Do children prefer to trust their own memory or defer to someone else?

- Young children’s memory abilities are still developing, and there are likely many instances where they need help remembering.
- Other people can serve as memory resources, but children need to be able to withhold their own responses and decide whether the other person’s memory is more accurate.
- On a perceptual task, preschoolers used their level of uncertainty to decide whether to respond to a question or withhold their answer (Lyons & Ghetti, 2013).
- On a memory task, 3.5-year-olds strategically withheld responses; they were more accurate on items that they chose to answer than ones they chose to skip (Balcomb & Gerken, 2008).
- What would children do if instead of being able to skip a question, they could ask someone else to answer?
- We addressed whether children will defer to someone else when that person’s memory is likely better than their own, but trust their own memory when that person’s memory is likely worse.

Participants

Study 1
5-year-olds (N = 16, M_age = 5.6 yrs)

Study 2
Easy Item Helper: 5-year-olds (n = 14, M_age = 5.4 yrs)
Hard Item Helper: 5-year-olds (n = 15, M_age = 5.5 yrs)

Acknowledgments
Many thanks to the members of the Child Language and Learning Lab for their hard work and helpful suggestions, and to the children and parents who participated in this research.
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References