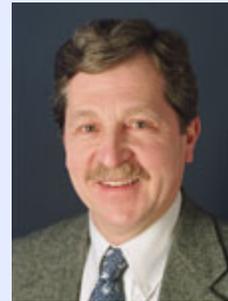




Hello from Dr. Nelson

Hello from the Labs of Cognitive Neuroscience! I hope that you all had a fabulous summer and are enjoying the arrival of fall, whether that means back to school or breaking out the cool weather gear for baby. Here at the LCN, fall means welcoming many new post docs, students, and volunteers to help us with our ever increasing number of studies. We have also officially launched our third research lab under the direction of Dr. Margaret Sheridan, PhD, whose current and upcoming studies focus on emotional development in adolescents, executive functions, and ADHD. Keep your eye on our Facebook page, where we will post a link to her website as soon as it is up and running! As always, please feel free to explore our [website](#) or contact our research team for more information about studies that you or your child might participate in.



Whether you have already taken part in our studies or have recently joined our growing Participant Registry, I greatly appreciate your interest in our research. Your support of our work and participation in our studies are invaluable to us in answering many important questions related to infant and child cognitive development.

Warm Wishes,

Charles A. Nelson, Ph.D.

Director of Research, Division of Developmental Medicine
Richard David Scott Chair in Pediatric Developmental Medicine Research
Professor of Pediatrics and Neuroscience, Harvard Medical School

Calling all Teens!

We are currently looking for 13-17 year olds to participate in our study on adolescent stress and coping. If your child would be interested or you know someone who might be, please feel free to forward this newsletter along so that they can find out more!

The study seeks to examine questions such as: **What parts of an adolescent's experience influence his or her emotional response? Could difficult and stressful experiences be part of what affects an individual's emotional development? And could stress reactivity predict differences in emotional sensitivity?**

You can click [here](#) to read the full description on our website, or contact Margaret Sheridan for more information at margaret.sheridan@childrens.harvard.edu or 857-218-5210.

In the News

"Decoding Autism"

NJN Public Television, September 2010

Click [here](#) to watch this documentary featuring Dr. Nelson and scientists from around the country who are working to shed light on the causes of autism spectrum disorders as they also work toward better tools for diagnosis, intervention, and ultimately prevention.

"HMS Professor's Work Details Devastating Toll of Romanian Orphanages"

Harvard Gazette, October 5, 2010

Click [here](#) to read about Dr. Nelson's studies looking at how development, both cognitive and physical, is impacted for institutionalized children raised in environments of extreme deprivation. You can read more about Dr. Nelson's work in Romania on the "[In the News](#)" section of our website.

Become Our Fan on Facebook!

This spring the LCN started our very own Facebook page, where fans can stay in the loop about our newest studies and lab happenings. Parents are also welcome to post photos of lab visits or their young "Neuroscientists in Training," like these two adorable twins who have paid us many visits and also happen to belong to our Lab Coordinator, Alissa!



We hope this will also be a way to reach out to new families via those who already know us, so if you are an LCN fan please take a moment to "like" our page! You can find us at www.facebook.com/wherекidshelpkids.



Boston Children's Museum

In addition to study participation opportunities here in the lab, you can also visit us at Boston Children's Museum on Saturday afternoons! Research Assistants from Dr. Margaret Sheridan's lab will be there with some fun memory studies for children ages 4 and up. Look for them at the end of the main hallway on the third floor!

Featured Study: Behavioral & Brain Responses to Changes in Facial Emotional Expression (5 & 10 year olds)

Do you see an emotion in the face to the right?

The ability to perceive and identify emotions in faces is crucial to maintaining successful social interactions, and it is often an area of difficulty for individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). Although many researchers have explored behavioral and brain responses to "prototypical" facial expressions (that is, very extreme examples of emotion), much less is known about how we respond to the more subtle expressions that characterize our daily interactions and to what degree that ability changes as we get older.



This study is designed to learn more about how the brains of both children and adults respond to expressions of different emotions of varying intensities and whether our behavioral responses to these expressions are consistent with the brain's response. For example, does our brain detect an emotion in a face even when we don't think we've seen one. Finally, we are curious to learn whether where we look on a face (for instance, at the eyes or the mouth) plays a role in our response to emotional faces.

This study will include both typically developing individuals and individuals with an autism spectrum disorder, and we hope that the findings will shed light on the specific areas of strength and difficulty for individuals with ASD. By gaining better insight into the complexities of emotional face processing, we may be able to contribute to a better understanding of the disorder and the design of more effective intervention programs and therapies.

If you are interested in participating with your child, please contact Rhiannon Luyster at rhiannon.luyster@childrens.harvard.edu or 857-218-5209.

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