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Bouncing Babies Strengthen Social Bonds through Music and Rhythm

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Swaying to music's rhythm may have more of a scientific meaning than meets the eye. Researchers at McMaster University in Canada found that people who move together are also building social bonds. For this study in particular, published in the journal Developmental Science, researchers found that moving together in the same time can affect the social behavior of babies who have barely even learned to walk. (Photo : Flickr.com/EraPhemalia Vintage)

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"Moving in sync with others is an important part of musical activities," said Laura Cirelli, lead author of a paper posted in the journal, via <u>a news release</u>. "These effects show that movement is a fundamental part of music that affects social behavior from a very young age."

Cirelli and colleagues in the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behavior, found that 14-monthold babies were more likely to help other people after they experienced bouncing up and down to music with another person.

For the study, researchers tested 69 babies to see if bouncing to music helped make other babies more likely to assist that person by "accidentally" handing back dropped objects.

With the babies grouped in pairs, one of the researchers held a baby in a forward-facing carrier while the other stood facing the second research. As the music started, both researchers would gently bounce up and down. Some of the babies were bounced in sync with the researcher across from them while others were bounced at a different tempo.

When the song ended, researchers who had been facing the baby then performed several simple tasks

that included drawing a picture with a marker. However, as the picture was drawn, researchers would accidentally pretend to drop the marker to see whether the infant would pick it up and hand it back to her based on a classic test of altruism.

Study findings revealed that babies who bounced in time with the researcher were more likely to fall over, pick up the object and pass it back to the researcher when compared with infants who had been bounced at a different tempo than their experimenter.

In-sync babies came to the researcher's aid 50 percent of the time, while out of sync babies only picked up and handed back objects 30 percent of the time.

Researchers believe that certain shared experiences that incorporate music and rhythm with children help them strengthen social bonds.



Tags <u>Health</u>, <u>Human</u>, <u>Music</u>

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