Evidence has been accumulating that toddlers exhibit empathy, cooperation, and helping, but much less is known about sharing (Hay & Cook, 2007). We examine development of sharing over the second year using a unique "low-cost" procedure in which children have an abundance of toys, thereby reducing the motivational barrier to sharing.

Sharing requires willingness to give up something that one owns or possesses to benefit another. We thus examine how sharing relates to emerging understanding of possession & ownership in this period.

**PARTICIPANTS**

18-month olds (N = 25)
24-month olds (N = 23)

**6 SHARING TASKS**

Child has many things; adult playmate has none

Adult delivers 4 progressive cues to communicate her need/desire:
1. Facial/bodily expression
2. State need (I don't have any; I need some so I can play)
3. Reach toward toy
4. Specific request (Can I have some [x]?)

Sharing score: Cue at which sharing occurred

Also coded frequency of non-sharing behaviors:
- Hypothesis-testing: try to figure out what other wants, needs
- Ignore/Refuse: self-oriented, rather than other-oriented

**Possession Understanding**

Parent requests child to perform actions to parent (me/my) and to child (you/your)... e.g., "Brush my/your hair" (Levine, 1983)

Score: # correct

**Ownership Understanding**

E asks child to choose parent's or child's belonging from pairs of items brought from home, e.g., "Get Mommy's/Nora's hat" (Paige, 2000) Score: # correct

**Conclusions**

1-yr olds share less than 2-yr olds, and need more adult support to behave prosocially.

Possession and ownership understanding also increase over the 2nd year. Better social understanding is associated with more sharing, less self-oriented responding, and lower levels of adult communicative support needed to initiate sharing.

Social understanding and need for adult support trade off in the development of prosocial behavior.


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