

Social Development Lab

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO | ISSUE NO. 02 | SPRING 2019

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Greetings from the Social Development Lab!

Over the past year, we worked with more than 150 children and their families who generously volunteered their time to participate in our studies. We were very excited to see almost all of our original group of 7-year-old children return to the lab this past year for their 8-year follow-up visit. They showed us just how rapidly attention, cognition and social behavior develop over the course of a single year in childhood. We also welcomed many families to the lab for the first time this past year to participate in exciting new projects including the 'Who's Next in Line?' study, looking at how motivation and emotion impact attention and our 'EEG and Peer Dyad' study, looking at how social attention relates to children's styles of interacting with a new peer. We were also in local schools collecting data examining executive function skills in students in English language learning classrooms. We are thankful for the incredible support we receive from so many people in our community, whether it be through participating in our studies, passing out information, attending our talks, or checking out our website. Our work would not be possible without you!



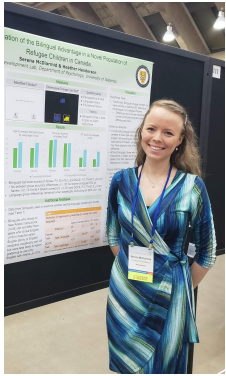
Our lab's goals

Examine the influence of temperament (early personality) on children's social, emotional and academic development

Study the strategies children use to regulate their thoughts and feelings in social and non-social contexts

Understand which self-regulatory strategies are most effective for children with different temperaments (e.g., shy vs. social children)

What's New?



PhD candidate *Serena McDiarmid* is headed to Sweden this summer to conduct research at Uppsala University. As the recipient of a highly competitive Mitacs Globalink Research Award, Serena will be collaborating with the RefugeesWellSchool program to understand how we can improve the mental health and well-being of refugee and migrant children.

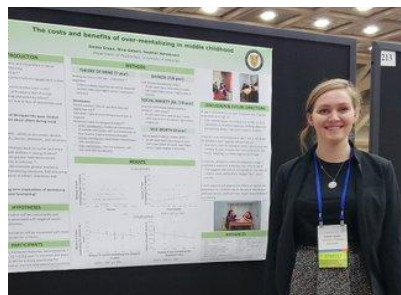
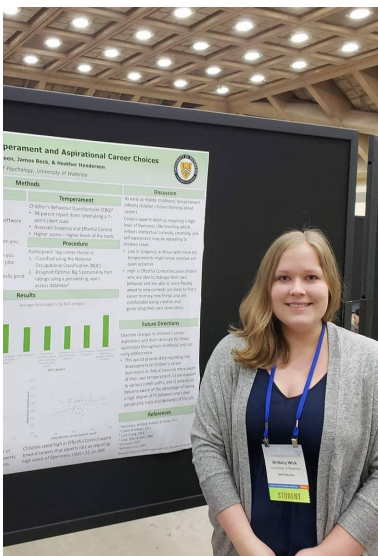


Conferences

Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) Baltimore, Maryland, USA

This past Winter, Dr. Henderson, and graduate students Serena, Emma, and McLennon, and undergraduate student Brittany attended the SRCD Biennial Meeting in Baltimore, MD where they made the following presentations:

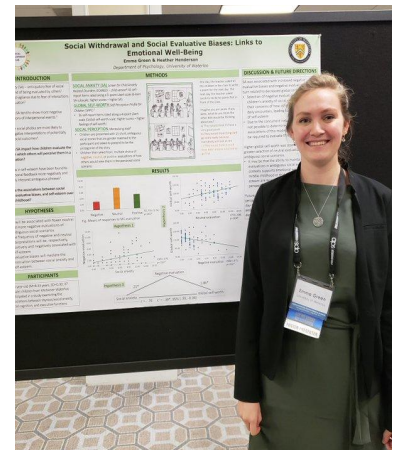
- When I Grow Up: Child Temperament and Aspirational Career Choices
- The Costs and Benefits of Over-Mentalizing in Middle Childhood
- Associations Between Shyness and Language Development Over Middle Childhood
- Temperamental and Cognitive Factors Underlying the Continuity of Rumination in Middle Childhood
- An Investigation of the Bilingual Advantage in a Novel Population of Refugee Children in Canada



Association for Psychological Science (APS) Washington, D.C, USA

Emma and McLennon recently traveled to Washington, DC to attend the APS Annual Convention where they made the following presentations:

- Social Withdrawal and Social Evaluative Biases: Links to Emotional Well-Being
- Social Monitoring Reduces the Efficiency of Children's Attention Allocation in a Divided Attention Task



Check out some of our 2018/2019 *talks and conference presentations!*

LOVE Conference

Hudson, A., Wilson, M., Green, E., Itier, R., & Henderson, H. (February, 2018). ***It's all about me: Disentangling the positivity bias within self- and other-relevant information processing.*** Poster session presented at the 47th Annual Lake Ontario Visionary Establishment (LOVE) Conference, Niagara Falls, ON

Window into Well-Being Parent & Caregiver Workshop

Henderson, H. A. & Awad Lobe, T. (2018, March). ***Helping teens and pre-teens with emotions and decision-making.*** Invited presentation in the Window into Well-Being Parent & Caregiver Workshop at Centennial Public School, Waterloo, ON.

Graduate Psychology Discovery Conference

Green, E.S., Gabert, N., Thomas, S., & Henderson, H. A. (March, 2018) ***The role of shyness in children's emotion identification and mentalizing tendencies.*** Poster session presented at the Graduate Psychology Discovery Conference, Waterloo, ON.

Development 2018

Green, E., Gabert, N., Thomas, S., & Henderson, H. A. (May, 2018) ***The role of shyness in children's emotion identification and mentalizing tendencies.*** In W. Hipson (Chair) Exploring Complex Linkages among Aspects of Emotional Competencies and the Development of Internalizing Problems in Childhood. Symposium presented at Development 2018, St. Catharine's, ON.

Wilson, M., & Henderson, H. (2018, May). ***The impact of emotional stimuli on the relation between shyness and attention shifting.*** Poster presented at Development 2018, St. Catharine's, ON.

Annual Meeting of the Vision Sciences Society

Hudson, A., Wilson, M., Green, E., Itier, R., & Henderson, H. (May, 2018). ***The impact of self-relevance and valence on word processing: An ERP Study.*** Poster session presented at 18th Annual Meeting of the Vision Sciences Society, St. Pete Beach, FL.

Memorial University of Newfoundland

Wilson, M. (2019, February). ***Shyness, Attention, and the Social World: A Developmental Perspective.*** Invited symposium presentation at Memorial University, Grenfell Campus, Corner Brook, NL.

Wilson, M. (2019, February). ***Temperament and Executive Functioning: Building Blocks of Personality.*** Invited lecture at Memorial University, Grenfell Campus, Corner Brook, NL.

University of Waterloo March Break Open House

Henderson, H. A. (2019, March). ***From wallflower to life of the party? The impact of early temperament on shyness.*** Invited presentation at University of Waterloo March Break Open House, Waterloo, ON.

Society for Research in Child Development Meeting

Green, E.S., Gabert, N., & Henderson, H.A. (March, 2019). ***The costs and benefits of over-mentalizing in middle childhood.*** Poster session presented at the 2019 Society for Research in Child Development Meeting, Baltimore, MD.

Abbasi, M., Green, E.S., & Henderson, H.A. (March, 2019). ***Associations between shyness and language development over middle childhood.*** Poster session presented at the 2019 Society for Research in Child Development Meeting, Baltimore, MD.

McDiarmid, S. & Henderson, H. (2019, March 21). ***An Investigation of the Bilingual Advantage in a Novel Population*** [Poster]. Presented at the Society for Research in Child Development 2019 Biennial Meeting, Baltimore, Maryland.

Wick, B.L., Green, E.S., & Henderson, H.A. (March, 2019). ***When I grow up: Child temperament and aspirational career choices.*** Poster session presented at the 2019 Society for Research in Child Development Meeting, Baltimore, MD.

Wilson, M., & Henderson, H. (2019, March). ***Temperamental and Cognitive Factors Underlying the Continuity of Rumination in Middle Childhood.*** Poster session presented at the Society for Research in Child Development 2019 Biennial Meeting in Baltimore, MD.

Association for Psychological Science Convention

Green, E.S. & Henderson, H.A. (May, 2019). ***Social withdrawal and social evaluative biases: Links to emotional well-being.*** Poster session presented at the 2019 Association for Psychological Science Convention, Washington, D.C.

Wilson, M., & Henderson, H. (2019, May). ***Social Monitoring Reduces the Efficiency of Children's Attention Allocation in a Divided Attention Task.*** Poster session presented at the 31st Association for Psychological Science Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour and Cognitive Science

Hudson, A., Green, E.S., Wilson, M., Itier, R., & Henderson, H. A (June, 2019). ***Socio-cognitive processing of referent and valence information in childhood.*** Poster session presented at the 29th Annual meeting of the Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour & Cognitive Science, Waterloo, ON.

International Symposium on Bilingualism

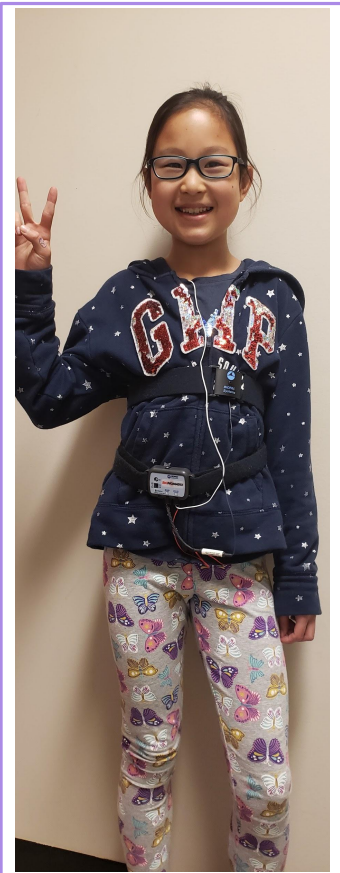
McDiarmid, S. & Henderson, H. (2019, June 28). ***Second Language Proficiency and Executive Functions in Children Enrolled in English as a Second Language Programs*** [Oral presentation]. Presented at the 12th International Symposium on Bilingualism, Edmonton, Alberta.

Current Studies

With the generous support of a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Insight Grant we ran several studies over the past year looking at various aspects of social development in childhood!

Who's next in Line?

Last September we launched a brand new study for 7- and 8-year olds titled "Who's Next in Line? A study of Temperament, Cognition, and Metacognition in Middle Childhood." In this study, we're interested in how children's early personalities influence how they think and learn in a variety of situations, such as dynamic classroom settings with other kids. In addition to our time-honoured memory and matching games, we're learning firsthand how our participants 'think about thinking': that is, how they approach and strategize about everyday scenarios, how frequently they notice their minds wandering, and to what topics their minds wander. This is also our first study with children using our brand new heart-rate and respiration monitoring system! With this cutting-edge technology, which we were able to acquire with the generous support of the Canada Foundation for Innovation, we're able to show kids how their brains and bodies communicate with each other as they engage in different activities. Data collection is still ongoing, so if you'd like to get involved, don't hesitate to get in touch!



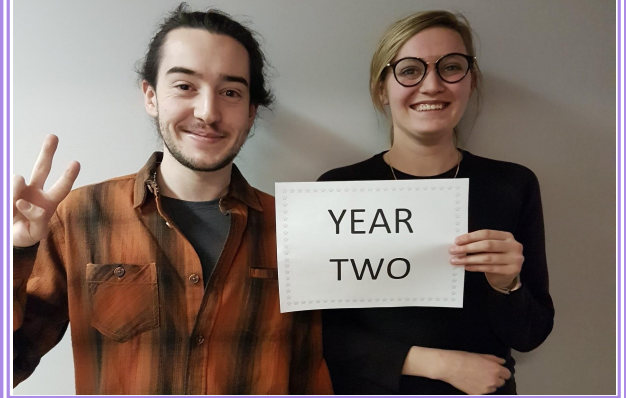
Executive Function in English Language Learners

Last winter, we began visiting public schools to meet with students who speak Arabic as a first language and are learning English as an additional language. We found that this group of students scored lower than their monolingual peers in measures of their executive functions, a set of cognitive skills involved in self-control and regulation. Among these students, being more proficient in English was associated with stronger executive functions. Lower executive functions are often at the root of challenging behaviour, so this study helps teachers understand student behaviour in a new light. Furthermore, these results suggest that as students become more proficient in English as an additional language, their executive functions may become stronger! We are planning a follow-up study in schools to test these ideas by tracking students over time.

Current Studies

Shyness and Executive Function

This June, we will complete our short-term longitudinal study examining how temperament (shyness vs. sociability) influences the way children attend to, and process, social and non-social information. We were thrilled with the commitment our participating families showed with 91 families volunteering at age 7 and almost all of those families returning a year later to complete their follow-up visit.



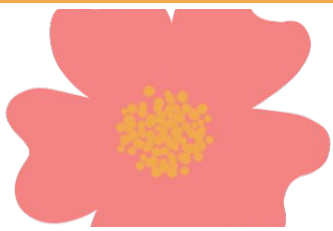
EEG & Peer Dyad Study

Our newest project is a two-part study with children from 9 to 11 years of age. This study is being conducted in collaboration with Dr. Roxane Itier in the Cognitive Neuroscience Area. In the first visit, we record children's EEG (or electroencephalogram) as they think carefully about themselves and others. In the second visit, children are scheduled to come to the lab in pairs so we can observe how children interact when they first meet another child their age. After spending some time getting to know each other, the children do a series of structured activities and games together. During this interaction, both children wear heart-rate and respiration monitors so we can examine the mind-body-behaviour connections during social interactions. We are currently collecting data for this study and are seeking participants. If you are interested in this fun, two-part study, feel free to contact us!





Heather Henderson is a Professor in the Department of Psychology and the Director of the Social Development Lab. She completed her BSc in Psychology at McMaster University and her Ph.D. in Human Development at the University of Maryland-College Park. She was on faculty at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida for 10 years before joining the faculty at UW in July 2014. Dr. Henderson's research focuses on social and emotional development in typically-developing children, children with extreme temperaments and children with autism. She also teaches Research Design and Developmental Psychology to UW undergraduate and graduate students. She can be reached directly by email (hhenderson@uwaterloo.ca) or by phone (519) 888-4567 ex. 31597.



Our People



Our People

Graduate Researchers



Claudia Labahn

is the Lab Manager at the Social Development Lab. She completed her MASc in Developmental Psychology at UW in 2015, where she also completed her BA in Honours Psychology. She currently teaches English as a Second Language at UW and works with children on the autism spectrum! She can be reached by email (clabahn@uwaterloo.ca).

Emma Green

is completing her doctorate in Developmental Psychology at the UW. She completed her BSc in Honours Mental Health Studies at the University of Toronto in 2016. Emma is the lead researcher working on our EEG and Peer Dyad study and conducts research on temperament and children's interpretations of others' thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. She can be contacted by email (e3green@uwaterloo.ca).

McLennon

Wilson is a doctoral student in Developmental Psychology at the UW. He completed his BSc in Honours Psychology at the Memorial University of Newfoundland in 2016. He is currently the lead researcher on our Who's Next in Line study! He is interested in the inter-relations between temperament, affect, and cognition. He can be contacted by email (m36wilso@uwaterloo.ca).

Serena

McDiarmid is doing her PhD in Developmental Psychology after finishing her MASc at UW last year, her B.Ed. at Wilfrid Laurier University and her BSc in Health Studies at UW. Serena is a substitute teacher with the WRDSB and is conducting research on the development of refugee children! She can be reached by email (sdmcdiar@uwaterloo.ca).

Our People

Goodbye

Sadly, we have to say goodbye to some of the amazing research assistants we've had over the past year. A big thank you to Savannah, Meredith, and Aaron for all of your help and support!

Current Undergraduate Research Assistants



Isaac Beech is in his third year at UW completing a BSc in Psychology. He was a co-op student in the lab last summer.

Jenna Sonoski is going into her third year at UW completing a BA in Psychology with a Research Intensive Specialization and a minor in Fine Arts. She is our current co-op student this summer.

Kaitlyn Crook is in her third year at UW completing a BA in Psychology with a Research Intensive Specialization. She was a co-op student in the lab last summer.

Lauren Schörmacher is going into her second year at Carleton University where she is completing a degree in Communication and Media Studies.

Nicole Herz is in her third year at UW completing a BSc in Psychology with a Biology minor. She did her co-op with us the past winter.

Serena Tran is in her third year at UW completing a BA in Psychology with a Research Intensive Specialization.

Vanessa Torchio is going into her fourth year at UW completing a BSc in Psychology.



Publications

If you are interested in reading some more about the type of research going on in our lab, check out some of our *published papers!*

Some Recent Publications

Troller-Renfree, S. V., Buzzell, G. A., Bowers, M. E., Salo, V. C., Forman-Alberti, A., Smith, E., Papp, L. J., McDermott, J. M., Pine, D. S., Henderson, H. A. and Fox, N. A. (2019). **Development of inhibitory control during childhood and its relations to early temperament and later social anxiety: unique insights provided by latent growth modeling and signal detection theory.** *J Child Psychol Psychiatr*, 60: 622-629.

Henderson, H. A., Green, E. S., & Wick, B. L. (2018). **The social world of behaviorally inhibited children: A transactional account.** In K. Perez-Edgar & N. Fox (Eds.) *Behavioral Inhibition: Integrating Theory, Research, and Clinical Perspectives* (pp. 135 – 155), New York, NY: Springer.

Burrows, C. A., Usher, L. V., Becker-Haimes, E. M., McMahan, C., Mundy, P. C., Jensen-Doss, A., & Henderson, H. A. (2018). **Profiles and correlates of parent-child agreement on social anxiety symptoms in youth with autism spectrum disorder.** *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 48, 2023-2037.

Usher, L. V., Burrows, C. A., Messinger, D. S., & Henderson, H. A. (2018). **Metaperception in adolescents with and without autism spectrum disorder.** *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 48, 533-548.

Henderson, H. A. & Wilson, M. J. G. (2017). **Attention processes underlying risk and resilience in behaviorally inhibited children.** *Current Behavioral Neuroscience Reports*, 4, 99-106.

White, L. K., Degnan, K. A., Henderson, H. A., Pérez-Edgar, K., Walker, O. L., Shechner, T., Leibenluft, E., Bar-Haim, Y., Pine, D. S., Fox, N. A. (2017) **Developmental relations among behavioral inhibition, anxiety, and attention biases to threat and positive information.** *Child Development*, 88, 141-155.





Contact Us!

Questions?



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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sdl.uwaterloo/>



Instagram: @socialdevelopmentlab



UW Website: <https://uwaterloo.ca/social-development-lab/>



Twitter: @SDLab_UW