The social brain in middle childhood: a neurobiological perspective on individual differences in social competence

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Propositions

Accompanying the public defense of Mara van der Meulen's dissertation

THE SOCIAL BRAIN IN MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

a neurobiological perspective on individual differences in social competence

1. Both socio-cognitive and affective processes play an important role in prosocial behavior across development. (*this thesis*)

2. Even the mere threat of social exclusion results in neural responses, highlighting the salience of this social event across the lifespan. (*this thesis*)

3. Genetic factors influence trait prosociality, whereas state prosociality is influenced by unique environmental factors. (*this thesis*)

4. The functional architecture of the social brain is already established in middle childhood. (*this thesis*)

5. The large influence of unique environmental factors on social competence provides possible room for training and interventions.

6. The role of middle childhood in social development should not be overlooked.

7. Experimental research in a lab setting is not sufficient to fully understand the complexity of social behavior.

8. An integration of developmental science and neuroscience allows for greater understanding of differences in social development.

9. The merit of a scientist should not solely be measured by their impact factor, but also by their ability to collaborate and to communicate scientific findings to the public.

10. Strive for progress, not perfection.