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"Forgetting-As-Abstraction: Allowing Children Time to Forget Promotes Their Ability to Learn Language, Categories, and Concepts”

Monday, April 4, 2016
4:30–6:00 pm
A53 Baker Hall/Steinberg Auditorium

The early years of life are an exciting period of growth and change in cognition. Children learn a seemingly infinite amount of new information despite limitations in their basic cognitive capacities, such as attention and memory abilities. In this talk, I will review research supporting the hypothesis that forgetting, commonly characterized as a constraint on children’s development, is actually promoting children’s learning. In particular, I will argue that forgetting acts as a form of abstraction, which promotes children’s ability to generalize knowledge across contexts. I will end the talk by discussing the possibility that what makes children incredible learners is not simply that they learn to encode information in the world, but that they rapidly forget the large amount of irrelevant information they learn.

All lectures are open to the public.
For more information, call 412-268-3151.