Psychology Department Colloquium

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The origins of the mind and the development of the brain

From the moment of birth, human infants are social creatures. Infants are initially motivated to look at and interact with other humans, and over the course of childhood, they build increasingly sophisticated ‘models’ of the internal workings of other minds. How is this cognitive development supported by changes in children’s developing brains? Leveraging knowledge of the neural basis of social cognition in adults, and recent techniques for designing, running, and analyzing fMRI in experiments in young children, I will describe research from my lab that (i) characterizes the neural feature-space of mental state inferences, (ii) relates the emergence of this feature-space to children’s social cognitive development, and then (iii) probes the earliest origins of functional organization in the cortex of human infants. These studies illustrate the enormous potential of research at the interdisciplinary boundary of developmental social cognitive neuroscience.

Thursday, March 31, 4 pm
Refreshments served at 3:45
108 West Village H