

# Children's mu suppression is sensitive to witnessing others' social victimization.

**THE GIST:** We wanted to take a look at empathy in response to social victimization in young children. We showed kids video scenarios depicting injustices against racial groups and saw some interesting connections. The first was that children demonstrated mu suppression when they viewed scenarios of social victimization or injustice, similar to how there may have been an empathetic response if they had seen a scenario of social or physical pain. We also noticed that, among White children, it did not necessarily seem to matter what race was shown as being victimized; their mu suppression, the neural marker for empathy, remained pretty consistent.

**THE TAKEAWAY:** Our research reveals a powerful insight: young children may not initially show racial biases in their neural responses to social victimization, suggesting that these biases may be learned over time. This gives us as parents and educators a key opportunity to nurture empathy early. We can do this by fostering inclusive environments and modeling kindness for our youth. Children already seem to be great at empathizing with a diverse group of people - let us help them carry that incredible ability on the rest of their lives.