Dear Families...

We wanted to take this opportunity to update you on the happenings at the Social Cognition Development lab at Cornell. We recently completed all home visits for the American families participating in the longitudinal study. In total 71 local families participated at some point in the study, and 63 families participated in all three rounds. We are very thankful for your participation! Our research is only made possible through the generous cooperation of local family like yourselves.

During our final round of home visits, many parents commented that they were interested in receiving updates about the results of this study. We have begun the long process of analyzing the nearly 200 hours of video obtained from the home visits. We currently have one research report that is forthcoming in the *Journal of Cognition and Development* from data obtained during the first round of interviews. (The results of this report are summarized below). We hope to keep you periodically updated as our analysis progresses with future newsletters.

Warm Regards,

The Social Cognition Development Lab

---

Emotional Knowledge Influences Autobiographical Remembering

In the first published research article from the social cognition development longitudinal study, we examined the relationship between culture, emotional knowledge, and autobiographical memory.

European American, Native Chinese, and Chinese immigrant 3-year-old children participated in the study. Children's emotional knowledge and autobiographical remembering were assessed.

Emotional knowledge was measured by two tasks: emotion production (e.g. "What makes people feel happy?") and a judgment task (children were asked to identify the emotion that another child would feel in a given situation).

We found that emotional knowledge was a strong predictor of children's autobiographical memory production. Children who produced more reasonable answers in the emotion production task and who were more correct in the judgment task provided more memory elaborations when asked to describe an event from their past. We also found that European American children differed in their emotional knowledge and memory compared with their Chinese peers.

This study suggests that emotion knowledge is an important mechanism in the (continued on the back page)
About the Social Cognition Development Lab...

The Social Cognition Development Lab at Cornell includes eleven undergraduate and six graduate students working under the direction of Dr. Qi Wang. Students in the lab conduct projects examining the interplay between memory, self, and emotion across the life-span and memory sharing between parents and their preschool and college-aged children.

Dr. Wang received her Ph.D. in Psychology from Harvard University. She came to Cornell in the fall of 2000 as an Assistant Professor in Human Development.

Visit us online at:
http://www.human.cornell.edu/socialcognition/

Emotion, cont.

development of autobiographical memory. We believe that without an understanding of emotion situations, very young children may be unable to properly process their significant personal experiences and store them in memory. As children begin to acquire emotional knowledge, they become increasingly able to interpret, represent, and organize their personal events for long-term retention.

We hope in future analyses to examine the role of emotional knowledge in autobiographical memory across time as children grow older.

Follow-Up Study Planned

During the final round of home visits we asked parents about their interest in future participation in research at the Social Cognition Development Lab. The overwhelming response was positive, as most families enthusiastically agreed to be contacted for future participation.

We are in the initial stages of planning a follow-up study to the current project. We hope to again visit your children as they enter grade school. There is little longitudinal research examining children's social-cognitive development from the early preschool years to school-age. We believe this project will provide significant contributions to the field of psychology and child development.

Look for further information about this follow-up study in 2005!

If you do not wish to receive future mailings from the Social Cognition Development lab, email Sarah at sck32@cornell.edu.