

Infants Learn Better When Listening to Human Speech—or Lemurs

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Pacific Standard:

Babies are born knowing very little about the world or what to pay attention to—they're not blank slates, but they're not exactly full ones either. A good example is faces: When they're just out of the womb, infants will pay about equal attention to human faces as they would to other primates' faces. Over time, babies learn to look more at humans. Why is that? Is there something innate to us that eventually draws our attention to our fellow human beings.

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The new research, from Northwestern University psychologists Danielle Perszyk and Sandra Waxman, builds on a series of experiments in the last few years that's investigated the role of speech in cognitive development. In a 2010 study, the researchers found that playing a recording of human speech to infants while they looked at new objects helped the babies learn object categories like "dinosaur" and "fish."

Read the whole story: [Pacific Standard](#)