

Infants Recognize 'Thick' Social Affiliation

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Ashley J. Thomas(1,2), Brandon Woo (2), Daniel Nettle (3), Elizabeth Spelke(2), Rebecca Saxe (1)
(1) MIT, (2) Harvard, (3) New Castle University



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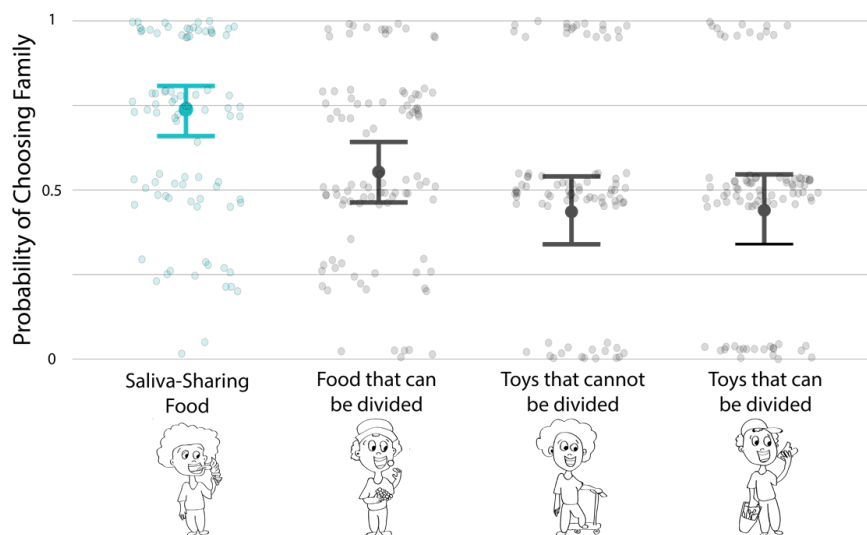


SALIVA SHARING AND SOCIAL CLOSENESS

Across cultures, people distinguish 'thick' relationships (e.g., close, intimate) from 'thin' relationships (e.g., tit-for-tat) (Margalit, 2017). A common cue of thick relationships is saliva-sharing (Fiske, 2005; Fischler, 2011)

Do children (age 5 to 7 years), toddlers (16 to 18 months), and infants (8 to 10 months) see saliva sharing as a cue of social closeness?

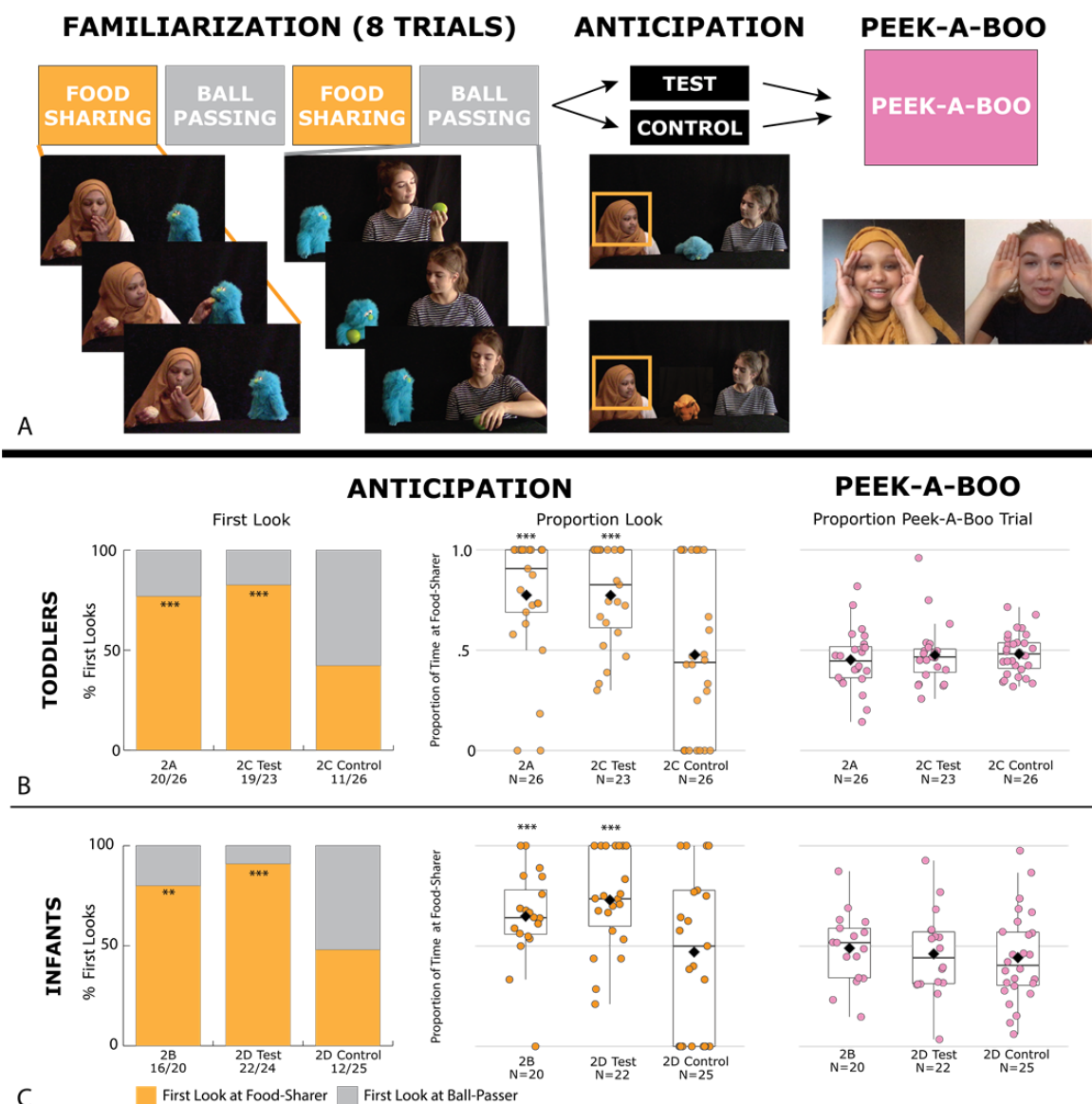
U.S. CHILDREN EXPECT SALIVA SHARING TO OCCUR WITHIN NUCLEAR FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.



Bars are 95% credible intervals, the large dot is the estimated probability of choosing sibling/parent in the four conditions compared to friend/teacher.

Children, ages 5 to 7 years old, were more likely to choose family than friend/teacher, only in the saliva sharing food condition.

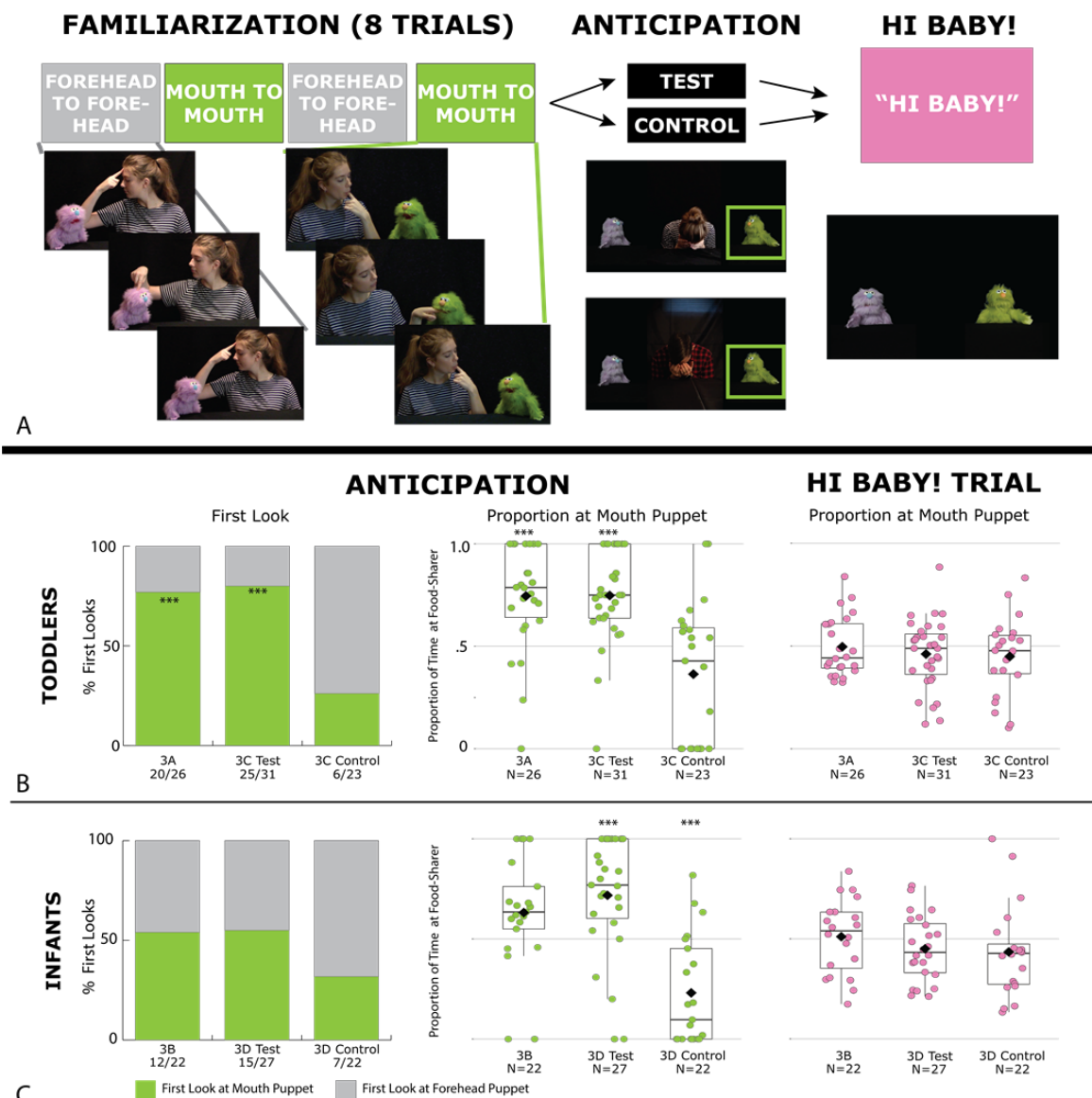
INFANTS AND TODDLERS USE FOOD-SHARING (THAT IMPLIES SALIVA SHARING) TO PREDICT RESPONSES TO DISTRESS



A: Schematic of Stimuli used in the study. During the anticipation trial, we measured which person the infants/toddlers looked at first and for how long they looked during a pause. In the Peek-A-Boo trial, we asked which person the infants/toddlers preferred to look at in a socially engaging task, this controlled for whether they were more interested in one of the characters during the anticipatory looks. B & C are results.

Infants and Toddlers expect food-sharing to predict responses to distress, and only with the individual that they shared food with.

INFANTS AND TODDLERS USE NON-FOOD SALIVA SHARING ACTIONS TO PREDICT RESPONSES TO DISTRESS



A: Schematic of Stimuli used in the study. During the anticipation trial, we measured which puppet the infants/toddlers looked at first and for how long they looked during a pause. In the Hi Baby trial, we asked which puppet the participants preferred to look at in a socially engaging task. B & C are results.

Toddlers, and infants use saliva-sharing interactions to predict responses to distress, and only with the individual with whom they had the interaction with.

NEXT STEPS

Children (age 5 to 7 years), toddlers (16 to 18 months), and infants (8 to 10 months) use actions that imply saliva sharing as a cue of social closeness.

Is this evidence for early naive sociology?

Are thick relationships a kind or a degree?

How do infants think about thick behaviors directed toward them?

REFERENCES

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