

PRESCHOOLERS' DECEPTIVE ABILITY

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Deception can be found in man as well as in animals. However, not all deceptive behavior involves the same level of sophistication. From a developmental perspective, the increasing level of sophistication in deception from children to adults reflects the growth of human cognitive ability. Thus to understand the development of deceptive behavior is a way to investigate the growth of Mind and Theory of Mind. The present study investigated preschool children's ability to deceive an opponent in a game. The main findings from this investigation included: (1) The crucial age for the emergence of deception was from 3 to 4-years of age. (2) The difference between 4 and 5-year old children can be seen in 4-year-old children's inability to refrain from deception when deception is disadvantageous. (3) The difference in deceptive ability among age mates was fairly substantial. Therefore, it is dangerous to treat age group as a homogenous whole.

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