“She got one too!”:
Will young children socially reference an older child?
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**BACKGROUND**
- By 12 months of age, infants use adults’ affective responses toward novel objects to govern their own behavior (i.e. social referencing) (Mumme & Fernald, 2003)
- Infants’ understanding of peers’ behavior and emotions appears to lag their competence with adults, emerging toward the end of the second year (Brownell, Ramani & Zerwas, 2006)
- When can infants use another child’s affective information about a novel object to govern their play?

**PROCEDURE**
- Emotion presentation (20 sec video)
  - 6-yr-old child; 2 neutral toys
  - Trial 1: Neutral affect toward one toy
  - Trial 2: Positive or Negative affect toward one toy
- Toys and sides counterbalanced
- Play period (30 secs)
  - After each trial

**RESULTS**
- Did a peer’s emotion alter children’s play with the toys?
- Did children play with the toy more when a peer was positive toward it?
- Did children play with the toy less when a peer was negative toward it?

**CONCLUSIONS**
- 12-month-olds did not systematically alter their play with a novel toy when they saw an older peer display affect towards it
- 18-month-olds played less with a toy when they saw an older peer display negative affect towards it
- 24-month-olds increased their play with novel toys when they saw an older peer display any affect – positive or negative – to one of the toys
- Infants’ use of peers’ emotions to govern their behavior with novel objects appears to develop differently than their ability to use adults’ emotions
  - The age and authority of the emotion messenger may be just as important as the content of the message

**PARTICIPANTS**
- N= 53 (22 males; 31 females)
  - 12 mos (N=19)
  - 18 mos (N=17)
  - 24 mos (N=17)

**Measures**
- Touch duration to both toys
- Touch duration to target toy

**REFERENCES**

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