

**Introduction**

- Children begin to help in their second year of life.
- Precursors to helping (e.g., empathic concern, goal understanding) are seen earlier in infancy.
- Helping typically requires motor skills like handing over objects or removing obstacles.
- Will young infants help in tasks that do not require motor skills?
- We employ a novel gaze-contingent paradigm where infants can help by manipulating objects with their gaze.

**Method**

- Looking at a button for at least 500ms makes a wall move backwards.

**Phases**

1. **Training** (8 trials): Infants learn that looking at either button moves the corresponding wall.
2. **Goal Establishment** (6 trials): Infants learn that character prefers one of two objects.
3. **Test** (6 trials): The goal object is blocked by the wall, and infants can help by looking at the button to move the wall.

**Preliminary Results**

Infants tend to trigger the Helpful button more often than the Not Helpful button, $t(13) = 1.69, p = .07$.

**Discussion**

- Infants tend to help the character by triggering the Helpful button.
- If this pattern is found in our full sample, it would suggest that infants are motivated to help before the physical behavior develops.
- Planned follow-up: Control condition where neither button is helpful because the objects are on the near side of the wall.

**Participants**

- 9–12 mo.
- $M = 10.73$ mo.
- $N = 14$
- In progress
- Target = 24

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**References**

Kötter et al. (2019). From understanding others’ needs to prosocial action: Motor and social abilities promote infants’ helping. Developmental Science.