LIFE ACADEMIC

CHILD'S PLAY

IF THE EXPERIMENT IS A BIT OF A TEASE...

At least it's all in the name of science.

Psychology professor Amy Kolak and her assistants, Tori大家都和孩子们一起玩玩具，他们一起玩耍。

Kolak's research participants are small children who have never been in a psychology lab before. They are asked to put their hands in a box and choose between two toys: a red ball or a blue block. If they choose the red ball, they get a reward; if they choose the blue block, they don't get anything. Kolak is interested in how children make decisions under pressure, and she wants to see how they respond to unexpected outcomes.

So far, the children have been good sports. They've followed the instructions and chosen the toys as directed. But now it's time to see how they react when things don't go as planned.

Kolak's next step is to introduce an element of uncertainty. She will randomly choose one child and give them a new toy to play with. If the child chooses the red ball, they get a reward; if they choose the blue block, they don't get anything. But what happens when the child chooses the red ball by accident? Will they be disappointed? Or will they be satisfied with their unexpected outcome?

To find out, Kolak will ask each child to rate their happiness on a scale from 1 to 10. She hopes to compare the happiness levels of children who receive the unexpected outcome with those who receive the expected outcome. This will allow her to see whether the children are able to adjust their behavior and feelings in response to unexpected events.

Kolak's research is important because it helps us understand how children develop their ability to cope with uncertainty. By studying how children respond to unexpected outcomes, she hopes to identify strategies that can help children become more resilient in the face of adversity.