

Abstract

The present study examined the development of temptation resistance and lying to conceal a transgression of preschool-age children in Hong Kong. About 110 children aged 3,4 and 5 attending local kindergartens were examined in a temptation resistance paradigm. It was found that 76% of the children transgress in the absence of monitors. While over 90% of the older children lied to conceal their transgression, 36% of the 3-years-olds confessed. Moreover, the children were poor at semantic maintenance and 88% of the children revealed their transgressions because of their inability to produce appropriate verbal statements to conceal their lies. Mothers' predictions about their own children's transgressing and lying behaviors were investigated. It was found that most mothers failed to predict their children's actual behaviors and they did not show different expectations in peeking and lying behaviors between boys and girls.