

How Fairness Develops in Kids Around the World

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The Atlantic:

You're sitting at a table with a friend and a stranger offers you some candy. Hooray! Who doesn't like candy? But wait! You're not getting the same amounts. One of you gets four delicious pieces, and the other gets a measly one. Does that feel unfair? Do you bristle? Do you forfeit your candy and your friend's candy, because they're unevenly distributed?

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McAuliffe and Blake caution that this doesn't mean that some countries are fairer than others. For a start, the children in the study might all eventually come to reject their own unfair advantages during adolescence or later in life. "We also don't know precisely why some children reject advantageous offers," says Blake. "It's entirely possible that they were doing it to maintain their reputations as good co-operators. It might be more of a good strategic behavior than just a signal of fairness."

"The paper makes it clear that while some aspects of a concern with fairness appear to be fairly universal, not all aspects are the same in every place," says Kristina Olson from the University of Washington.

Read the whole story: [The Atlantic](#)