

## Meet our multilingual story time partners



Linda B. Smith, Director of the IU  
Cognitive Development Lab



Multilingual Story Time, led by Cognitive  
Development Lab staff

*Story time for kids (every Saturday at 10:00 am) hosted by children's book experts Cara and Margaret has been a mainstay of the store since the beginning, including occasional sessions in Spanish. This year, we began doing story time in even more languages, thanks to our partnership with the [IU Cognitive Development Lab](#). I asked Lab Director Linda B. Smith and Lab Manager Kelly Irwin to share more about what they do.*

### **Tell me about the Cognitive Development Lab:**

(Linda) The lab was founded in 1977 when I joined the faculty, and funded by the NIH and NSF since 1978. Our research traces the connections between infants' advances in sitting, holding, manipulating, talking, and language learning. The research contributes to an understanding of the real-time experiences that support word learning. At every moment, when children are eating breakfast, chasing the dog, playing with toys, they are learning. Our goal is to understand how that works. We have a group of post-docs and undergraduate students who contribute to our

work. They come from lots of different backgrounds and bring so much diversity to our lab.

**How did this collaboration come about?**

(Kelly) Children and parents play a huge role in our research. Covid left us feeling very disconnected from the families in our community. We were searching for ways to not only get back in touch with those families, but also a way to give back some of the knowledge that comes out of all the studies they help us do.

**How has it gone?**

(Kelly) We've been having the best time! It's been an amazing opportunity to connect, give back, and learn from our child scientists and their families in a really fun way. We feel like our expectations have been exceeded. We see familiar faces each month, both at Morgenstern's and in our lab for studies.

**What languages have been presented so far?**

(Kelly) So far, our post-doctoral fellows and students have read books in Japanese, Spanish, Hebrew, Korean, Arabic, Telugu, and English. We hope to do story time in Chinese, more Indian languages, and other languages spoken by future lab members.

**Do you come to Morgenstern's outside of story time?**

(Kelly) Morgenstern's is one of my absolute favorite places in Bloomington! It's a little piece of magic that I love sharing with friends and family when they are in town. I love the sense of welcome and community I always feel as soon as I walk through the doors.

**I saved the most scholarly rigorous question for last – what's your favorite treat at the Morgenstern's cafe?**

(Kelly) I'm kind of boring most of the time and stick to an oat milk latte. But I do like trying all the new creations the baristas come up with!

**How can people find out more about your work? And are you still seeking families to participate in your studies?**

(Kelly) Yes! Please visit our [website](#) to find out more about our work, and how you can participate!

*Save the date for the next multilingual story time with the Cognitive Development Lab on January 6. Languages and books TBA.*

**Dr. Smith's book recommendations:**

- [The Scientist in the Crib](#) by Alison Gopnik, Andrew N. Meltzoff, & Patricia K. Kuhl
- [Brain Rules for Baby](#) by John Medina
- [Einstein Never Used Flash Cards](#) by Kathy Hirsh-Pasek & Roberta Michnick Golinkoff
- [How Babies Talk](#) by Roberta Michnick Golinkoff & Kathy Hirsh-Pasek