

Evaluating both precognition and presentiment among children in different age groups

ABSTRACT:

Background

Anecdotal reports suggest that PSI may be more apparent in young children, although there are few studies of age-related differences in PSI.

Aims

Our study investigated age-related differences in precognition and presentiment among children using a standardized laboratory test.

Method

Precognition and presentiment testing was performed for 120 children divided into three age groups, 3 to 6, 7 to 10, and 11 to 14 years of age. Each completed a computerized precognition task based on that distributed by Daryl Bem. Testing comprised 36 trials predicting the location of target images that elicited positive emotions or were non-emotional. Performance was determined as the percentage of correct predictions (hit rate).

Results

All 120 participants, even the youngest, were able to complete the task as instructed. Comparisons of the three age group revealed significant differences in hit rate ($F(2,117) = 3.11$, $p = .049$), with the youngest performing best and the middle group worst ($p = .01$). Age-related differences were apparent for positive emotional images, but not for non-emotional images. Exploratory tests indicated that although performance was not better than chance in the full sample ($N = 120$), the young group did perform better than chance ($p = .004$) with a hit rate of 53.2%.

Conclusions

This pilot study demonstrated that computerized testing of precognition and presentiment is feasible in children across a broad age range. Results confirmed that age groups differed in performance, with the youngest group doing best. Further studies of age differences are warranted. A better understanding of PSI in children could be beneficial to both the fields of parapsychology and child development.

Keywords

Precognition, Presentiment, Children, Emotion, Extra-sensory perception

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