

UC Merced

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society

Title

Children's expectations of dominant and prestigious leaders

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3gt7k2d7>

Journal

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 47(0)

Authors

Creppy, Renee

Vžlez, Natalia A

Publication Date

2025

Copyright Information

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Peer reviewed

Children's expectations of dominant and prestigious leaders

Renee Creppy

Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, United States

Natalia Vélez

Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, United States

Abstract

Humans are enmeshed in many hierarchical relationships, such as that between a parent and child. Leaders in dominance hierarchies are typically strong and intimidating, while leaders in prestige hierarchies are respected for their expertise. In an ongoing study (N=13), we ask whether preschoolers ages 4–5 have different expectations about how dominant and prestigious leaders divide resources. Children learned about two social groups, the dominant Glerks and prestigious Zonks. Children watched a leader and subordinate from each group pick five apples and divide them into two baskets in a 5-0 or 3-2 split. We then pointed to one basket and asked children whether the leader or subordinate took that share of apples. In preliminary results, we find that children expect the dominant (76.9%) but not prestigious leader (46.2%) to take all of the apples, which suggests that children expect dominant leaders to claim a larger share of resources.