
Rose F. Kennedy Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center (IDDRC)
Seminar Series

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The Critical Role of Experience in the Acquisition of Knowledge in Human Infants



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**Kennedy Center (Room 901):
1:00pm, Tuesday, December 4th, 2012**

Biographical note: David J. Lewkowicz is professor of Psychology and a member of the Center for Complex Systems and Brain Science at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida. He has been investigating perceptual and cognitive development for over 30 years, and has published widely on the topic. He is past President of the International Society on Infant Studies, and is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science.

Abstract:

Infancy is a remarkable time in human development. It is then that we acquire our basic knowledge about our world. In this talk, I will discuss our research on the acquisition of knowledge about faces, voices, speech, and language in infancy and will show that specific early experience plays a critical role in the growth of this knowledge. In particular, I will discuss evidence that early experience has paradoxical effects on this process by showing that it not only leads to increasing perceptual expertise in the unisensory and multisensory domains but that it also leads to a decline in certain key perceptual abilities. I will conclude by discussing the implications of these findings for the understanding of typical and atypical human development.