Parents Page

How does memory work?

Many people think that memory is like a video camera that records everything perfectly as it happens. But that’s not really true!

Memory is more like a ball of clay that others and we can shape, mold, and change. We can change it with our experiences, but other people can change it, too. This is what we focus on in our lab – how our memories can be changed.

Line Ups

Do line up procedures influence our memories? We are interested in looking at how different methods of presenting photographs may influence memories for the event. In a game-like atmosphere, we will show your child a video of a simulated crime. We will then ask him or her questions about a lineup. One week later we will e-mail you a quick follow up survey for the child to complete. If you’d like to participate in this study, email Caisa (cer96@cornell.edu)!

Two Truths and a Lie

How do suggestive factors influence our memories? In this study we want to find out if playing a game involving true and false statements about a picture changes our memories of the picture. We will ask the child to look at a picture for a brief period of time. We will then play a game called “two truths and a lie” about the picture. We will ask your child to convincingly describe three statements about the picture (some of which are false) in order to win a prize. We will then ask your child to answer questions about the picture. If you’d like to participate in this study, visit us on the second floor of the Sciencenter on Saturdays and Sundays or email Amelia (ach254@cornell.edu)!

False Accusations

Will children make false accusations to help others? In this study we will ask your child questions about the Chemsations show performed at the Sciencenter in Ithaca, NY. We ask him or her to help us keep the clumsy chemist from accidently breaking her test tube again. We will ask your
child to confirm that the chemist accidentally broke her test tube (even though she did not). We will also ask your child questions to get a sense of his or her vocabulary and willingness to please adults. During a second interview we will ask your child more questions about the Chemsations show to see if the first interview has influenced his or her memory for the show.

Thank you for visiting our webpage! Our research cannot be conducted without your help!