



Newsletter of Purdue University Child Language Research Projects



**PURDUE  
UNIVERSITY**

Department of Speech, Language,  
and Hearing Sciences

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**SPRING 2026**

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765-496-0345

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765-496-0204

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West Lafayette: 765-496-0427  
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(SKILL)  
765-496-0215

Find our websites here:



*Language Links* is the Newsletter of the *Child Language Research Projects* in the Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences at Purdue University. Through this publication, we keep in touch with families who have participated in our research, as well as people who have referred families to our programs.

We are grateful for the contributions that you have made to our research, and we hope that you find this newsletter interesting and informative!

## **CHILDREN WHO STUTTER**

### *In the Spotlight*

Developmental stuttering is a type of fluency disorder that typically emerges around three years of age. Disfluencies that are likely to be considered "stuttering" include repetition of parts of words (e.g., "ba-ba-ba-baby"), prolongation of sounds in words (e.g., mmmom), or an increase in tension during disfluent speech. While about 5% of preschool children go through a period of stuttering as they are learning to talk, this resolves in 75-80% of cases. Although there are known risk factors, such as a family history of stuttering, we can't yet reliably predict whether stuttering will resolve or persist in an individual child. If you have concerns about your child, consult with a speech-language pathologist. Early intervention is effective in

supporting a child's developing communication skills, fostering a positive attitude toward talking, and enhancing parental confidence.

#### **You can find more information and parent tips here:**

- MD Steer Speech, Language, and Hearing clinic, (765)-496-4229
- The Stuttering Foundation of America, [www.stutteringhelp.org](http://www.stutteringhelp.org)
- National Stuttering Association, [www.westutter.org](http://www.westutter.org) (also see NSA article on p.2)

#### **You can find out more about stuttering research at Purdue here:**

- Dr. Kwang Kim's SKILL Lab, [hhs.purdue.edu/stutter](http://hhs.purdue.edu/stutter)



# Research Update

## WORD LEARNING PROJECT COMPLETING ITS 10TH YEAR!

Thanks to the participation of over 200 children and their families and a group of helpful speech-language pathologists, the word learning project in the Child Language Lab is completing its 10th year. The project focuses on 4- and 5-year-old children with developmental language disorder (DLD) and same-age children with typical language development. The overall goal of the project is to find out if the use of “retrieval practice” boosts children’s learning of new words.

In our studies, retrieval practice occurs as children are learning a set of new “made-up” words for unfamiliar plants and animals. They might be asked to recall, or “retrieve,” one of the words after several other words have been heard in the meantime, making remembering and learning that word more challenging.



However, we have found in all of our studies that children learned more words when retrieval practice was included than when the children simply listened to the words with no opportunities for retrieval.

This advantage was seen not only when the children were asked to recall the words immediately after the learning session but also one week later.

Our most recent studies have converted the word learning activity from structured practice into one that involves shared book reading, to more closely reflect the kind of learning activities that 4- and 5-year-olds might typically be involved in.

An important finding is that retrieval practice proved helpful to both children with DLD and children with typical language development. It seems that retrieval practice can be a very useful addition for fostering vocabulary development in both educational and clinical settings.

### Did you know?

- Children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) have been described using terms like *language impairment, language delay, language learning disability*.
- DLD is 5 times more common than autism.
- DLD is associated with risk for dyslexia and other learning disabilities.

Learn more at [www.dldandme.org](http://www.dldandme.org)



## “EVERY VOICE HAS VALUE”

Anabelle Ross will graduate this Spring from Purdue’s SLHS Department and plans to obtain a graduate degree in speech-language pathology. Her experience growing up as a person who stutters led to her interest in the field and to her involvement with the National Stuttering Association (NSA). The NSA is an organization for people who stutter and for those who have a special interest in stuttering such as family members and speech pathologists.

Thanks to the efforts of Anabelle and the NSA West Lafayette Chapter, this April Purdue will be hosting the first NSA 1-Day conference held in Indiana. Anabelle had never attended an NSA chapter meeting until she came to Purdue as a freshman. For her, it was the first time she was part of a community of people who shared her experience of stuttering, a community where mutual understanding and encouragement were abundant.

The NSA Indiana 1-Day Conference will bring together kids and adults who stutter from the state and region, as well as their families and speech-language pathologists.

A variety of workshops will touch on such topics as the science of stuttering, self-advocacy for people who stutter, the challenges and insights of living with stuttering and current research.

Anabelle hopes the conference will give attendees a chance to meet others, learn, and have fun. The most important message she has learned and hopes to pass on is that “every voice has value.”

A promotional poster for the NSA Indiana 1-Day Conference. The background is purple with a white grid pattern. In the top left corner is a QR code. In the top center is the NSA logo, which consists of a white starburst shape with the letters "nsa" inside. In the top right corner, the text "Register NOW!" is written in white on a teal background. The main text "Indiana 1-Day Conference!" is written in a large, white, serif font. Below this, in a smaller white font, is "for Adults, Families &amp; SLPs". At the bottom, there is a white banner with the text "A PAY WHAT YOU CAN EVENT!". On the right side, there is a list of standard event pricing: "\$39 Adults (single admission 18+)", "\$49 Families (up to 4 people)", and "\$59 SLPs (0.45 ASHA CEUs)". At the bottom, there is a white banner with the text "PURDUE UNIVERSITY - WEST LAFAYETTE, IN SATURDAY, APRIL 11TH | 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM".

# So Many Ways to Participate!



## SuPur Friends Program

The Summer Purdue (SuPur) Friends Program is **for 9- to 12- year-old children with autism**. In SuPur Friends, children participate in pragmatic language groups, which are designed to provide opportunities to interact with peers, to learn and practice skills for social interaction, and to develop friendships. Two-hour sessions provide opportunities for participants to learn and practice skills during motivating activities. Parents have the opportunity to meet with clinical staff at the end of the program to discuss their child's progress. Compensation for participation includes a written report on results of standardized testing and \$10 per hour for eligibility testing and research participation.

**\*When and Where?\*** The program will take place the first four weeks of June, meeting in Lyles-Porter Hall on Purdue's campus from 9-11:30 each Tuesday and Thursday (8 sessions total).

**Contact:** Dr. Brandon Keehn ▪ 765-496-0204 ▪ bkeehn@purdue.edu

## Play Café:

### A Free, Family-Friendly Event at Purdue!

Children of all ages are invited to come play with us at Purdue's Language Preschool. In addition, enjoy the Bob L. and Joyce Beery Miles Outdoor Learning Space. This special playground was designed to encourage communication through play. (To find out more about it, google "Purdue's Playground with a Purpose"). At Play Café, you can also learn about what the Department of Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences has to offer families!

- Coffee and light snacks are available.
- The event is open to all families with children of all ages
- Purdue Language Preschool and the Outdoor Learning Space are located at Lyles-Porter Hall. Free parking is available in our attached garage
- Date: March 28, 2026 from 9-11:30.

#### Contact:

Claney Outzen, voutzen@purdue.edu



## Kids Needed!

### SPEECH LEARNING STUDY

**Ages:** 4- and 5-year-olds with typical speech or with speech sound disorder

**Compensation:** \$15/session (2-3 one-hour sessions); children also receive a toy per session. An assessment of your child's speech, language, and hearing is completed.

**Location:** Child Phonology Lab at Purdue (Lyles-Porter Hall)

**Contact:** Interested families should contact us at 765-496-0345 or childspeech@purdue.edu IRB 2024-1515, PI. Dr. Françoise Brosseau-Lapré

### THE SLHS LAB IN INDY

Researchers in the SLHS department see research participants of all ages for various clinical studies in our "satellite" office in Indianapolis. We are located in the Conner Insurance building at 8445 Keystone Crossing, very close to the Keystone Fashion Mall. (765) 496-7574

### SIGN UP FOR THE SLHS RESEARCH REGISTRY

Once you sign up, researchers will be able to contact you when your child is the right age for a study in SLHS at Purdue. You can decide at that time if you want to take part. Only qualified researchers in SLHS would have access to your contact information, and you can choose to be removed at any time. Signing up is easy – Use the QR code here to sign up online, call us at (765) 494-4229, or email SLHSRegistry@purdue.edu.





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