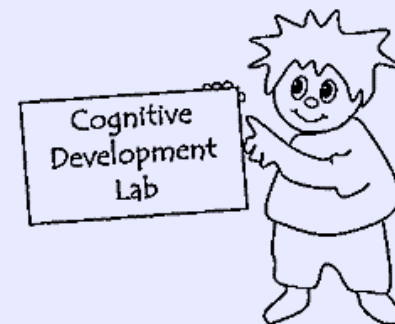


University of Waterloo CDL's



Featured Research



Have you wondered what influences children's actions and behaviours when they interact with their peers?

Slide through post for more details



The study

A new study from our lab investigated how 4-6 year old children communicate and share with partners during an online game that is designed to be either cooperative or competitive.





Results



Valcke and Nilsen (2022) found that children generated more prosocial comments after they received a message from their partner indicating interest in working as a team (vs. a self-focused message). Children were more prosocial in what they said and what they did during a cooperative vs. competitive game. Thus, children reciprocate the communicative tone of their partner and align their behaviour with the game objective.



In terms of skills that facilitate prosociality, this work found that children with better cognitive skills (executive functioning and reasoning about others' mental states) shared more items, and said more prosocial comments, to other players... but only in a cooperative context.

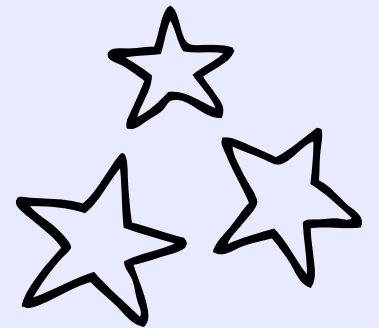
Implications

Prosocial behaviour in early childhood is associated with later social and academic successes. These findings provide information as to what cues children rely on within social contexts, as well as the individual skills for generating context-appropriate behaviours.





THANK YOU FOR READING!



LEARN MORE



More information about this article, and research in the Cognitive Development Lab, can be found on our website (link in bio).

Valcke, A., & Nilsen, E. S. (2022). The Influence of Context and Player Comments on Preschoolers' Social and Partner-Directed Communicative Behavior. *Journal of Cognition and Development*, 1-27.

