**Learning Sympathy**

Part of being human is learning how to feel sympathy, but just how early on in our lives we learn this is something that scientists would like to know.

Behavioral scientists know that newborns 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of other people, by crying when other babies cry. However, babies can’t 2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ — shown by recognizing themselves in a mirror — until they’re eighteen to twenty months old. Toddlers also start to show concern for others around this time.

Kids also begin to do things 3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at about this age. By the time they’re three, most children will try to protect 4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in a fight. But how do kids go from the infant stage, crying when others cry, to the 5.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

To find out, researchers from Kyoto University, and Toyohashi University of Technology in Japan, designed a program to test for 6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in ten-month olds. In the video, a blue ball chases a yellow cube around the screen, repeatedly pushing and hitting it.

After the babies watched the video, 7. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and try to touch the yellow cube victim, a sign of sympathy. When the bully became the victim, babies still reached out for the object 8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Adding a neutral object to make sure the kids weren’t just afraid of the bully didn’t 9. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from trying to comfort the victim. However, some researchers think that babies might just be attracted to an object that moves differently in videos such as these. So the matter of exactly 10. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is still up for debate.

Key:

1. respond to the emotional states
2. distinguish between themselves and others
3. like comfort other people
4. a victim from a bully
5. protecting stage of later childhood
6. signs of sympathy
7. they tended to reach out
8. that got hurt
9. deter the babies
10. when sympathy may develop

Script

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Part of being human is learning how to feel sympathy, but just how early on in our lives we learn this is something that scientists would like to know.

Behavioral scientists know that newborns respond to the emotional states of other people, by crying when other babies cry. However, babies can’t distinguish between themselves and others — shown by recognizing themselves in a mirror — until they’re eighteen to twenty months old. Toddlers also start to show concern for others around this time.

Kids also begin to do things like comfort other people at about this age. By the time they’re three, most children will try to protect a victim from a bully in a fight. But how do kids go from the infant stage, crying when others cry, to the protecting stage of later childhood?

To find out, researchers from Kyoto University, and Toyohashi University of Technology in Japan, designed a program to test for signs of sympathy in ten-month olds. In the video, a blue ball chases a yellow cube around the screen, repeatedly pushing and hitting it.

After the babies watched the video, they tended to reach out and try to touch the yellow cube victim, a sign of sympathy. When the bully became the victim, babies still reached out for the object that got hurt.

Adding a neutral object to make sure the kids weren’t just afraid of the bully didn’t deter the babies from trying to comfort the victim. However, some researchers think that babies might just be attracted to an object that moves differently in videos such as these. So the matter of exactly when sympathy may develop is still up for debate.