

Cereal Characters Lure Kiddies With Eye Gaze: Study

story By Ben Popken

If you ever got the creeps as a kid walking down the cereal aisle, you're not imagining things. Snap, Crackle and Pop were all staring at you.



A new study finds that the eyes of characters on kids' cereal boxes are designed to angle downwards so they make contact with children standing in the aisle. [A new study](#) from Cornell University finds that the cartoon characters on cereals marketed to kids are routinely designed so their eyes are shifted 9.6 degrees down. That's the perfect angle to make eye contact with a child standing in the aisle.

It works, too. When the same researchers showed participants two different versions of a box of Trix, the box that had the rabbit spokes-character looking downwards versus straight out increased brand trust 16 percent and feelings of connection to the brand by 28 percent. That could increase sales.

Apparently, Trix really are for kids after all, but not in the way you might have thought. The researchers provided two key takeaways from their findings. One, parents should think about not taking their children down the cereal aisle. Two, manufacturers of healthier cereals could consider adding a character looking downwards to the box to make their cereal more appealing to younger consumers.