



מרכז אדמונד י. ספרא לחקר המח של לקויות למידה
Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities
مركز أدموند ي. سفرا لبحوث الدماغ في صعوبات التعلم

Department of Learning Disabilities
Faculty of Education
University of Haifa

Inaugural Conference

The Young and the Adult Brain

Learning Disabilities: Prevention and Intervention

May 31-June 2, 2009



EDMOND J. SAFRA
PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATION

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PROGRAM & ABSTRACTS



Sunday, May 31, 2009

Hecht Museum Auditorium

09:00-10:00 **Registration**

10:00-10:30 **Opening remarks:**

Prof. Zvia Breznitz, Head of the Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa

Greetings:

Prof. Ofra Maysless - Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa

Session 1: The Reading Brain 1

Head: **Prof. Avi Karni**

10:30-11:15 **Kenneth R. Pugh, Ph.D**

President and Director of Research, Haskins Laboratories,
Yale University, School of Medicine, New Haven Connecticut, USA
*Neuroimaging studies of skilled reading and reading disability:
Establishing brain/behavior links*

11:15-12:00 **Heinz Wimmer, Ph.D**

Department of Psychology and Centre for Neurocognitive Research,
University of Salzburg, Austria
*Developmental dyslexia: Cognitive phenotype and brain
dysfunctions in a relatively transparent orthography
(German)*

12:00-12:30 **Zvia Breznitz, Ph.D**

Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
The rate at which linguistic information enters into cerebral systems directs its processing: The Asynchrony theory as a possible explanation of dyslexia

12:30-14:30 Lunch and Poster Session

Session 2: The Reading Brain 2

Head: **Dr. Tami Katzir**

- 14:30-15:15 **Daniel Brandeis, Ph.D**
Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University of
Zurich, Switzerland
*Neural changes with learning to read: Effects of dyslexia and
early training*
- 15:15-16:00 **Bruce D. McCandliss, Ph.D**
Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, USA
*The role of attention and learning in shaping the response
properties of the visual word form area*
- 16:00-16:30 Coffee Break
- 16:30-17:15 **Richard K. Olson, Ph.D**
Department of Psychology, University of Colorado, Boulder, USA
*Genetic and environmental influences on reading ability and
disability*
- 17:15-17:45 **Tami Katzir, Ph.D**
Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning
Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
*A structural basis for reading fluency: Cortico-cortical fiber
tract disruptions are associated with reading impairment in
a neuronal migration disorder*

Monday, June 1, 2009

Hecht Museum Auditorium

08:30-09:30 **Registration**

Session 3: The Young Brain

Head: **Prof. David Share**

09:30-10:00 **Iris Levin, Ph.D**
Dept. of Human Development and Education, Tel Aviv University
*Promoting early literacy by parent-child joint activities in
low SES strata (Iris Levin and Dorit Aram)*

10:00-10:45 **Linda S. Siegel, Ph.D**
Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology and Special
Education, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
Early identification and intervention to prevent reading failure

10:45-11:15 Coffee Break

11:15-12:00 **Dennis Molfese, Ph.D and Victoria Molfese, Ph.D**
University of Louisville, Kentucky, USA
*Impact of early experience on subsequent brain and cognitive
development*

12:00-12:30 **Anat Scher, Ph.D**
Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
Turning off at night: The importance of sleep to early learning

12:30-13:30 Lunch Break

Prof. Dina Feitelson Award



13:30-13:45

Opening Remarks:

Prof. David Share, Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel

13:45-14:30

Dina Feitelson Memorial Lecture

Ludo Verhoeven, Ph.D

Behavioural Science Institute, Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands

Quality of phonological representations and phonological awareness as predictors of early literacy development

14:30-14:45

The Award winner presentation

Student Recipient: **Irit Bar-Kochva**, Brain and Behavior Program

Cognitive factors underlying reading in Hebrew at different stages of development



Session 4: The Young and the Adult Brain

Head: **Dr. Shelley Shaul**

- 14:45-15:15 **Shelley Shaul, Ph.D**
Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning
Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
*A model of brain activity of young as compared to adult dyslexic
readers*
- 15:15-15:45 **Avi Karni, M.D, Ph.D**
Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning
Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
*Critical thoughts on critical periods in skill acquisition and
brain plasticity*
- 15:45-16:15 Coffee Break
- 16:15-16:45 **Michal Shany, Ph.D**
Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning
Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
*Subtypes of reading disabilities among young and adult Hebrew
readers: Linguistic/cognitive and ERP profiles*

Session 5: Learning Disabilities

Head: **Dr. Raphiq Ibrahim**

- 16:45-17:15 **David Share, Ph.D**
Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning
Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
*The self-teaching model of orthographic learning: A theoretical
and empirical overview*
- 17:15-17:45 **Paul Miller, Ph.D**
Department of Special Education, University of Haifa
*The role of phonology in the word decoding skills of poor
readers*

Tuesday, June 2, 2009

Sfadia Auditorium

08:30-09:30 **Registration**

Session 6: Brain and Numbers

Head: **Dr. Orly Rubenstein**

09:30-10:00 **Orly Rubenstein, Ph.D**

¹Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
Co-morbidity of mathematical learning disabilities with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or with reading disabilities

(Orly Rubenstein¹, Logika Rasalingam³, Stephanie Tang³, Betty Chiu³, Rosemary Tannock^{2,4})

²Neuroscience and Mental Health Research Program, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

³Research Opportunity Program, University of Toronto

⁴Human Development and Applied Psychology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

10:00-10:45 **Liane Kaufmann, Ph.D**

Department of Psychology, University of Salzburg, Austria
Neural correlates of number processing and simple arithmetic in children with and without dyscalculia

10:45-11:15 **Avishai Henik, Ph.D**

Department of Psychology and Zlotowski Center for Neuroscience, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel
How pure is pure developmental dyscalculia?
(Avishai Henik and Sarit Ashkenazi)

11:15-11:45 **Coffee Break**

Session 7: The Bilingual Brain

Head: **Dr. Anat Prior**

- 11:45-12:15 **Anat Prior, Ph.D**
Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
Bilingualism and executive function
- 12:15-12:45 **Asaid Khateb, Ph.D**
Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
Languages in the bilingual brain: What about language selection mechanisms?
- 12:45-13:30 **Malatesha Joshi, Ph.D**
College of Education and Human Development, Texas, A & M University College Station, Texas, USA
The role of orthography in literacy acquisition in monolinguals and bilinguals
- 13:30-13:50 **Mila Shwartz, Ph.D**
Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel
Evidence for the script-dependent hypothesis: The fully-fledged alphabet versus consonantal script
- 13:50-14:45 Lunch Break

Session 8: Cognition, Language, and Literacy

Head: **Dr. Karen Banai**

- 14:45-15:00 **Karen Banai, Ph.D**
Department of Communication Disorders, University of Haifa, Israel
Cognition and Subcortical Auditory Processing
- 15:00-15:15 **Tali Bitan, Ph.D**
¹Department of Communication Disorders, University of Haifa, Israel
Inter-hemispheric connectivity during phonological processing in children
(Tali Bitan¹, Adi Lifshitz², Zvia Breznitz², James Booth³)
²Dept. of Learning Disabilities, The Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, Haifa University, Israel
³Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Northwestern University, IL, USA
- 15:15-15:30 **Elinor Saiegh-Haddad, Ph.D**
Bar-Ilan University, Israel
Linguistic intervention and the development of word reading in Arabic: A developmental study

16:30



The Edmond J. Safra Center Inauguration

Sfadia Auditorium

Short film:

“Struggling with learning disabilities in Arab Society”

Greetings:

Prof. Aaron Ben Zeev

President, University of Haifa

Prof. Ofra Maysseless

Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa

Prof. Majid Al-Haj

Vice President and Dean of Research, University of Haifa

Prof. Zvia Breznitz

Head, Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa

Aims of the Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for Learning Disabilities, including the Arabic project

Keynote address

Dr. Kenneth Pugh

President and Director of Research, Haskins Laboratories,
Yale University, School of Medicine, New Haven Connecticut,
USA

The contribution of advances in neuroscience to understanding learning disabilities

The Edmond J. Safra Award for Student Excellence

Student Recipient: **Waleed Jarjoura**, Edmond J. Safra Unit for the Advancement of Learning Disabilities Research in the Arabic Language

Student Recipient: **Shay Menashe**, Brain and Behavior Program

Ribbon-cutting ceremony and festive toast on site

18:30-19:00

Cocktail Hour at the opening ceremony of the Board of Governors

19:00

Honorary doctorate ceremony

