilton. I'm a second year Master's student studying Marriage and Family Therapy in the Child, Youth, and Family Studies program. I graduated from Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa with a Bachelor of Arts in Counseling Psychology. I have always possessed a strong interest in researching birth order and how it associates with child temperament. Working in the lab helps me gain a stronger understanding of child temperament, while also looking at how temperament relates to every day functionality. After I earn my Master's from UNL, my goal is to become a fully licensed mental health practitioner and work in a private practice setting. I was born and raised in Lincoln, and take a lot of pride in continuing my graduate education at UNL. When I'm not involved in school activities, I enjoy playing basketball, volleyball, and spending my time outdoors.

*Garth is a graduate student in Marriage and Family Therapy.*

## Student Spotlight: Brianna Hekrdle

Hello! My name is Brianna Hekrdle, and I'm a sophomore taking pre-med coursework, and minoring in English and African Studies. I'm from Norfolk, Nebraska, and this summer I'm going to make Lincoln my home! This is my second year at UNL and my first semester in the lab. I aspire to graduate, join the Peace Corps, attend osteopathic medical school, and eventually become an ophthalmologist. I study a lot, but when I get a break I like to paint, write, be outdoors, and make music! I love people, and my favorite thing about the EDL Lab is the people I meet, especially the tiny ones!

*Brianna is a pre-med undergraduate majoring in Ethnic Studies.*

**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: Amy Encinger

Hello! My name is Amy Encinger. I am a second year PhD student studying Child Development/ Early Childhood Education. I received my Bachelor of Science in Family Studies from the University of Nebraska at Kearney. My research interests include infant/toddler development, attachment, parent-child relationships, and breastfeeding. I am excited to have the opportunity to work in the lab and gain further understanding of how temperament relates to child development. I currently live in Grand Island, Nebraska and commute to UNL three days a week. When I am not in school I am chasing two very active boys aged 4 and 8.

*Amy is a graduate student in Child, Youth and Family Studies.*



## The EDLL Staff

### Co-Directors

Dr. Victoria Molfese

Dr. Kathleen Moritz Rudasill

Dr. Dennis Molfese

### Project Coordinator

Amanda Prokasky

### Graduate Research Assistants

Scott Frohn

Molly Holmes

Carly Champagne

Jayden Nord

Nicole Adams

Garth Hamilton

Amy Encinger

### Undergraduate Research Assistants

Hannah Malcolm Molly Pantzloff

Jeanna Song Taylor Iverson

Jack Gallagher Carrie Nieman

Rachel Schroeter Mary Cairns

Kaitlyn Johnson Paige TenHulzen



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