

DUCK Lab Newsletter

Spring 2015 – Volume 8



Development and Understanding of Children's Knowledge

Greensboro Science Center Partnership

The DUCK Lab and MDLaB (Memory Development, Learning, and Brain) have become collaborative research partners with the Greensboro Science Center! We are seeking to understand how children learn and retain scientific information from parents and educators in the GSC setting. You will have the opportunity to work one-on-one with your child while learning interesting exhibit facts! Thanks to this unique opportunity, we are able to offer free general admission to your family.

In the coming months, we will be looking for families with children between the ages of 4 and 8 years to participate in a study at the Carolina SciQuarium within the GSC. If your family is interested in participating, please contact us via phone (336) 256-0048 or email duck_lab@uncg.edu to be added to a list of potential participants. We offer flexible scheduling at your convenience. This is an ongoing project, so even if you are not able to accommodate a trip to the GSC in the near future, we would be happy to put you on our list for future participation and contact you at a time that is suitable for you and your family.



Meet the DUCK Lab

Directors:

Dr. Janet Boseovski
Dr. Stuart Marcovitch

Lab Manager/
Honors Program:
Angela Dyson

Doctoral Candidates:
Naomi Chatley
Candace Lapan

Masters Candidates:
Delaney Bivens
Kimmy Marble
Jessica Stark

Research Assistants:
Carmin Ball
Amber Campos
Brooke Kearney
Kara Lowery
Kelsey McKinney
Elizabeth McQuaig

The New Cohort

We welcome three new students who are beginning graduate work in Developmental Psychology. Thank you for supporting our students and their degree completion!

Delaney Bivens is pursuing research on the development of children's ideas about themselves and others. She is interested in how views of the self emerge and are organized, and how this affects thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. She is also interested in discovering how the self impacts perceptions of others during childhood. Delaney comes to UNCG from southwestern Missouri, and is enjoying living in a new part of the country!

Kimmy Marble is interested in how children conceptualize expertise and how they make decisions about which characteristics of people are the most valuable when trying to learn something new. Specifically, she hopes to understand how children perceive unfamiliar social and cultural practices, which methods they judge as most efficient for learning about these practices, and whom they consider to be culturally knowledgeable. In addition, Kimmy is currently a member of the team collaborating with the Greensboro Science Center. A UNCG undergraduate alum, Kimmy is excited to be staying in Greensboro to pursue this interesting line of research!

Jessica Stark is interested in learning how children think about and react to social situations. She is looking to see which characteristics of children, such as perspective taking and behavioral control, may help or hinder their ability to respond appropriately to tough social scenarios. Jessica is also a member of the Greensboro Science Center collaboration team. She is originally from Maryland, but has recently found a home in Greensboro after graduating from High Point University and continuing her education at UNCG.

Check out our brand **new Facebook page** for info on studies and findings!

Don't miss updates about fun upcoming activities for parents and kids!

Like us at www.facebook.com/uncgducklab



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Frequently Asked Questions

How is my child's information stored and used?

Your child's personal information is only accessible to our trained DUCK Lab members. Also, we use ID numbers on all stored data so that the information that we collect cannot be paired readily with your child's name.

How are DUCK Lab members trained?

All of our student research assistants have received rigorous training in ethical research practice and the proper administration of research protocols.

How can I be confident that the studies are okay for my child?

All our research is approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at UNCG. They help to ensure that our studies are always designed with your child's well-being in mind.

What are the studies like for my child?

Our data are collected through playing games and reading stories rather than "tests" in which children feel pressured to produce the "right" answers. We make it fun for your child!

Further questions?

Feel free to contact us!

Exciting Study Highlights!

"Can I Believe My Own Eyes?"

Children often form impressions about people by observing their behavior directly. Sometimes, these impressions conflict with information provided by others. We studied 3- to 6-year-olds' willingness to change their beliefs about a character's personality after hearing an authority figure (i.e., a teacher) contradict their opinions.

Children watched a child character behave positively or negatively (e.g., sharing or refusing to share) and made judgments about whether the character was "nice" or "mean." Next, children heard a teacher make the opposite judgment. Children were then given the opportunity to change their judgment of the child character, if they so desired.

Overall, relatively few children chose to change their own judgments, but they were more willing to do so when their original judgment was negative (i.e., "mean") rather than positive (i.e., "nice"). Three- to 4-year-olds did this more often than 5- to 6-year-olds. These findings tell us that children do not simply change their beliefs when they are contradicted by others, even authority figures like teachers. Also, the tendency to stand by one's own beliefs increases as children age.

These results also suggest that children are motivated to view others positively rather than negatively. **The take-home message:** Although positivity helps children in many ways (e.g., fosters friendship), it means that as adults, we need to be attentive to their personal safety in social settings.

Lapan, C., Boseovski, J.J., & Blincoe S. (in press). "Can I believe my eyes?" Three- to six-year-olds' willingness to accept contradictory trait labels. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*.

Megan Geerds: A "Post-Duck" in the Lab

I come from New Jersey, where I completed both my Masters in Cognitive Psychology and my Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology at Rutgers University- Newark.

As a postdoctoral fellow, I help the faculty directors in mentoring undergraduate and graduate researchers, while working on my own research and scholarly skills to be able to successfully pursue a professional career in developmental research. I am involved in ongoing projects in the lab, as well as working on developing my own line of new research. I also teach undergraduate courses as an adjunct faculty member both here at UNCG and at neighboring universities.

I'm currently involved in a range of projects within the lab. I am a part of our research partnership with the Greensboro Science Center, which includes projects on children's memory and learning in science museums. We are currently looking at how kids learn from others, such as parents and zookeepers, and are planning new projects looking at how to facilitate imaginative adult-child interactions. Additionally, I am working on a line of studies investigating what children learn from storybooks, including studies on learning about animals and how to increase "executive functioning", or the management of one's thoughts and behaviors, with bedtime family reading.



Our Thanks! Airbound Trampoline Park, Apple of His Eye, Apple Tree Academies, Apple Tree Academies- Northgate, ArtQuest (Greenhill Center), Arts and Basics, Beginning Visions, Blanche S., Benjamin Branch Public Library, Bnai Shalom Day School, Brown Rec Center After School, Building Blocks Children's Center, Canterbury School, Childcare Network, Children's Museum of Alamance County, Children's Museum of Winston-Salem, Childtime, Cogie Cathedral, College Hill Childcare, Cornerstone Baptist Weeschool, Curry Annex UNCG, Davis' Taekwondo America, EMF Explorers Kids Camp, Excell Christian Academy, Fairfield Enrichment Center (Now Childcare Network), Faith Wesleyan Childcare, First Baptist Preschool, First Presbyterian, First Step Preschool, Friendly Ave Christian School, Glenwood Rec Center After School, Greensboro Children's Museum, Greensboro Montessori School, Greensboro Science Center, Greensboro Summer Solstice, Griffin Recreation Center, Guilford Preparatory Academy, Hartley Dr Family YMCA (previously High Point YMCA), Hayes Taylor YMCA A.S. Program, Hemphill Branch Library, "Hester's Creative Schools, Inc.", Holy Trinity Day Schools, Irving Park Preschool, Jump-N-Fun, Kids Ahead, Kids-R-Kids, La Petite, Laurel Oak Christian Church, Leonard Rec Center, Lindley Rec Center After school Program, Little Feet Learning Center, Little Mouse Playhouse, Mad Science of the Piedmont, Mainstreet United Methodist Preschool, May Memorial Library, McGirt-Horton Branch Library, Mt. Pleasant Daycare Center, Muirs Chapel Christian Playschool, Our Children's House, Our Lady of Grace Catholic School, Partners in Childcare, Proehlfic Park Family Sports Complex, Ragsdale YMCA, Rainbow (Used to be called Children's Friends), Ruggles Street Learning Center, SciWorks, Spears Family YMCA, St. Francis Day School, St. Pius X Catholic School, Sunshine House, Tabernacle United Methodist, Tiger Kim's Tae Kwon Do, Triad Christian Academy, Tumblebees, Walkertown Branch Library, Weatherspoon Museum, Weekday Early Education (First Baptist Church), West Market Methodist Church, Y.E.S.S. Learning Center, YWCA Kidspace