Thanks for Participating!

With your permission, your child participated in a study that explored how children think about social conflict and the ways people respond to it. We presented your child with illustrated stories depicting conflicts, and your child was then asked to predict what the characters in the stories would do and to provide judgments about the acceptability of different responses.

In our current study, we are especially interested in how children think about the acceptability of revenge, how this thinking both changes with age. We are also interested in whether children's thinking about revenge relates to their behavior in any way (thus, we ask parents to fill out a short survey about their child). We know very little about how children think about revenge. We hope that this research will lead to a greater understanding of how children think about social conflict, and that this understanding will give parents and teachers greater insight into child development.

Try it at Home!

Many parents like to chat with their children about their participation in research. It can be fun to hear more about what your child thinks about topics like social conflict and revenge. For younger children, parents can pretend with dolls, puppets, or action figures, exploring what your child thinks about the best ways for the characters to handle conflicts and transgressions. For older children, parents can ask questions about when revenge might seem acceptable, how much revenge is too much, etc.

Something to Consider Discussing with Your Child

In this study we used a mild form of deception. We had your child play a sticker-sharing game with another child who lives in a different city. In reality, there was no other child. The envelope your child received was actually prepared by the researchers. We used this type of deception so that we could see how your child acts in a social exchange situation. This form of deception allowed us to tightly control the type of behavior your child experienced from the other child. This kind of control over study conditions is a key part of doing experimental work. Because you know your child best, we leave it up to you whether to tell your child about the deception. If you have questions about this, please don't hesitate to ask, or to contact Craig Smith (see contact info below).

Thanks Again For Your Help!

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact Craig Smith at: craigsm@umich.edu -or- 617-865-9469. Please also get in touch if you are interested in the results of this study.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board, 2800 Plymouth Rd., Building 520, Room 1169, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2800, (734) 936-0933 [or toll free, (866) 936-0933], irbhsbs@umich.edu.