Correlation Is Not Causation

Two things happening together is not proof that one causes the other

Example: ice cream sales and sunburns both go up in summer



The hidden cause (hot weather) drives both.

MORE EXAMPLES

Bigger shoe size and better reading

Both go up with age. Older kids have bigger feet and more practice reading.

More umbrellas and wetter streets

Rain causes both. Umbrellas do not make streets wet.

Taller kids and higher math scores

Age again. Older students are taller and have learned more math.

BEFORE YOU SAY "A CAUSES B", ASK

- ☐ Could a third thing cause both?
- ☐ Could it be chance?
- ☐ Could B be causing A instead?
- ☐ Has anyone run a fair test?

Real causes are found with fair tests, not just by spotting a pattern.

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