



# GROWING WITH BROCK

WINTER 2026

## THIS ISSUE

In the News

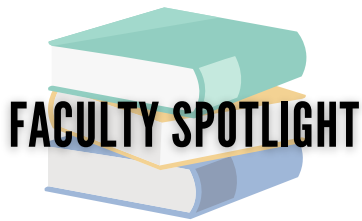
Awards & Scholarships

Research Updates & Recent Publications

Invitations to participate

Discount Codes

Winter Science Experiments



## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



**Dr. Angela  
Evans**

## IN THE NEWS: HOW TO PROMOTE HONESTY IN CHILDREN

Two studies conducted by Angela Evans from Growing with Brock and Victoria Talwar (McGill University), explored 3- to 8-year-old children in Canada and their honesty. One of the studies examined how increasing self-awareness and promising to tell the truth impacted honesty. They discovered that encouraging self-awareness was remarkably effective in reducing lying for 3- and 4-year-olds, but completely ineffective for the 7- and 8-year-olds.

The second study examined modelling honest behaviour and emphasizing the good consequences of telling the truth where they found that using both strategies together appeared to be a bit more effective than either of them in isolation.

*Read more:*

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/christianmiller/2024/04/30/how-to-promote-honesty-in-children/?sh=fd8f6a865767>

# Awards & Scholarships

## SSHRC Insight Grant

Dr. Caitlin Mahy was awarded a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Insight Grant (2025-2030) entitled “A theory-based investigation of the development of children’s procrastination” which will fund the lab’s work on children’s procrastination.



## Vanier Scholarship

PhD student Madi Maguire (BA '23) is among 36 Brock University graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to receive federal funding for her research. She was awarded a \$150,000 Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship. In total, 36 Brock student researchers received more than \$2.4 million in Canadian Graduate Scholarships (CGS) and Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships for their innovative and impactful work.



Read more about Madi’s award: <https://brocku.ca/brock-news/2025/07/procrastination-researcher-among-grad-students-postdocs-given-2-4m-funding-boost/>

# RESEARCH UPDATES FROM THE GWB LABS!

## ***Using movies to understand the aging brain - Campbell Neurocognitive Aging Lab***

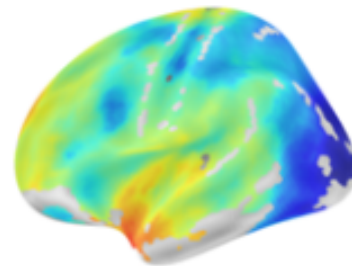
Alfred Hitchcock was the master of suspense. He transformed the world of cinema, and now he is helping transform our understanding of the aging brain.

Rather than showing people boring lists of words or objects to remember, cognitive aging researchers have started using movies, like those by the famed director, to study how age affects the brain under more lifelike conditions.

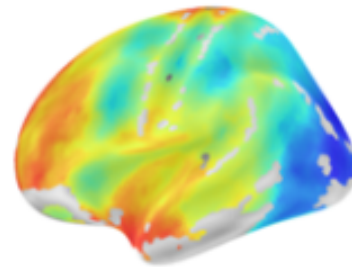
Part of the reason movies feel more lifelike to us is that they are made up of a series of meaningful events. Even though we experience the world around us in a continuous fashion, we tend to remember it as a series of separate events. For instance, your day today may have consisted of waking up to take a shower, going downstairs to eat breakfast, and then commuting to work. How are these relatively long events represented in the brain and committed to memory?

Hitchcock to the rescue! We scanned people aged 18-88 years with functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) while they watched a short episode of Hitchcock's "Bang! You're Dead". We wanted to know how the brain represents complex, continuous events and whether these representations change with age.

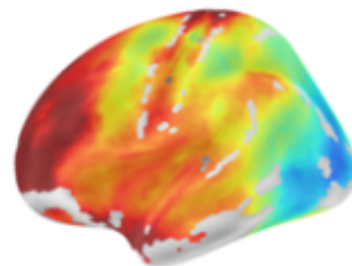
Age: 18-42



Age: 43-63



Age: 64-88



# RESEARCH UPDATES FROM THE GWB LABS!

## ***Using movies to understand the aging brain (continued)*** - Campbell Neurocognitive Aging Lab

Our study, published in [Communications Biology](#), shows that when people watch movies, their brains move through a series of states – stable patterns of neural activity that change when one event ends and another begins. The boy finds a gun in his uncle’s suitcase and thinks it’s a toy [state change], he heads to the living room with the loaded weapon [state change], then roams through the town aiming it at people [state change].

The novel finding from this study is that neural states last longer in older adults. Put another way, older adults’ brains stay in the same configuration for longer before they transition to a new configuration. And even when they do change, the change is less pronounced. This may be because older adults are still processing the previous event as the next one begins. Alternatively, increased knowledge and experience of older adults might allow them to form stronger links between distinct events and only mark the most meaningful changes. Indeed, we found that older adults still show neural state transitions when there are important changes in the storyline.

What does this mean for memory? In a related study published in [Cerebral Cortex](#), we showed that bigger changes between states relate to better memory in both younger and older adults. When a new event starts, you want your brain to say, “hey, there is something new happening here, let’s pay attention”. If you don’t do this updating process very well, it can affect your ability to remember the movie later on.

Funded by the [Canadian Institutes of Health Research](#), we are now using this knowledge to develop an intervention aimed at improving event memory in older adults exhibiting the first signs of dementia. Ultimately, we want to help people remember what the doctor said or what happened at yesterday’s bridge game, not just the details of Hitchcock Presents.

# Connect with us!



@growingwithbrock



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# CALL FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS!



**LOOKING FOR YOU!**

Participate in our Online Survey about decisions and beliefs about caregiving in Canada and opt in to win a \$20 gift card!

**Are you eligible?**

- Between the ages of 18-35
- English-speaking
- Have not provided care to an individual aged 60 years or older in the last two years

**What is involved?**

- Participation in an online survey (approx. 30 minutes), internet access required

**Compensation:**

- You can enter a draw to win 1 of 3 \$20 gift cards (must provide an email address to enter)
- Brock students from the Psychology Department can choose to receive 0.5 SONA credits for participating in this survey (Note: you must access this survey through the SONA website to receive SONA credit)

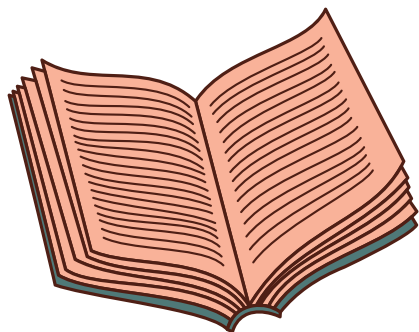
**Interested in Participating?**

**Click the link below!**  
[https://brock.ca/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8lgVQO5PO\\_ztHEhM](https://brock.ca/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8lgVQO5PO_ztHEhM)

**Questions? Contact Us!**  
zwarlabor@brocku.ca  
(905) 688 - 5550 ext. 3556

Principal Investigator: Dr. Larissa Zwar  
Department of Psychology, Brock University

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (25-095 - ZWAR)



## CHECK OUT OUR RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Davis, E. E., Thomas, H. G., Price, M. S., Mahy, C. E. V., & Campbell, K. L. (2025). Differential attentional demands on implicit and explicit associative memory in children 8-12 years old. *Memory*, 33, 527-541.

Kamber, E., Mahy, C. E. V., & Martin-Ordas, G. (in press). Children's future oriented cognition and family characteristics: How similar are children's and parents' future-oriented cognition? *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*.

Rocca, M. R., Kamber, E., Mazachowsky, T. R., & Mahy, C. E. V. (2026). Investigating the development and coherence of children's saving skills. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 261, 106359.

Zwar, L., Buczak-Stec, E., Konig, H. H., & Hajek, A. (2025). Long-Term Care Facilities by Design: The Different Preferences of Location, Features, and Policies of LTC Facilities Among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Heterosexual Adults in Germany. *J Am Med Dir Assoc*, 26(12), 105894.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jamda.2025.105894>

Zwar, L., & Hajek, A. (2025). It's all about the attitude: findings on internalized caregiver stigma and mental health of informal caregivers. *J Gerontol B Psychol Sci Soc Sci*, 80(9), gbaf111.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbaf111> - Editor's Choice Article of The Journals of Gerontology, B: Psychological Sciences

# EXPERIMENT AT HOME: ICE EXCAVATION

1. Prepare bowls or containers of your choice and fill them with water. Using different-sized containers can make it more interesting.
2. Submerge small toys or trinkets into the water. For a creative twist, you can include animal toys and invent a narrative around a daring animal rescue mission.
3. Place the containers in the freezer overnight to let the water freeze solid. Once frozen, carefully remove the ice blocks from their containers and arrange them on a spacious tray.
4. Encourage your child to embark on their excavation adventure. Equip them with squeeze bottles filled with warm water to melt the ice or sturdy tools like a hammer or rolling pin to chip away at the icy surface and uncover the hidden treasures.

<https://www.kidsclubchildcare.com.au/ice-excavation-activity/#:~:text=Once%20frozen%2C%20carefully%20remove%20the,during%20a%20child's%20formative%20years>

## What you will need:

- Bowls, containers, or cups of various sizes filled with water
- Small toys or trinkets (e.g., seashells, Lego blocks, animal toys)
- Squeeze bottles
- Toy hammer, small rolling pin, or any sturdy toy
- A spacious tray



# DISCOUNT:

  
**Bird**  
**KINGDOM**  
NIAGARA FALLS, CANADA

Growing with Brock is happy to announce that we have partnered with the Bird Kingdom in Niagara Falls to provide our members a special discount code!

Use the code **BROCK3** for \$3 off all admission tickets from their online store. It is active now and expires on July 31.

## SCIENCE CONCEPTS TO EXPLORE

**Melting & Freezing:** Observe how heat changes ice to water and vice versa.

**States of Matter:** See solids (ice) become liquids (water).

**Heat Transfer:** Warm water transfers heat, causing melting.

**Freezing Point Depression:** Salt lowers the melting point, making ice melt faster.

**Archaeology/Paleontology:** Pretend to be scientists uncovering fossils.