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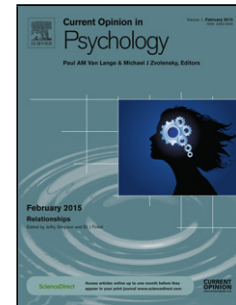
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## Early development can reveal the foundation of human prosociality

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Some of the most persistent questions about prosocial behavior have concerned whether people act on behalf of others out of a genuine concern for their welfare, or whether people are rather driven by hidden selfish strategizing and external societal demands to do something they would not do otherwise (Smith, 2010/1759). Disentangling the various motivators of prosocial behavior and their interplay of these factors is tricky. It is particularly challenging when studying adults who have gone through a long period of learning and internalization of social expectations - and who further possess sophisticated cognitive skills allowing them to reason about how others think about them to adjust their behavior accordingly. The study of prosocial behavior over development can therefore play a unique role in untangling foundational aspects of human psychology. Developmental research can identify the earliest states of prosocial behavior in ontogeny, and then trace the changes that occur over developmental time. By doing so, it can probe how external factors and underlying mechanisms shape prosocial behavior from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Studying early development is therefore critical to understand the foundations of prosocial behavior. But we would want to go even one step further and suggest that studying these foundations is critical to understand human social behaviors more generally. Although prosocial behaviors are defined as those aimed at benefiting others, they serve the broader function of enabling the individual actors themselves to flourish as inherently social beings. Humans are social not only in terms of seeking the company of others - indeed, many animals are gregarious - but because we cultivate enduring, long-term bonds with social partners (Tomasello et al, 2011; Warneken & Rosati, 2012). This requires children to balance a concern care for others with care for the self: safeguarding oneself against free-riders, and up-

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