

Zoo polar bear cubs left to nature's fate

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Three polar bear cubs at a German zoo were at risk of starvation after being rejected by their mother.

Keepers at the Nuremberg Zoo decided not to intervene and feed the cubs since it would be a manipulation of nature.

The deputy director of the zoo, Helmut Maegdefrau, told the British newspaper The Observer they were "cautiously optimistic" the mother bear would catch on and eventually start caring for her offspring.

"We expect to be branded as being cruel to animals," he said. "But the fact is in nature, if something goes wrong, it goes wrong. If you don't let the mothers practice, they'll never learn how to bring up their cubs."

The zoo has said it was determined not to create a sensation such as the one surrounding Knut, the popular polar bear cub rescued from similar unfortunate circumstances at the zoo in Berlin.

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