



A huge thank you to YOU - our families and children!
We could not do the work we do or publish our research findings without your generous participation throughout the year.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

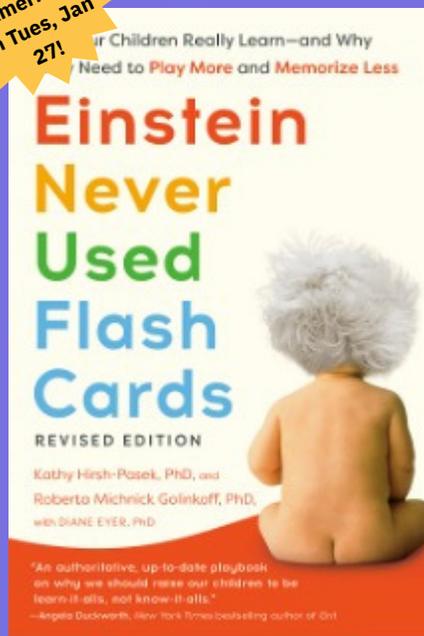


Einstein Never Used Flashcards (Revised Edition)

Coming soon on January 20th, 2026

Preorder today!

Look for us on Good Morning America on Tues, Jan 27!



Playful Learning LANDSCAPES

Playful Learning Landscapes Inaugural Conference Exceeds All Expectations

Playful Learning Landscapes, an initiative that grew out of the Temple Infant & Child Lab (TICL), hosted its first-ever Playful Learning Conference in October 2025. It brought together over 145 attendees and presenters and was hosted at CYTOPHL in Philly.

The conference was attended by education and psychology researchers, non-profit professionals, architects, pediatricians, and more. Sessions highlighted several topics on how a playful learning installation comes to fruition and showcased several successful installations around the world. Most of the event featured interactive sessions, where attendees gained hands-on experience with nine different installations! There was even a community build day and tour around Philadelphia, where folks experienced firsthand the transformative power of these spaces.

Arthur G. Affleck, III, the Executive Director of the Association of Children's Museums, kicked off the event with an inspiring keynote address and Dr. Kathy Hirsh-Pasek (director of TICL) offered a wonderful closing talk to attendees. Organizers are thrilled by the momentum generated and look forward to building on this success with future conferences that will continue strengthening and expanding the playful learning movement.

The conference was made possible through generous support from the William Penn Foundation, Watchdog, FutureTogether, FIFTEEN, Masters Group Design, and WRT.

Happenings at the Lab

Kathy Hirsh-Pasek

presented to Philadelphia City Council in November on ways to expand education equity by bringing playful learning model in and out of the classrooms.

[Read more here.](#)



Updates

Welcome to the lab!

Abby Losey: Post-baccalaureate researcher

Abby graduated from Temple University with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Certificate in Spanish. She is passionate about data-driven research and plans to pursue a career in statistics and data science. Fun fact: She gained hands-on research experience working in Dr. Newcombe's lab as an undergrad!



Congrats!



Kathy Hirsh-Pasek has been selected to receive the 2026 APS Mentor Award. This award recognizes APS members who have significantly fostered the careers of others, honoring those who masterfully help students and others find their own voices and discover their own research and career goals. The award will be received in Barcelona, Spain in May 2026.

Our study, **Marvelous Moments**, has official concluded data collection after the past 3 years! Thank you so much to all the families who took part, we are truly grateful for your time and support. Stay tuned for more findings and publications coming out in the near future!



**Dr Kathy
& Dr Ro**

Dr. **Kathy Hirsh-Pasek** (Temple University) and Dr. Roberta Golinkoff (University of DE) launched their new instagram profile. [Follow along](#) for tips to make parenting fun and meaningful for both adults and kids!

In the Media

Kathy Hirsh-Pasek guest hosts on the Remaking Tomorrow podcasts:

Hirsh-Pasek, K. & Roche, E. (guests) (2025, November 13). Remaking Tomorrow: S9, Episode 7 Ellen Roche & Kathy Hirsh-Pasek. [audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://slbradio.org/podcast/s9-ep7-ellen-roche-kathy-hirsh-pasek/>

Behr, G. & Hirsh-Pasek, K (guest host). (2025, November 6). Remaking Tomorrow: S9, Episode 6 Robert Pianta, University of Virginia. [audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://slbradio.org/podcast/s9-ep6-robert-pianta-university-of-virginia/>

Podcasts for Parents: Kathy Hirsh-Pasek offers insights on finding the joys of parenting

Hirsh-Pasek, K. (2025, December 15). Raising Good Humans podcast. [audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://www.instagram.com/raisinggoodhumanspodcast/?hl=en>

Hirsh-Pasek, K. & Golinkoff, R.M. (2025, December 8). Bottle Service podcast. Retrieved from: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/more-play-less-stress-putting-the-joy-back-in/id1594639891?i=1000740190488>

Hirsh-Pasek, K. (2025, December 6). Speech Therapy in the Age of AI: Play, Screens, and Language Development. Beyond Words with Garrett Oyama podcast. Ep 16. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/3t81plbZseU>



Findings from the Lab

Recent Publications from the Newcombe lab: *Where are they now?*

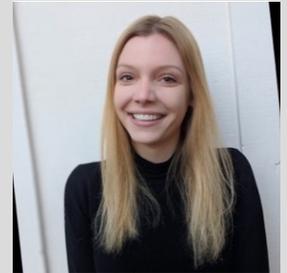


Hill, K., Cohen, S.S., Olson, I.R. & Newcombe, N.S. (2025). The role of narrative structure in scaffolding children's recall. *Journal of Cognition and Development*.

Kate Hill, a previous postbaccalaureate research assistant, is now a PhD candidate student at the University of Illinois Chicago in the Brain and Cognitive Sciences Program.

Karjack, S., Newcombe, N.S. & Ngo, C.T. (2025). The dependence of children's generalization on episodic memory varies with age and level of abstraction. *Nature Communication*.

Sabrina Karjack, who previously worked for us as a research coordinator, is currently a PhD candidate at UC Davis studying how memory and the hippocampus develops in young children.



An ode to joy: Advances in Playful Learning



Ahead of the second annual International Day of Play (June 11, 2025), Sweta Shah and Kathy Hirsh-Pasek

reflected on the importance of play to children's development and outlined several ongoing initiatives that aim to incorporate play into all aspects of children's lives. [Read more](#)



Cohen, S.S., Olson, I.R. & Newcombe, N.S. (2025). The component structure of memory during development. *Developmental Psychology*.

Sam Cohen currently works as a postdoctoral research scientist at Temple University.

Tani, N., Olson, I. R., & Newcombe, N. S. (2025). The limits of agency: Young children's memory may not benefit from choice. *Collabra: Psychology*.

Naoya Tani is currently a PhD at Temple University under Dr. Newcombe.



Litwin, J., Hill, K., Foley, J., Tani, N., Cohen, S., Newcombe, N. & Olson, I. (2025). Autobiographical memory in children: Relationship to neural white matter. *Memory*.

Previous postbaccalaureate research assistant Josh Litwin is now a PhD candidate at the University of Houston.

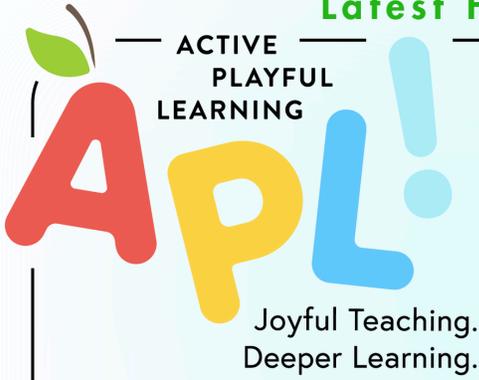
Nguyen, K.V., Olson, I.R. & Newcombe, N.S. (2025). Do spatial navigation and episodic memory rely on the same systems? Evidence from a naturalistic experience with children and adults. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.

Kim Nguyen, who earned her PhD under Dr. Newcombe at Temple, recently became Assistant Professor of Medicine at the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University. Congratulations Kim!



Findings from the Lab

Latest Findings from the Active Playful Learning Study

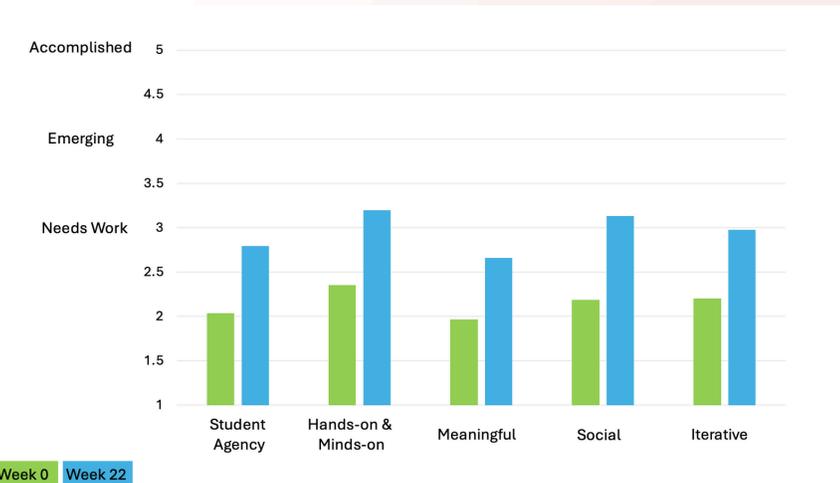
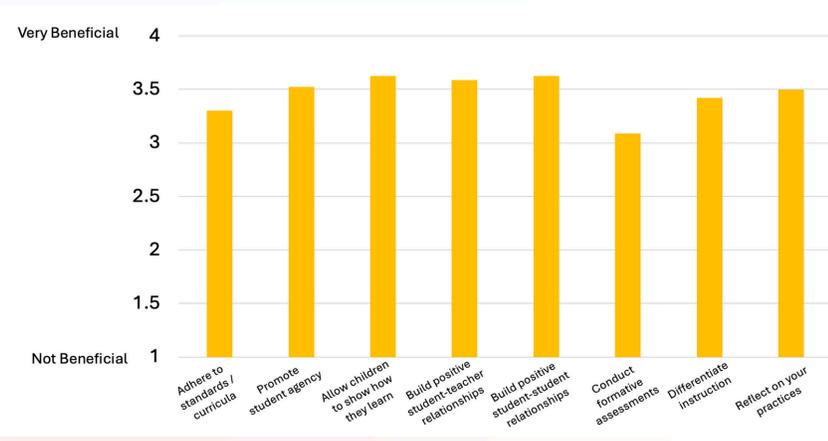


Coached APL teachers rate their students higher in math, language, reading, and the 6Cs at the end of the school year, compared to the beginning.

Student agency increased in classrooms with APL coaching over the 2024-2025 school year!



Coached APL teachers are finding the program beneficial for a wide variety of teaching practices.



Coaches are reporting that teachers are making gains on APL pillars throughout the school year.



Get Involved

We're excited to announce the return of the Geo-OWL Summer Camp, designed for children ages 11–14!

Families can choose from seven fun-filled weeks of hands-on exploration and learning. Please see the attached flyer for details and available dates.



RESEARCH IN SPATIAL COGNITION
RISC

GEO-OWL ACADEMY

NSF

GEOSPATIAL EXPLORATION & OUTDOOR WORLD LEARNING

At the Temple University Research in Spatial Cognition Lab, we study how children learn about and navigate their environment using virtual and real-world navigation tasks.

- ✓ Explore native bird and bug species!
- ✓ Join scavenger hunts!
- ✓ Solve real world environmental problems!
- ✓ Engage in Geographic Information Systems projects!

Ages 11 to 14

SUMMER 2025 ROCKED — JOIN THE ADVENTURE IN 2026 AT TEMPLE AMBLER CAMPUS!

SUMMER 2026 CAMP DATES

WEEK 1: June 22 - June 26
WEEK 2: July 13 - July 17
WEEK 3: July 20 - July 24
WEEK 4: July 27 - July 31
WEEK 5: August 3 - August 7
WEEK 6: August 10 - August 14
WEEK 7: August 17 - August 21

FIND OUT MORE AND JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST USING THE QR CODE OR EMAIL US



EMAIL: SPATIAL@TEMPLE.EDU / [SITES.TEMPLE.EDU/RISC](https://sites.temple.edu/risc)

This study is sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF). Attendance in the camp requires participation in the research study. The camp is offered at no cost.
This information is approved by Temple University for public display and is associated with project #31505



New Paid Study Opportunity

Exciting Research Opportunity for Ages 11-14 in the Research in Spatial Cognition Lab!

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY
College of Liberal Arts



Your child will complete behavioral tasks that tests their spatial knowledge in this study.

You and your child can earn up to \$70 for this two-session study!

Qualifications include
11-14 years old
fluent in English
normal or corrected vision
no psychological or neurological diagnosis

To find out more & sign up please fill out the form using the QR code



Another exciting research opportunity at Temple University!

Children ages 11–14 are invited to participate in a study exploring how kids think about and navigate new environments. The study includes two engaging sessions on Temple's main campus, and participants can earn up to \$70.

Our Directors

Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Ph.D., a Professor of Psychology at Temple University, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institute and a Visiting Professor at Oxford University, was declared a “scientific entrepreneur” from the American Association of Psychology. Writing 18 books and 250+ publications, she served as President of the International Congress for Infant Studies, was on the Governing Board of the Society for Research in Child Development and is on the board of Zero to Three. Her *Einstein Never Used Flashcards* won the Book for a Better Life Award in 2003 with her *Becoming Brilliant* (2016) reaching the NYTimes Best Sellers List in education. Her book *Making Schools Work* (Nov. 2022) is the first education book co-written with teachers, administrators and scientists. It sparked a national grant to re-imagine education. The revised edition of *Einstein Never Used Flashcards* is being released in January 2026. Hirsh-Pasek won awards from every psychological and educational society for her basic science and translational work designed to bridge basic science and educational impact. She also was honored with the Simms Mann Award and the Association of Children’s Museum Great Friend to Kids Award. She is a founding member of the Latin American School for Educational and Cognitive Neuroscience, she spearheaded a global network of scientists devoted to educational science. Co-founder of the global Learning Science Exchange Fellowship (LSX), she brings together scientists, journalists, policy makers and entertainers, to put learning science in the hands of educators. In 2021, she was elected as a member of the National Academy of Education. Her initiative Playful Learning Landscapes re-imagines cities and public squares as places with science infused designs that enhance academic and social opportunities. Her recent, initiative, Active Playful Learning, brings together leading scientists and educators to re-imagine early education in the US. Hirsh-Pasek frequently comments for the press (e.g. NPR, NYT) and blogs for the Brookings Institution.



Nora Newcombe, Ph.D., is a Laura H. Carnell Professor of Psychology at Temple University. Dr. Newcombe was educated at Antioch College, where she graduated with a major in psychology in 1972 and at Harvard University, where she received her Ph.D. in Psychology and Social Relations in 1976. She taught previously at Penn State University. Her research in cognition and cognitive development has centered on spatial cognition and on episodic memory, along with translational work on STEM education. She served as the PI of the NSF-funded Spatial Intelligence and Learning Center (SILC) from 2006- 2018, headquartered at Temple and involving Northwestern, the University of Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania as primary partners. Dr. Newcombe currently serves as Past President of the International Mind Brain Education Society (IMBES), and as Editor of *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, a journal of the Association for Psychological Science.

Honors include the Distinguished Scientific Contributions Award from the Society for Research in Child Development, the William James Fellow Award from APS, the Howard Crosby Warren Medal from the Society of Experimental Psychologists, the George Miller Award and the G. Stanley Hall Awards from APA, the Award for Distinguished Service to Psychological Science, also from APA. She has received three mentor awards, from Women in Cognitive Science, APA Division 7, and APS. She is a fellow of four divisions of the American Psychological Association (General, Experimental, Developmental, and Psychology of Women), of the Association for Psychological Science, and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and has been a Visiting Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin and the University of Otago. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Society of Experimental Psychologists.



Thank you to our sponsors: **The LEGO Foundation, William Penn Foundation, Vanguard Strong Start for Kids, NSF, The Bezos Foundation, Stan & Debra Lefkowitz, NIH, The Detre Family Charitable Fund**

**Interested in participating in research?
Scan the QR code and fill out the form to receive more information!**

