

Preschoolers' resource allocations align with their normative judgements ^[1]

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The researchers in this study found that preschool children who protested more against an agent distributing resources equally between a poor and a rich recipient, and affirmed giving more to a poor than to a rich recipient, the more they gave themselves to the poor. Overall, the results suggest that preschool children do act in accordance with their normative views.

Abstract

Recent research showed that preschool children hold normative views on how to distribute resources fairly and enforce these fairness norms even from third parties. The current study examined whether 3- to 6-year-old preschool children's resource allocation behavior aligns with their normative stances. To this end, children were presented with protagonists who either distributed resources equally between a poor and a rich recipient, or gave more to the poor recipient. In addition, children's own resource distribution behavior towards a rich and poor other were assessed. Results showed that the more children protested against the protagonist distributing resources equally and the more they affirmed the protagonist giving more to the poor, the more resources they themselves allocated to a poor other. These findings point to a relation between moral evaluation and behavior in the preschool years.

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