

# New Research From Psychological Science

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Read about the latest research published in *Psychological Science*:

## [When Delays Improve Memory: Stabilizing Memory in Children May Require Time](#)

*Kevin P. Darby and Vladimir M. Sloutsky*

The learning of new information often reduces memory for older information — something called retroactive interference. Although retroactive interference is generally small in adults, children can experience catastrophic interference. In a series of studies, children learned connections between pairs of objects and a cartoon character during three learning phases. Some of the objects were recombined and associated with different characters across testing phases (overlapping pairs), and some pairs of objects were specific to each character and remained constant across phases (unique pairs). Children experienced substantial retroactive interference for overlapping pairs except when a break was given between phases 2 and 3. The authors suggest that the 48-hour break let the children create a more stable configural memory trace, making the information more resistant to catastrophic interference.

## [In-Group Ostracism Increases High-Fidelity Imitation in Early Childhood](#)

*Rachel E. Watson-Jones, Harvey Whitehouse, and Cristine H. Legare*

Adults and children who are ostracized often work especially hard to try to reaffiliate themselves with group members. In this study, the authors examined how ostracism by in- or out-group members influences children's imitation of social group conventions. Children were assigned to a color-based group and played a virtual ball-throwing game where they were either included or excluded by in- or out-group members. The children then performed an imitation task. Children excluded by their in-group showed higher fidelity imitation compared with children included by their in-group. Children included or excluded by an out-group showed no difference in the fidelity of imitation, indicating that young children are sensitive to ostracism by in-group members and use imitation as a way to be readmitted back into the group.