

Kinde \mathcal{R} - \mathcal{U} at Rutgers University, New Jersey

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Enhance children's ideas of themselves as critical thinkers.
Encourage children to sustain curiosity about fundamental questions.
Empower children to become respected participants of the university community.

Our **goal** is to launch the **first children's university** in the US, at Rutgers-Camden, the site of the first doctoral program in Childhood Studies.

University-style lectures with discussions. A series of free lectures by Rutgers professors that are open to children ages 7-12. Children will hear lectures on philosophy, physics, chemistry, history, law, sociology, economics, geography, psychology, archaeology, neuroscience, and ecology.

2-week summer semesters. Children will have the opportunity to enroll in a major, such as physics, philosophy, or psychology and attend lectures, research seminars, and workshops. At the end of the session, participants will host presentations on the subject matter and be certified with a major.

Kinde \mathcal{R} - \mathcal{U} conference. A one-day conference for and by children who attended either summer-semester or lectures, where they will have an opportunity to present their thoughts and ideas about the Kinde \mathcal{R} - \mathcal{U} itself and on how they would design a university. Workshops by and with children will be offered to design future Kinde \mathcal{R} - \mathcal{U} events.

Research

Objectives:

- Exploring possible conceptual differences in the way children think about problems.
- Gain insight into children and their ideas about universities and studies as they might become future students.
- Assess interest in diverse scientific fields and awareness of current research.
- Evaluate the impact of academic role-models to overcome stereotypes of science and scientists.

Methods:

Short-term: quantitative evaluation to investigate possible changes in thinking skills.

Longitudinal: assessment of long-term effects of early university exposure.

Continuous Evaluation: Qualitative (interviews/observations) and quantitative (pre/post-surveys) studies with children and parents to assess attitude changes in regard to learning – and with lecturers to assess (change in) adult constructions of children.

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