Sarah Rave

**Arrrgh! Please stop talking!**

Stanford researchers studied kids with autism and found that their brains respond differently to human voices and emotions. In a recent study, researchers at Stanford looked at 10 kids with autism and 10 kids that do not have autism. The kids were similar in most other ways; they had similar IQs and reading levels. The researchers examined their brain activity and learned that the sound of human voices did not result in the same level of brain activity in the kids with autism. This means that these kids receive less pleasure from the sound of human voices. They also found that the link between the voice-processing center and the amygdala, a part of the brain that processes memory and emotional reactions. This led researchers to believe that the brains of kids with autism don’t reward them for interest in voices and emotions.

This article is important, as it adds to the knowledge we have about how the brains of people with autism. The more we understand about autism and how it affects the brain, the better we can help people with autism. The researchers did not learn anything that will directly impact the treatment of autism, but they now understand it better. The author may want the reader to feel sympathy and compassion for people with autism. This is important to me because there are students in this school that have autism and this knowledge will help me to understand how they feel. It can also help me understand their reactions and how they may be different from mine. This discovery could be important to others because there are a lot of children with autism. The more we understand about how their brains work, the better we can help them learn and have self confidence.
Kids With Autism May Not Enjoy The Sound Of The Human Voice

All human voices, not just the annoying ones.

By Dan Nosowitz

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The causes, symptoms, and effects of autism are some of the most puzzling mysteries in all of psychology and neuroscience, but researchers at Stanford University may have connected a few of the dots. They dove deep into the brains (not literally) of a selection of kids with and without autism, and found that those with autism respond differently to the human voice than those without.

The researchers took 20 kids with similar IQs and reading abilities, 10 with high-functioning autism and 10 without any sign of autism, and examined activity between several parts of the brain. There is a theory, says the lead researcher, that social cues don't interact with the brain's reward system in the same way as in non-autistic people. This study supports that: it found that in the brains of the kids with autism, there's a significantly weaker connection between the parts of the brain that interprets voices and the part that doles out pleasure. In other words, the sound of the human voice gives those with autism less joy.

There's also a weaker link between those voice-processing centers and the amygdala, which is the part of the brain that deals in emotion. That suggests a neurological reason for an autistic person's inability or disinterest in social cues--their brains don't reward them for caring about these things.

The study doesn't have any immediate ramifications for the treatment or even diagnosis of autism, and it only tested one very particular segment of those on the autism spectrum. Still, it's pretty fascinating, and may lead these or other researchers down a path that could help treat or diagnose autism in the future.

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