Strabismus-related prejudice in 5-6 year-old children

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Background

- Individuals with conspicuous strabismus are perceived more negatively.
- Lead to social alienation and negative psychosocial development.
Aim

- Explore young children’s perception of peers with noticeable exotropia
Subjects

- 128 children attending kindergartens
- 43 5-year-old, 85 6-year-old
- M=64, F=64
- Interview in classroom
Procedures

- Pick a toy
- ‘Which picture do you like better?’
- ‘Point to the one you like better’
- ‘Which person would you share your toy with?’
Pictures

- Digitally created
- 4 pairs of images
- Extropia - more common than esotropia
## Table 1  Distribution of participants according to age and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (years)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

- 2 omitted: a girl refused to choose a face and would give the toys to both; a boy would not give a toy to any
## Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Orthotropic faces (95% CL)</th>
<th>Exotropic faces (95% CL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facial preference</td>
<td>62.7 (58.4 to 67.0)</td>
<td>37.3 (33.0 to 41.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toy sharing</td>
<td>60.9 (56.5 to 65.3)</td>
<td>39.1 (34.7 to 43.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61.8 (58.7 to 64.9)</td>
<td>38.2 (35.1 to 41.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% CL, 95% confidence limits.
Discussion

- Young children show negative attitudes towards strabismus
- Linked with negative social interactions
- Toy-sharing: a form of social alienation
- Negative psychosocial development
- Early intervention to correct ocular misalignment