



5th Annual Meeting

Wednesday & Thursday, 10TH and 11TH January 2024

"Belonging & Connecting"


Abstract book

Swiss Society for Early Childhood Research

Contact

Swiss Society for Early Childhood Research
Thurgau University of Teacher Education
Olena Schopf | Administrative office
Unterer Schulweg 3
CH-8280 Kreuzlingen

Tel: +41 71 678 57 84
info@earlychildhoodresearch.ch

Follow us on Twitter 
[@SSECR](https://twitter.com/SSECR)

Organizing Committee

Prof. Dr. Maren Zeller | OST
Prof. Dr. Bettina Grubenmann | OST
Prof. Dr. Sonja Perren | PHTG und
Universität Konstanz
Prof. Dr. Carine Burkhardt Bossi | PHTG
Karina Iskrzycki | PHTG
Johanna Lieb | PHTG

Registration <https://www.conftool.org/ssecr2024>

SSECR Full members	200 CHF
SSECR Junior members	100 CHF
SSECR Associated members	200 CHF
SSECR Non-members	250 CHF
BA and MA students	30 CHF

Conference Venue

Ostschweizer Fachhochschule | OST
Rosenbergstrasse 56
CH-9001 St. Gallen | Switzerland



Program overview

Wednesday, 10th Januar 2024

Date: Wednesday, 10/Jan/2024

10:00am - 11:30am	SSECR Junior Network Workshop Scientific writing workshop by Dr. Alodie Rey-Mermet
1:00pm - 1:30pm	Welcome & Opening of the Annual Meeting 2024
1:30pm - 2:30pm	Keynote I: "Where do you belong? Children's perspectives on belonging in early childhood education" by Dr. Jaana Juutinen
2:30pm - 3:30pm Aula	Poster Session I & Coffee Break Location: Aula
3:30pm - 6:00pm	Alliance Enfance Session (DE/FR)
3:30pm - 6:00pm	Session of the SIG Neurocognitive Development
3:30pm - 6:00pm	Session of the SIG Perinatal Health
3:30pm - 6:00pm	Session of the SIG Play
6:00pm - 7:00pm	Apéro

Program overview

Thursday, 11th Januar 2024 | Morning

Date: Thursday, 11/Jan/2024

8:45am - 9:00am	Welcome
9:00am - 10:00am	Keynote II: "People feel that they are connected": Facilitating belonging for refugee children and families through recreation" by Prof. Dr. Nicole Yves
10:00am - 11:00am Aula	Poster Session II & Coffee Break Location: Aula
11:00am - 12:30pm	Oral Presentations I-V OP I: "Mother-Infant Interactions in The Context of Childbirth-Related Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms". OP II: "Getting Down To The Facts: The Effect of Parental Screen Use on Toddlers' Communicative and Socioemotional Skills". OP IV: "Maternity Care Providers' Perceptions and Experiences of Cultural Competence in Caring for Chinese Migrant Mothers in Switzerland". OP V: "Language of the heart? Examining the influence of maternal acculturation and literacy-related activities on children's language development".
11:00am - 12:30pm	Symposium I "Early Life Adversity and Epigenetics: Moving from Community to High-Risk Samples"
11:00am - 12:30pm	Symposium II "Early Childhood Intervention and Immigrant Families".

Program overview

Thursday, 11th Januar 2024 | Afternoon

12:30pm - 1:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm - 3:00pm	Oral Presentations VI-X OP VI: "Individual and public barriers to participation in ECEC". OP VII: "Parental Well-Being as an Outcome of Early Childhood Special Education: Preliminary Evidence on Effectiveness and Mechanisms". OP VIII: "Promoting belonging in communities by co-designing with children: the example of inclusive playgrounds". OP IX: "Relationships between Teacher-child Interaction Quality and the Quality of Children's Play". OP X: "The LifeStories Project- Impact of infant institutionalization under psychosocial deprivation across the life span – a 60-year follow-up study".
1:30pm - 3:00pm	Symposium III "The interdisciplinary study of childhood maltreatment – from data-science approaches towards better understanding maltreatment trajectories and disclosure of maltreatment"
3:00pm - 3:15pm Aula	Break Location: Aula
3:15pm - 4:15pm	Open Science Input Introduction to Open Science by Prof. Dr. Nicolas Rothen
4:15pm - 4:30pm	Closure

Annual Meeting 2024
"Belonging & Connecting "

Wednesday, 10th Januar 2024

Keynote I | 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Where do you belong?

Children's perspectives on belonging in early childhood education

Dr. Jaana Juutinen

In this keynote, I will shed a light to children's perspectives on their belonging in the early educational settings. Belonging is often theorised through two interrelated binaries: the sense of belonging and the politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2011). The sense of belonging refers to personal attachment to other people, communities, and places (e.g., Allen, 2019; Baumeister & Leary, 1995), while the politics of belonging is described as collectively constructed through multiple power relations, values, and societal dimensions (Yuval-Davis, 2011). The concept of belonging is here understood as a dynamic and holistic, relationally shaped phenomenon, which is constructed and re-constructed often without a shared language in children's daily lives. Based on my ethnographical studies (Juutinen, 2018; 2023; Einarsdóttir, Juutinen et al. 2022) conducted with children aged from 1 to 6 years in early childhood education, I will discuss both to the sense of belonging as well as to the politics of belonging from children's perspectives: How the children themselves construct their belonging and non-belonging and what kind of relations and pedagogical practices seem significant in shaping children's membership in the child group?

Poster Session I & Coffee Break 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. | Aula

Poster #1

Peer Effects on Early Language Development – An Individual Participant Data Meta-Analysis

[Franziska Hürlimann](#)¹, [Daniel Schmerse](#)¹, [Alexander Grob](#)², [Oliver Lüdtke](#)^{3,4}

¹PH FHNW, Switzerland; ²University of Basel, Switzerland; ³IPN - Leibniz Institute for Science and Mathematics Education, Germany; ⁴Centre for International Student Assessment (ZIB);

franziska.huerlimann@fhnw.ch

Language proficiency plays an essential role for a child's future achievements. Various environmental factors significantly influence language development, resulting in evident disparities in children's language skills. As most children aged 3 to 5 attend early childhood education centers and spend considerable time with peers, this study aims to investigate the potential impact of peer group composition in preschool and primary school settings, concerning language skills and socio-demographic factors, on children's language development. Furthermore, we examine possible differential effects related to family language, initial language competence, and socioeconomic status. To address conflicting results from prior research in this area, we conduct an individual participant data (IPD) meta-analysis to generate more robust findings by integrating data from seven German studies involving over 15,000 children aged 2 to 10 years in approximately 1,500 classrooms. All considered studies assessed receptive vocabulary at multiple time points, non-verbal cognitive abilities, and socio-demographic information. We implement a two-stage approach, first specifying the same multi-level models to individual datasets to estimate peer effects, and then synthesizing the effect sizes through meta-analysis.

Results will be presented and discussed at the conference. Previous findings suggest that dual language learners may potentially benefit more from a higher level of peer language skills within their classroom.

The study contributes to clarifying the importance of peers in language development and highlights potential implications for policymakers and educators. The use of an IPD meta-analysis with consistent methods enhances the robustness of our findings.

Poster #2

The Influence of Play Partners for Preschoolers' Observed Emotion Regulation in Dyadic Play Situations

[Pablo Nischak](#)^{1,2}, [Sonja Lorusso](#)^{1,2}, [Tatiana Diebold](#)¹, [Carine Burkhardt Bossi](#)¹, [Sonja Perren](#)^{1,2}

¹Thurgau University of Teacher Education, Switzerland; ²University of Konstanz, Germany;

pablo.nischak@phtg.ch

Emotion regulation (ER) is a process that occurs when the experience and/or expression of emotion risk compromising the goals and expectations of the individual and/or social partners and leads to changes in intensity, duration or type of emotion. Since ER both affects and is affected by social partners, it is assumed that the play partners have an effect on children's ER. We aim to assess how

much of the ER is a stable characteristic of the child (actor effect), how prominent the play partners' influence is in general (partner effect) and what role the specific relationship between two children (relationship effect) plays.

ER was observed with the help of a round-robin design where N = 120 preschool children (M-age: 44.72 months; 45% girls) played with randomly assigned play partners in semi-standardized dyadic play situations (building blocks & micro robotic beetles; N = 190 dyads). The data will be analyzed with the use of the Social Relations Model.

It is hypothesized that a big part of the variance of the ER can be attributed to the actor level and therefore represents ER as a trait. Another significant part of the ER is assumed to be found on the relationship level and thus represent ER as a state. The dyadic reciprocity is expected to be high – the higher the actor's ER, the higher the partner's ER. To our knowledge the study is the first one investigating this topic in preschoolers and will hence contribute to the scientific progress of the field.

Poster #3

Investigating Peer Influences on Emotion Regulation in Preschoolers through Heart Rate Measurements

[Sonja Beatrix Lorusso](#)^{1,2}, [Pablo Nischak](#)^{1,2}, [Tatiana Diebold](#)^{1,2}, [Sonja Perren](#)^{1,2}, [Carine Burkhardt Bossi](#)¹

¹Thurgau University for Teacher Education, Germany; ²Universität Konstanz; sonja.lorusso@phtg.ch

Emotion regulation in preschoolers is shaped by early socialization experiences, including co-regulation. The role of peers in this process remains understudied despite their significance in the social experience space. Heart rate variability (HRV) serves as a non-intrusive measure to observe real-time emotional responses in children aged 3 to 5, providing objective data despite their limited verbal expression. HRV decreases during intense emotions, indicating heightened arousal, and increases during recovery, reflecting a return to a calmer state (= emotion regulation).

This study investigates whether children's heart rate variability is associated with emotion-related behaviors of their play partners. Around 120 Swiss playgroup children, aged 3 to 5 years, wore Polar Vantage V2 wristwatches during play sessions in alternating pairs using the "Round Robin Principle." To ensure data quality and comparability, heart rate variability follows Catai et al.'s (2020) standardization checklist. Videoanalysis is still ongoing. Kenny's Social Relations Model will be used to analyze heart rate variabilities (Root Mean Square of Successive Differences) during play sessions. Additionally, emotional contagion will be examined by analyzing the synchronicity of heart rates using wavelet coherences.

This study's findings could clarify the role of peers in the emotion regulation of preschoolers and provide insights into emotional exchange dynamics during peer interactions. Understanding these mechanisms is essential for promoting healthy socio-emotional development in their formative years. The results may guide educational and intervention methods for fostering positive social interactions and emotional growth in young children.

Poster #4

Movement Imitation Therapy for Preterm Babies (MIT-PB): How Does This Early Intervention Influence The Neuromotor Outcome Of Infants Presenting Abnormal General Movements?: Study Protocol

[Stephanie Brezina](#)¹, [Giancarlo Natalucci](#)¹, [Denise Etzweiler](#)¹, [Marine Goedert](#)², [Silke Scheufele](#)³, [Benedikt Bubl](#)⁴, [Ruth Stauffer Lacorcia](#)⁵, [Sebastian Grunt](#)⁶

¹Department of Neonatology, University Hospital of Zurich, University of Zurich, Switzerland;

²University Children's Hospital Zurich, Switzerland; ³Institute of Physical Therapy, Kantonsspital

Winterthur, Switzerland; ⁴Department of Neonatology, Inselspital, Bern University Hospital, University

of Bern, Switzerland; ⁵Institute of Physiotherapy, Inselspital, Bern University Hospital, University of

Bern, Switzerland; ⁶Division of Neuropediatrics, Development and Rehabilitation, Department of

Pediatrics, Inselspital, Bern University Hospital, University of Bern, Switzerland;

stephanie.brezina@usz.ch

Introduction: Preterm infants are at risk of impaired motor and cognitive development. Prechtl's General Movements (GMs) assessment is a valuable and reliable tool for early prediction of later developmental disorders, particularly cerebral palsy, by analyzing the infant's spontaneous movement pattern. However, there is no specific physiotherapeutic intervention based on this assessment. Soloveichick et al.(2019) described the Movement Imitation Therapy for Preterm Babies (MIT-PB) as a promising new approach based on the GMs' model and current knowledge of brain development.

Methods: The present pilot prospective controlled intervention study aims to evaluate whether preterm infants (<32 0/7 weeks gestational age) showing abnormal GMs at 33-34 weeks postmenstrual age (PMA) differ in their neurodevelopmental outcome at three and 24 months corrected age (CA) depending on whether they were treated with usual care physiotherapy or additionally with MIT-PB. Eighty participants will be recruited at two neonatal intensive care units (NICU) over 18 months (intervention: University Hospital Zurich; control: Inselspital Bern). Recruitment is scheduled to start in October 2023. The MIT-PB begins in the NICU and continues until 52 weeks PMA. The parents are involved from the very beginning. The essential content of MIT-PB is to manually guide the child's abnormal movements into movements as similar as possible to normal GMs. The neurodevelopmental outcome is measured with the General Movements Optimality Score (baseline, term age), Motor Optimality Score-Revised (three months CA) and Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development III (two years CA). The parental self-efficacy is evaluated with the Perceived Maternal Parental Self-Efficacy tool.

Poster #5

Growing into Parenting Together: Similarities and Differences in Parenting Practices among First-time Parents

[Sabrina Beck](#)^{1,2}, [Lisa Wagner](#)^{1,2}, [Moritz Matthäus Daum](#)^{1,2}

¹University of Zurich, Switzerland; ²Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development, Switzerland;

sabrina.beck@jacobscenter.uzh.ch

Introduction: When parents function well as a team, children benefit in their socioemotional and cognitive development. An important aspect of coparenting is the level of agreement between

partners on parental attitudes, behaviors, and goals. Here we examined how accurately mothers and fathers within the same family perceive and assess their partner in terms of their parenting practices and the factors that contribute to similarities and differences in their parenting behaviors. Methods: We recruited 244 Swiss-German couples who were first-time parents, cohabiting, and had an only child aged 12, 24, or 36 months (+/- 3 months). Both mothers and fathers completed an online survey on parenting practices in which they assessed both their own and their partner's parenting practices. In addition, demographic characteristics such as education level, age, etc., as well as relationship satisfaction were obtained. Results: We ran an Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) for all four scales on parenting practices (positive parenting, responsible parenting, authoritarian parenting, inconsistent discipline). Overall, there was a high level of perceived similarity regarding parental attitudes and behaviors among both mothers and fathers, but only modest to moderate accuracy in assessing their partner's parenting practices. Discussion: The high degree of perceived similarity of both mothers and fathers with respect to their partner's parenting practices may be related to the generally very high relationship satisfaction of the present sample. This should be investigated further in future studies. Conclusion: First-time parent couples who have had a child together for the first time tend to perceive themselves as more similar than they actually are in terms of their attitudes and behaviors in parenting.

Poster #6

Effect of social buffering on children and their parent during a lab-based stress task

Maëlle Grandjean¹, Jan-Philipp Knirsch², Anaëlle L Leuba¹, Marius Rubo³, Andrea H Meyer⁴, Nadine Messerli-Bürgy¹

¹University of Lausanne, Switzerland; ²University of Fribourg, Switzerland; ³University of Bern, Switzerland; ⁴University of Basel, Switzerland; maelle.grandjean@unil.ch

Introduction: Social buffering is a phenomenon in which the activity of the physiological stress systems is reduced by the presence of a social partner. To which extent this effect can be found in preschool children, and which impact it may have on the parents' own stress levels remains unclear. The aim of the study was to investigate such social buffering effects in preschool children and their parents during a lab-based stress task.

Methods: A total of 54 preschoolers aged 4.48 years (SD = 0.37) and their parents were separately exposed to a stress task and secondly to a joint stress task. Saliva samples of the child and the parent were collected repeatedly over both tasks.

Results: Cortisol release increased in response to individual stress tasks in children and their parents as expected, but children didn't recover after the individual stress task, remained at a high level during the joint stress task and only showed a decrease of cortisol during the recovery in parent's presence. Further, parents' stress buffering caused similar cortisol levels during the joint stress task as during their individual stress task.

Conclusion: Social buffering influences the child's recovery after a stress task but not stress reactivity. Further, social buffering of a parent results in increased stress levels of a parent even if they have a passive role in a child's stress condition.

Poster #7

From milk to brain to love - How human milk affects mother-infant neural synchrony and bonding

[Debora Suppiger¹](#), [Sabino Guglielmini²](#), [Tilman Reinelt¹](#), [Giancarlo Natalucci¹](#), [Martin Wolf²](#)

¹Larsson-Rosenquist Center for Neurodevelopment, Growth, and Nutrition of the Newborn, Department of Neonatology, University Hospital Zurich, University of Zurich, Frauenklinikstrasse 10, CH - 8091 Zurich, Switzerland; ²University of Zurich, University Hospital Zurich, Department of Neonatology, Biomedical Optics Research Laboratory, Zurich, Switzerland.; debora.suppiger@uzh.ch

Background: Breastfeeding duration has been positively linked to child cognitive development. However, little is known about the specific mechanisms that explain this association. Human milk nutrients (e.g. LCPUFA) and bioactive compounds (e.g., growth factors) are involved in neurodevelopment and with this promotes child cognition. Aside from this, breastfeeding may also promote child cognition through strengthening mother-child attachment. Breastfeeding duration has been related to more secure attachment of the infant and increased maternal sensitivity, which both have been associated with child cognition.

Method: 250 mother-infant dyads are selected with regard to uniform distribution of breastfeeding duration and maternal educational level. Infant age is between 6;2 and 7;2 months. Mother and infant will perform a free-play interaction task. During this fNIRS hyperscanning and physiological measures (ECG and skin conductance) will be investigated. The interaction task will be video recorded and rated for behavioral synchrony (e.g., joint attention). Two additional fNIRS tasks with focus on child memory performance and maternal attachment will be performed with individual fNIRS measurements.

Planned Analysis: Neural synchrony between mother and child will be related to behavioral synchrony, other measures of maternal attachment (i.e., questionnaire, attachment-task), breastfeeding duration and cognitive development (Bayley-III).

Poster #8

Evaluating School-Based Mindfulness Trainings in Switzerland: Lessons Learned

[Regula Neuenschwander¹](#), [Cécile Tschopp²](#), [Detlev Vogel²](#)

¹University of Bern, Switzerland; ²University of Applied Sciences of Lucerne, Switzerland; regula.neuenschwander@unibe.ch

School-based mindfulness training (SBMT) may be a promising tool for fostering well-being and mitigating the risk of mental disorders among young people. First onset of mental health problems in adolescence call for early prevention in elementary school settings. SBMT is theorized to promote self-regulation, which in turn is thought to enhance mental health. Furthermore, SBMT may support teachers to reach educational goals of social-emotional learning (SEL), as it targets specific SEL components such as self- and social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Recently, we have evaluated the effectiveness and implementation of SBMTs in primary schools using quasi-experimental and randomized waitlist-control-group designs. SBMTs were developed in Switzerland (Schulfach ICH, Binja, BTP, MoMento), and delivered by trained classroom teachers for 8 weeks, 10 weeks, or a whole school year. Before and after the intervention, students – and in some

studies teachers and parents – completed validated questionnaires. In one study, students were additionally interviewed (mixed-method study); in another study, students' self-regulation was also assessed with behavioral tasks. Overall, findings were mixed: effects were small to moderate, sometimes absent and/or unexpected, quite robust when controlling for covariates, and not consistent across informants and SBMTs. Studies will be compared to each other (characteristics of interventions, samples, study designs, measures, findings, type of researcher-practitioner partnership, dissemination of findings) to better understand variation in intervention effects and issues related to relationship building, communication, and outreach. Insights gained by this work may contribute to optimize research, as well as design, implementation, and delivery of SBMTs in young populations.

Poster #9

Development of Conditional Learning Abilities in Children from 3 to 12 Years of Age

Emilie Bochud-Fraginière¹, Pierre Lavenex¹, Pamela Banta Lavenex^{1,2}

¹University of Lausanne, Switzerland; ²UniDistance Suisse, Switzerland; pamela.banta@unidistance.ch

Introduction: Conditional learning underlies the ability to respond differently to a stimulus in a context-dependent manner. This ability has been evaluated indirectly in typically developing children with transitive inference tasks, in which participants must first learn the reward contingencies of a series of pairs of stimuli (A>B, B>C, etc.). However, many studies failed to characterize the learning strategies enabling above chance performance in these tasks, thus raising questions about the cognitive abilities being evaluated and their development.

Methods: Here, we assessed the development of non-conditional learning, conditional learning, and transitive inference abilities in typically developing 3-12-year-old children (N = 71) and 20-30-year-old adults (N = 22). We used three different touch-screen tasks: a visual learning task to test the ability to learn non-conditional relationships between two stimuli (A>B and C>D), a 3-item conditional learning task (A>B and B>C) and a 5-item conditional learning task (A>B, B>C, C>D, D>E), two tasks often used to assess transitive inference abilities.

Results: Whereas half of the 3-5.5-year-old children and most older participants exhibited non-conditional learning, children did not exhibit conditional learning before 5 years of age. Moreover, the majority of children did not exhibit conditional learning before 7.5 years of age. Surprisingly, 3-12-year-old children did not exhibit transitive inference abilities, in contrast to 20-30-year-old adults.

Conclusion: Our findings are consistent with the theory that the maturation of distinct hippocampal circuits supports the development of conditional learning and transitive inference, although these abilities may also require the maturation of later developing brain circuits.

Poster #10

Belonging in the Digital World: Gender Equity in Guided Pretend Play about Digital Transformation

Franzisk Vogt, Lena Hollenstein

Pädagogische Hochschule St.Gallen, Switzerland; franziska.vogt@phsg.ch

Regarding digital transformation, questions about gender equity need to be raised. Whilst digital transformation will be at the center of developments in the future, the current presence of women in digital professions is limited: Only 16 % of students in computer science in Switzerland are women (BFS, 2021). For girls, as well as boys, it is important to generate interest for professions in that field by pretend-playing these professions from an early age (Turja et al., 2009). The project “we play the future” initiated guided pretend play in kindergarten to enable children to appropriate processes of digital transformation (Vogt et al., 2020). In this way, interest and identification with professions and activities are kindled for all children in the field of digital transformation in kindergarten. Specifically, the present paper focuses on the potential and challenges of fostering gender equity.

Fifteen kindergarten educators participated in the study and implemented the pretend play impulses. Data collection included video observations and semi-structured interviews. Ten sequences with boys, girls and the kindergarten educator being present in the play were selected for fine-grained multimodal interaction analyses (Goodwin, 2018; Mondada, 2014). Furthermore, educators were asked to describe which children were integrated in the spatial arrangements of their kindergarten. Interviews were analyzed using content analysis (Kuckartz, 2014).

Educators reported that all children were interested in the pretend play on digital transformation. Results using multimodal interaction analysis show the complexity and fluidity of doing and undoing gender in play. The complexities of ensuring gender equity become visible.

Poster #11

Developing Working Memory is Not Affected by Multisensory Distraction

[Nora Turoman](#), [Elodie Walter](#), [Anae Motz](#), [Evie Vergauwe](#)

University of Geneva, Switzerland; nora.turoman@unige.ch

Introduction: Multisensory information, which stimulates multiple senses simultaneously, is all around us, and can be highly distracting due to its exceptional salience. Studies have shown that distraction can be detrimental to school learning. If we are to ever mitigate such effects, we must first understand how developing cognitive systems implicated in school learning, like working memory (WM), are affected by multisensory distraction. Methods: We measured adults’ and children’s visual WM performance on a change detection task (60 adults aged 18-35, 61 older children aged 8-10, and 58 younger children aged 6-8), and a recall task (29 adults aged 18-35, 21 older children aged 9-11, and 20 younger children aged 6-8). Four types of distractors (visual, auditory, audiovisual [multisensory], and none) appeared while to-be-remembered information was being maintained. Results: Across both tasks, multisensory distractors were not the most disruptive for children’s WM performance. For change detection, audiovisual distractors were as distracting as auditory distractors, and for recall, they were as distracting as visual distractors. There was no evidence for differences in distractibility between the age groups. Discussion: Contrary to typical assumptions in the literature, we found that children’s WM is neither more affected by multisensory distraction than it is by unisensory distraction, nor more susceptible to distraction than adults’ WM. Conclusion: Our findings suggest that, once visual information is encoded in WM, even supposedly distracting multisensory information does not detrimentally disrupt WM performance, age 6 onwards. This holds promise for the robustness of learning outcomes, even in multisensory-distractor-laden primary school contexts.

Alliance Enfance Session (DE/FR) | 3:30pm - 6:00pm

OST:

Familien mit Migrationshintergrund im Fokus der Frühen Förderung?!

Prof. Dr. Maren Zeller und Prof. Dr. Bettina Grubenmann

Institut für Soziale Arbeit im Lebensverlauf

Dieser Beitrag zieht Ergebnisse aus drei Forschungsprojekten im Bereich der Frühen Förderung/Frühen Hilfen aus den letzten fünf Jahren zusammen und stellt diese thesenförmig zur Diskussion. Den Ausgangspunkt bildet dabei die Frage danach, welches Bild von Familie, guter Elternschaft und dem Wohl des «kleinen Kindes» (Säuglingswohl) in den letzten 20 Jahren in dem Diskurs um die Einführung und Etablierung von Früher Förderung in der Schweiz auf nationaler Ebene aufscheint, um daran anknüpfend die Figur der Migrationsfamilie und des Migrationskindes zu diskutieren.

Daran anschliessend wird insbesondere mit Blick auf niedrigschwellige Hausbesuchsprogramme dargelegt, wie Familien mit Migrations- und/oder Fluchthintergrund erreicht (oder auch nicht erreicht) werden. Hier schliessen sich Fragen nach der Umsetzung von Kultursensibilität, Inklusion, Belonging und Diversität im gesamten Feld der Frühen Förderung an. Der Beitrag schliesst mit Überlegungen, was es aus Sicht einer wissenschaftlich fundierten sozialarbeiterischen/sozialpädagogischen Perspektive bedarf, um Angebote für und mit Familien mit Migrationshintergrund im Feld der Frühen Förderung weiterzuentwickeln.

a:primo:

Begleitung sozial belasteter Familien als Querschnittsaufgabe – Lösungsansätze aus der Praxis

Anke Moors

Familien sind eingebettet in ein gesellschaftliches Umfeld, das durch rechtliche, kulturelle und ökonomische Rahmenbedingungen geprägt ist. In der Schweiz sind die Themen, die Familien betreffen, auf allen politischen Ebenen und auf zahlreiche Departemente verteilt. Diese Strukturen haben Auswirkungen bis hin zur Begleitung der einzelnen Familie. Insbesondere sozial belastete Familien spüren diese geteilten Zuständigkeiten. Die Familien pendeln zwischen zu wenig Unterstützung, da sie nicht erreicht werden, und zu viel Unterstützung, die unkoordiniert und gleichzeitig auf sie trifft.

Mit diesem Beitrag will a:primo die Herausforderungen für sozial belastete Familien aufzeigen und Lösungsansätze aus der Praxis vorstellen. Das Schaffen von Strukturen zur Begleitung der Familie ist zentral für mehr Chancengerechtigkeit bereits ab Geburt. Dadurch verbessern sich die Rahmenbedingungen für das Aufwachsen unter sozialen Belastungen.

Thursday, 11th Januar 2024

Keynote II | 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

"People feel that they are connected": Facilitating belonging for refugee children and families through recreation"

Prof. Dr. Nicole Yves

Worldwide, children and families are increasingly migrating across societies and finding a sense of belonging in new communities. Belonging has been described as the feeling of being connected to others and forming part of a community, both of which are protective factors for the wellbeing and mental health of refugee children and families. Primary social support systems for refugees, such as educational and community-based programs, have the potential to promote a sense of belonging in their service users. This is especially true when these social support systems connect newcomers with local children and families. Camp Cosmos, a summer day camp in Montreal, provides children from diverse social, economic and cultural backgrounds with a safe and fun environment to play, learn and grow. This study explored refugee children and families' experiences participating in the summer camp, and how these experiences acted as a protector factor by contributing to their connection to others and sense of belonging in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

In-depth individual interviews were conducted with 14 refugee children (6 to 14 years of age; 8 girls and 6 boys), before and after participating in one summer camp session lasting 8 weeks. Most children were from Palestine and Syria. Six mothers of the participating children were also interviewed before the summer camp and a focus group discussion was held with 5 of these mothers once the summer camp session was finished. Three staff members, from Palestine and Haiti, were also interviewed at the end of the summer camp session. All individual and group interviews were conducted in Arabic, transcribed verbatim, translated to English and thematically coded. Three major themes emerged: development of a sense of belonging and social integration; centrality of family engagement; and ways in which participation was shaped into protective factors critical to refugee children's wellbeing and growth. Clinical implications are presented for working with refugee children and their families using an ecological systems lens, incorporating refugee children and families' perspectives in the development of community-based interventions and highlighting the importance of incorporating protective factors directly into programming for families and communities.

Poster Session II & Coffee Break I 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. I Aula

Poster #12

Developmental cascades from maternal depressive symptoms in childhood to adolescents' friendship quality: A 13-year longitudinal study

[Laura Bechtiger](#)¹, [Annekatriin Steinhoff](#)², [Jessica Dollar](#)³, [Susan Keane](#)³, [Susan Calkins](#)³, [Lilly Shanahan](#)¹

¹University of Zurich, Switzerland; ²University of Bern, Switzerland; ³University of North Carolina at Greensboro, U.S.; laura.bechtiger@jacobscenter.uzh.ch

Background: Positive friendship experiences in adolescence have the potential to promote people's well-being for decades to come. But which developmental processes predict positive friendship quality? The current study examined whether maternal depressive symptoms during early childhood predict children's poorer friendship quality in adolescence, and whether children's social skills and their own depressive symptoms in middle childhood mediate these associations.

Methods: We analyzed data from six waves of data from a prospective-longitudinal community sample in the United States (N = 396). The study followed children (52% female, 67% White, 26% Black) and their mothers across 13 years from early childhood (child age 2) into adolescence (child age 15); and collected multi-informant data from mothers, children, and teachers. Path models, including the significance of indirect effects, were estimated with structural equation modeling.

Results: Early childhood exposure to high levels of maternal depressive symptoms predicted poorer friendship quality in adolescence, at age 15. This association was mediated by children's poorer social skills (age 7) and poorer friendship quality (age 10) in middle childhood. Children's depressive symptoms in middle childhood did not mediate this association.

Discussion: Maternal depressive symptoms may have downstream associations with children's friendship quality in adolescence, including via children's teacher-rated social skills. These findings corroborate evidence on social impairments in the context of depressive symptoms, and extend previous research by documenting intergenerational associations.

Conclusion: The early promotion of social skills in children exposed to maternal depressive symptoms could have long-term positive effects for their social and emotional development.

Poster #13

Beyond Language Abilities: Semantic Networks and Multisensory Processes in Very Preterm Children at School-age

[Marion Décaillet](#)^{1,2,3}, [Micah Murray](#)^{2,3}, [Alexander P Christensen](#)⁴, [Laureline Besuchet](#)^{1,3}, [Cléo Huguenin-Virchaux](#)^{1,3}, [Céline J Fischer Fumeaux](#)¹, [Solange Denervaud](#)², [Juliane Schneider](#)^{1,3}

¹Clinic of Neonatology and Developmental Unit, Department of Mother-Woman-Child, University Hospital Center, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland; ²The Department of Radiology, Lausanne University Hospital and University of Lausanne, 1011 Lausanne, Switzerland; ³The Sense, Innovation, and Research Center, Lausanne, Switzerland; ⁴Psychology and Human Development, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, USA; marion.decaillet@chuv.ch

It has been widely assessed that very preterm children (VPT; <32 weeks gestational age) present more cognitive deficits such as language and memory impairments compared to full-term children.

However, the way in which their semantic memory is structured has still not been studied. Yet, it is during childhood that the greatest number of concepts are acquired. The manner we organize them allow us to make associations and retrieve information easier. Therefore, this organization could underlie some cognitive deficits existing in VPT children. Using mathematical models, here we assessed the semantic network of 38 VPT schoolchildren compared to 38 full-term schoolchildren with a verbal fluency task. Using a semantic network analysis, VPT children showed a lower interconnected semantic network at a local level than full-term children. However, we found no differences between VPT and full-term children regarding their short paths between concepts and their modularity. Moreover, language and memory impairments are known to be linked to multisensory difficulties. A subgroup of 25 VPT children have done a simple detection task for which they had to respond to auditory, visual and audiovisual stimuli. We found that VPT children were slower, tended to benefit less from the multisensory presentation and showed no evidence for integrative processes. These findings provide the first evidence that VPT children demonstrate subtle impairments in the organisation of their semantic network alongside atypical multisensory profiles. It supports the adaptation of the support and education they receive by focusing more on meaning and integrating new words while engaging multiple senses.

Poster #14

Narration Processing During a Movie Watching Paradigm in the Developing Brain

[Carmen Providoli](#)^{1,2,3,5}, [Nina Raduner](#)^{1,2,3,4,5}, [Sarah V. Di Pietro](#)^{1,2,3}, [Sofia Weidle Scatolin](#)⁴, [Liora Strickler](#)¹, [Nico Ehrhardt](#)^{1,2,3,4,5}, [Réka Borbas](#)⁴, [Plamina Dimanova](#)^{2,4}, [Iliana I. Karipidis](#)^{1,2}, [Amelie Haugg](#)¹, [Christian Ruff](#)^{2,3,6}, [Michael Von Rhein](#)^{3,5}, [Silvia Brem](#)^{*1,2,3,7}, [Nora Maria Raschle](#)^{*2,3,4,7}

¹ Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, University Hospital of Psychiatry, University of Zurich; ² Neuroscience Center Zurich, University of Zurich and ETH Zurich; ³ URPP Adaptive Brain Circuits in Development and Learning, University of Zurich; ⁴ Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development, University of Zurich; ⁵ University Children's Hospital Zurich and University of Zurich; ⁶ Department of Neuroeconomics, University Zurich; ⁷ equal contribution; carmen.providoli@uzh.ch

Audiovisual integration is essential for language processing and development. Movie paradigms enable us to study these processes in a naturalistic setting across a wide age range. Yet, our understanding of the neural network differences in processing matching and mismatching visual and speech information remains limited.

We developed a naturalistic movie-watching paradigm by adapting and self-narrating a cartoon movie. We acquired fMRI data from 24 healthy children (mean age = 9.04 ± 1.97 years) and compared scenes with only visual information (V), matching audiovisual narration (AVm), nonmatching audiovisual narration (AVn) and unintelligible audiovisual narration (AVu).

We found higher brain activation (pFWE<0.05) bilaterally in the middle temporal gyrus and supramarginal gyrus during AVm compared to AVn. The opposite comparison (AVn versus AVm) revealed higher activation in left middle and inferior frontal regions and left the angular gyrus. Temporal regions, the fusiform gyrus and angular gyrus showed higher activation during AVm compared to AVu.

Our results indicate that processing meaningful, matching audiovisual information facilitates multisensory integration, indicated by the recruitment of integration areas such as the middle

temporal gyrus. In contrast, the audiovisual incongruity of the nonmatching scenes was detected by frontal regions. Stronger engagement of the angular gyrus during AVm compared to AVu was found due to semantic information processing during AVm conditions. In summary, our paradigm may provide a framework for studying developmental trajectories of audiovisual processing and integration in children with and without language impairments, advancing our understanding of the involved neural networks.

Poster #15

Age-Dependent Brain Perfusion Alteration in Intrauterine Growth Restricted Neonates at Term Equivalent Age

Seline Coraj^{1,2}, Alexandra De Silvestro^{3,4,5}, Ninib Yakoub^{1,2}, Thi Dao Nguyen², Cornelia Hagmann^{3,6}, Andras Jakab⁴, Tilman Reinelt^{1,2}, Ruth O'Gorman Tuura^{3,4}, Giancarlo Natalucci^{1,2}

¹Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation Center for Neurodevelopment, Growth and Nutrition of the Newborn. Department of Neonatology, University Hospital Zurich, University of Zurich, Switzerland; ²Newborn Research, Department of Neonatology, University of Zurich and University Hospital Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland; ³Children's Research Center, University Children's Hospital Zurich, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland; ⁴Center for MR Research, University Children's Hospital Zurich, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland; ⁵Pediatric Cardiology, Pediatric Heart Center, Department of Surgery, University Children's Hospital Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland; ⁶Children's University Hospital of Zurich, Department of Neonatology and Pediatric Intensive Care, Zurich, Switzerland; Seline.Coraj@usz.ch

Introduction: Infants with intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR) are at risk for neurodevelopmental impairment. In IUGR altered cerebral blood supply may contribute to suboptimal brain maturation. Here, we aimed to compare cerebral perfusion in neonates with IUGR and intrauterine growth appropriate for gestational age (AGA) by ASL MRI at term equivalent age (TEA).

Methods: We included 35 IUGR, defined based on consensus criteria, and 40 AGA infants. Perfusion images were acquired on a 3T GE MR750 scanner (3D background-suppressed pCASL sequence) and registered to a neonatal perfusion template. Whole brain grey matter (GM) and voxelwise perfusion was compared across groups (alpha = 0.05, TFCE corrected), including postnatal age at MRI, GA at birth and PMA at MRI as covariates. Postnatal age by group on perfusion was investigated separately. Regional perfusion was extracted in regions where we found significant effects.

Results: Higher perfusion in IUGR, both in whole brain GM (accounting for 3 age covariates) and voxelwise (accounting for postnatal age by group interaction). The slope of postnatal age-dependent increase in whole brain GM perfusion and regional perfusion was higher in AGA than in IUGR. These effects were found bilaterally extending into basal ganglia, thalamus, hippocampus, insula as well as in occipital and midline parietal cortices.

Discussion: In IUGR the lower perfusion increase over time may be explained by unmet metabolic demands during pregnancy. Different postnatal age distribution and the cross-sectional design limit result interpretation.

Conclusion: Our findings suggest altered brain perfusion in IUGR which is dependent on postnatal age.

Poster #16

Childhood Adversity and Quality-of-Life of Young Adult Care-Leavers – Findings from the Swiss Cohort Study «Youth Welfare Trajectories: Learning From Experience»

[Milou Leiting](#)¹, [David Bürgin](#)^{1,2}, [Jörg M. Fegert](#)², [Nils Jenkel](#)¹, [Cyril Boonmann](#)^{1,3}, [Klaus Schmeck](#)¹, [Marc Schmid](#)¹

¹Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Research Department, University Psychiatric Hospitals, University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland; ²Department for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, University Hospital Ulm, Ulm, Germany; ³LUMC Curium – Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden, The Netherlands; milou.leiting@upk.ch

Introduction: Young people in residential youth care report high rates of childhood adversities (e.g., abuse and neglect). Various studies show that stressful experiences in childhood can impair social participation and mental health, whereas quality of life (QoL) is less frequently studied. This study aims to describe the prevalence of childhood adversity in a sample of formerly out-of-home placed young adults and investigate the relationship between cumulative childhood adversities and later psychological, physical, social, and environmental QoL.

Methods: A total of 181 formerly out-of-home placed young adults (Mage = 26.5, 33.1% women) were queried using the Maltreatment and Abuse Chronology of Exposure (MACE) scale and the World Health Organization Quality-of-Life Questionnaire (WHOQoL-BREF).

Results: Overall, 87.4% of participants reported at least one type of childhood adversity. Emotional neglect was the most prevalent type (64.6%). Reported quality of life (MQOL = 68.41, SD = 15.95) was considerably low. The severity of overall childhood adversity was associated with a decreased overall QoL ($r(179) = -0.37, p < .001$).

Discussion: Cumulative childhood adversities have severe and long-term consequences for the QoL of formerly out-of-home placed young adults. Results underline the importance of prevention and early intervention efforts for young people and their families. Next to research on functional outcomes, studies investigating well-being and quality of life in at-risk populations are needed.

Conclusion: This study highlights the prevalent occurrence of childhood adversities among formerly out-of-home placed young adults and underscores their profound impact on multiple dimensions of quality of life.

Poster #17

Belonging in (Early) Childhood Education and Care Institutions

[Carmen Kosorok Labhart](#), [Barbara Weiss](#), [Angelika Schöllhorn](#), [Carine Burkhardt Bossi](#), [Karin Fasseing Heim](#)

Thurgau University of Teacher Education, Switzerland; carmen.kosorok@phtg.ch

Introduction: Society is becoming increasingly diverse and the experience of belonging is highly important for individual well-being as well as for child development, early learning and social behavior. Thus, a sense of belonging supports developmental process of self-coherence, personal agency and evolving identity, especially in early childhood.

In addition, various institutional transitions take place between the ages of 3 and 8 in Switzerland. Understanding how a sense of belonging develops is important for children's learning and (social) participation in the community.

Methods: We explore the following questions: How do children between the ages of 3 to 8 years experience belonging in Education and Care Institutions? The current study aims to investigate how a sense of belonging can be supported in education and care institutions for all children, respecting their diversity (age, sex, social and ethnic background or disability). According to previous research, we employed a focused ethnography strategy with a combination of child-oriented symbolic interviews, focused participant observations and interviews with parents and educators / teachers.

Results: The study is in its first phase. The surveys will take place in winter 2023 and summer 2024. At the meeting we will be able to present initial trends on results.

Discussion: The results provide important clues about what factors influence the sense of belonging in the institutional setting and how practice can be designed accordingly.

Conclusion: First field visits are already showing exciting new perspectives. The discussion of the first results should give us hints for the further research process.

Poster #18

A Developmental Exploration of Multisensory Interference in Working Memory

Elodie Walter, Nora Turoman, Evie Vergauwe

University of Geneva, Switzerland; elodie.walter@etu.unige.ch

Introduction: Though working memory (WM) for multisensory information is gaining research attention, the effect of irrelevant multisensory information on visual WM is still unclear. Understanding such effects on children's WM is especially important, since WM is essential for cognitive development and educational attainment. Method: We compared adults' (N=29), older children's (N=21), and younger children's (N=20) recall for multiple simultaneously presented images of animals, with either visual (V), audio (A), audio-visual (AV), or no distractors appearing during a retention period. Results: For adults, all distractors interfered with WM performance, and AV distractors were the most disruptive – more than A or V distractors. For older children, too, all distractors interfered with WM performance, however, V distractors were the most disruptive (AV interference was almost the same as V interference). For younger children, only V and AV distractors interfered with WM performance, and V distractors were the most disruptive (AV interference again being almost the same as V interference). Discussion: In a WM recall task, adults performed the worst in the presence of AV distractions. Children, on the other hand, were more hindered by visual distractors. Children's WM interference was in line with the classic WM literature whereby information from the same (visual) domain as the task at hand preferentially interferes with WM performance. Conclusion: At the level of WM recall, there seem to be differences in multisensory information processing between adults and children. Critically, children's WM may be less vulnerable to interference by multisensory distractors than what the current literature would suggest.

Poster #19

Development of Playfulness in Children with Low Executive Functions: A Longitudinal Study

[Isabelle Duss](#)¹, [Cornelia Rüdüsüli](#)², [Corina Wustmann Seiler](#)², [Patricia Lannen](#)¹

¹Marie Meierhofer Children's Institute (MMI), Zurich, Switzerland; ²Zurich University of Teacher Education (PH Zurich), Zurich, Switzerland; duss@mmi.ch

Executive functions (EFs) play an important role in the cognitive, social, and motor development of children and are a reliable indicator of future academic achievement. Furthermore, a positive correlation has been observed cross-sectionally between EFs and playfulness (children's enjoyment, motivation, and engagement in play). While several studies have shown reduced playfulness in children with EF impairments (e.g., Autism-Spectrum-Disorder or cognitive deficits), the developmental trajectory of playfulness in these children remains unclear. Therefore, the present study examines the following research question: How does playfulness develop in children with low EFs compared to those with typical EFs?

59 children with low EFs were compared for age and gender with 59 children whose EFs were within the normal range. The two groups were also matched on their playfulness scores, so that they did not differ on these three variables at T1. Playfulness was assessed with the Children's Playfulness Scale (CPS) in an online questionnaire administered to parents and teachers at three measurement points (T1, T2, T3). Children's EFs were measured using the Minnesota Executive Function Scale App (MEFS) at T1.

Preliminary results indicated that children's playfulness increases over time across both groups ($F = (2, 232) = 7.73, p < .001$). Nonetheless, children with low EFs showed significant lower CPS scores than children with typical EFs at T3 ($M_{lowEFs} = 3.70, M_{typicalEFs} = 3.85, p < .001$).

The results suggest that children with low EFs may experience a slowed development of their playfulness, highlighting the potential value of supporting the holistic development of these children.

Poster #20

Behavioral Assessment of Social-emotional Skills in Children

[Johanna Lieb](#), [Monique Maute](#), [Sonja Perren](#)

Thurgau University for Teacher Education & University of Konstanz; johanna.lieb@uni-konstanz.de

The importance of socio-emotional skills is increasingly recognized and receiving attention in education policy. Therefore, we developed the behavioral assessment of social-emotional skills (BASES) for children aged 4 to 8 years. Based on the OECD-SSES (2021) concept, we assess socio-emotional competencies in five main dimensions: Interpersonal competencies (sociability, assertiveness, cooperation), Intrapersonal competencies (self-control, perseverance, emotion regulation), and Intellectual competencies (creativity). The validation sample includes 141 children from ten classes in five schools in Switzerland. In small groups of up to 6 children, each child describes a picture and solves a puzzle together with the other children (sociability, assertiveness, cooperation), builds two objects with Legos (creativity), sorts Legos into a sorting box (self-regulation, perseverance), and searches for a matching key for a treasure chest on a keychain, without knowing that none fit (emotion regulation). Video recordings of the assessments are scored using a newly

developed scoring manual. The manual describes markers for low, moderate, and high levels of each skill. Trained raters assign scores from 1 (only markers for low skill levels apply) to 7 (only markers for high skill levels apply). To determine objectivity, agreement between two independent observers is assessed. Factorial validity is examined through factor analyses, and construct validity is assessed through correlations with a teacher questionnaire. Data collection is complete, and currently, ratings are being conducted. Therefore, the results of the analyses will be available before the conference. The analysis will show if the instrument is suitable to assess social-emotional skills in children.

Poster #21

Brain Activation During Multisensory Feedback Learning in Children

[Nina Raduner](#)^{1,2,3,4,5}, [Carmen Providoli](#)^{1,5}, [Sarah V. Di Pietro](#)^{1,4,5}, [Saurabh Bedi](#)^{5,6}, [Ella Casimiro](#)^{5,6}, [Iliana I. Karipidis](#)^{1,4}, [Maya Schneebeli](#)¹, [Nora M. Raschle](#)^{2,4,5}, [Christian Ruff](#)^{4,5,6}, [Michael Von Rhein](#)^{*3,5}, [Silvia Brem](#)^{*1,4,5}

¹Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, University Hospital of Psychiatry, University of Zurich; ²Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development, University of Zurich; ³University Children's Hospital Zurich and University of Zurich; ⁴Neuroscience Center Zurich ZNZ; ⁵URPP Adaptive Brain Circuits in Development and Learning, University of Zurich; ⁶Department of Neuroeconomics, University Zurich; nina.raduner@uzh.ch

Living in a multisensory world requires individuals to learn how to integrate information from different sensory modalities. Multisensory integration optimizes behaviour (e.g., processing speed and memory), making it especially relevant for language development and function (Barutcu et al., 2011; Denervaud et al., 2020; Dionne-Dostie et al., 2015). Our study aimed at characterizing multisensory learning dynamics in the brain. Seventeen healthy children (mean age=9.88 years, SD=1.7, 13 female) completed four runs (two audio-visual [AV], two tactile-visual [TV]) of a multisensory feedback task during fMRI. Participants learned associations between four pairs of symbols and environmental sounds (AV) or vibrations (TV). We analysed stimulus and feedback processing using GLMs. Linear mixed models were used to analyse the behavioural data. Participants learned the correct associations. Behavioural data showed decreasing reaction times ($p < .001$) and increasing accuracies ($p < .05$) within runs, with higher accuracies in AV than TV runs ($p = .039$). The fMRI analyses showed significant activations during stimulus processing in visual and auditory or tactile sensory processing regions, including occipital, temporal, and pre- and postcentral areas ($p_{CDT} < .05$, $p < .05$ (FWE)). Feedback processing showed activations in occipital, temporal, and frontal regions, including the fusiform gyrus, hippocampus, and anterior cingulate and orbital gyrus ($p_{CDT} < .05$, $p < .001$ (unc.)). Audio-visual and tactile-visual stimulation yielded the expected activation during stimulus processing in sensory regions in this multisensory feedback task. In summary, our task may provide a framework for studying developmental trajectories of multisensory learning in children with and without language impairments, advancing our understanding of the involved learning trajectories and brain dynamics.

Poster #22

Co-construction of an inclusive early childhood practices framework: knowledge sharing between practitioners and researchers

Céline Chatenoud¹, Delphine Odier-Guedj², Britt-Marie Martini-Willemin¹, Agnès Monnet¹, Myriam Gremion¹, Rashmi Rangarajan², Marie Milau¹

1 Université de Genève, Suisse;

2 HEP-Vaud, Suisse;

celine.chatenoud@unige.ch, delphine.odier-guedj@hepl.ch

Several international conventions, including CDPH (2014) and UNESCO (2015), have been ratified by Switzerland over the past 10 years to emphasize the urgency of implementing children's rights to non-discriminatory education from a young age. These imperatives require an adjustment and reorganization of early childhood care structures to ensure they can provide stimulating environments for all children to grow together. With this goal in mind, a resource group, consisting of around fifteen early childhood professionals from the City of Geneva, collaborated with researchers to co-create a framework for inclusive practices. The poster will delineate the theoretical foundation and methodological process, guided by Booth & Ainscow's (2000) inclusive education guide, that facilitated the collaborative work between researchers and field practitioners. Additionally, it will shed light on the practices implemented by early childhood structures to address the diversity of children and their families across four major themes: leadership of management, partnership with parents, interdisciplinarity, and physical and pedagogical accessibility of activities.

Keywords: inclusive education, early childhood special education; collaborative research, children with special needs, accessibility.

Oral Presentations I-V | 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

OP I: "Mother-Infant Interactions in The Context of Childbirth-Related Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms".

OP II: "Getting Down To The Facts: The Effect of Parental Screen Use on Toddlers' Communicative and Socioemotional Skills".

OP IV: "Maternity Care Providers' Perceptions and Experiences of Cultural Competence in Caring for Chinese Migrant Mothers in Switzerland".

OP V: "Language of the heart? Examining the influence of maternal acculturation and literacy-related activities on children's language development".

Oral Presentation I

Mother-Infant Interactions in The Context of Childbirth-Related Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms

[Sella Devita](#)¹, [Camille Deforges](#)¹, [Laura Bozicevic](#)², [Jean-François Tolsa](#)³, [Laura Ciavarella](#)¹, [Vania Sandoz](#)^{1,4}, [Antje Horsch](#)^{1,3}

¹Institute of Higher Education and Research in Healthcare (IUFERS), University of Lausanne and Lausanne University Hospital, Lausanne, Switzerland; ²Department of Primary Care and Mental Health, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom; ³Department Woman-Mother-Child, Clinic of Neonatology, Lausanne University Hospital and University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland; ⁴Department Woman-Mother-Child, Child Abuse and Neglect Team, Lausanne University Hospital, Lausanne, Switzerland; sella.devita@unil.ch

Introduction: Childbirth can be traumatic for mothers, causing childbirth-related posttraumatic stress symptoms (CB-PTSS), depression, and anxiety. While the effect of maternal depression and anxiety on mother-infant interactions is well explored, only limited studies investigated the impact of CB-PTSS on it. This study aims to investigate the differences in the quality of mother-infant interactions among groups of mothers with symptoms related to CB-PTSS.

Methods: French-speaking and/or English-speaking mother-infant dyads were included. Dyads were classified into three groups (birth-related symptoms of PTSS (BRS), general symptoms of PTSS (GS), and non-symptomatic (NS)) based on mothers' CB-PTSS measured using PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5). Mother-infant play interactions were video-recorded and coded using the Global Rating Scale (e.g., maternal sensitivity, infant emotional tone, reciprocity). Depressive symptoms were measured with Edinburgh Postpartum Depression Scale (EPDS) and anxiety with Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS-A) and included as covariates. All data were collected at six months postpartum.

Results: Preliminary analysis of an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) (n=90) was carried out to analyze the mean differences of mother-infant interactions between PCL-5 groups after controlling for the effect of maternal anxiety and depression symptoms. Results showed no significant mother-infant interaction mean differences among PCL-5 groups.

Discussion: The findings of this study are in line with one previous study but contradict several others. This might be attributed to variations in instruments and study populations.

Conclusion: Healthcare professionals could help inform mothers with CB-PTSS that their symptoms may not significantly affect their interactions with their six months old infants.

Oral Presentation II

Getting Down To The Facts: The Effect of Parental Screen Use on Toddlers' Communicative and Socioemotional Skills

Alexia Forcella, Souhir Chamam, Nadia Musio, Florence Quinodoz, [Nevena Dimitrova](#)
Haute Ecole de Travail Social de Lausanne, Switzerland; nevena.dimitrova@hetsl.ch

Electronic screen devices are pervasive, including in everyday routine interactions between parents and young children. When parents use screens around their young children, they are considerably distracted. Here we aim to determine whether parental screen use disrupts early parent-child interaction and how such interactive disruptions might affect young children's communicative and socioemotional development. The sample consisted of 52 parent-child dyads (Mchild age= 22 months, range 12-36 months). All parent-child dyads were first invited to play for 5 min (T1); then, the sample was split into three conditions and parent-child dyads were invited to play for 5 more minutes as follows: continue to play (no distraction condition), continue to play while the parent filled out a paper-pen questionnaire (paper-pen condition), and continue to play while the parent filled out a questionnaire on a tablet (screen condition). Child communicative skills were assessed by coding the number of produced gestures, word tokens and word types during T1 and T2. Child socioemotional abilities were assessed using the Coding Interactive Behavior scale. Comparing T2 scores across the three conditions, we found no differences in children's communicative productions (verbal and non-verbal) but we found a difference in children's interactive skills: children from the "without distraction" condition showed better social engagement in the interaction compared to both their peers from the "paper-pen" and "screen" conditions ($p=.041$). Comparing T1-T2 scores within each condition, we found no differences in the "without distraction" condition but better child social engagement at T1 compared to T2 for the paper-pen condition ($p=.004$). Findings fail to document major disturbances in young children's communicative and socioemotional functioning following parental screen use, with the exception of lesser child social engagement when the parent is distracted on a paper-pen activity.

Oral Presentation IV

Maternity Care Providers' Perceptions and Experiences of Cultural Competence in Caring for Chinese Migrant Mothers in Switzerland

[Dingcui CAI](#)¹, [Paulina Villanueva](#)¹, [Hong Lu](#)², [Basile Zimmermann](#)³, [Antje Horsch](#)⁴

¹Institute of Higher Education and Research in Healthcare (IUFERS), University of Lausanne, Switzerland; ²Peking University School of Nursing; ³Confucius Institute, University of Geneva; ⁴Department Woman-Mother-Child, Lausanne University Hospital; dingcui.cai@unil.ch

Background: With 29.4% of infants born to migrant mothers in Switzerland, Swiss hospitals are aiming to improve maternity services to meet the needs of the migrant population. To date, few qualitative studies have explored the work experiences and perceptions of maternity care providers caring for migrant women, particularly those of non-European origin, within the Swiss maternity system.

Objective: This study aimed to investigate the work experience and perceptions of maternity care providers caring for migrant women from non-European countries in Switzerland, focusing on Chinese women.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 maternity care providers working in French-speaking Switzerland. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Data was analyzed using thematic analysis. **Results:** Findings indicated that most maternity care providers acknowledged specific pregnancy and childbirth-related beliefs among Chinese migrant women, as well as their specific problem of delayed lactation. Overall, maternity care providers thought they provided safe and respectful care and built trusting relationships with Chinese mothers through communication assistance, comprehensive support, and multidisciplinary collaboration.

However, language barriers and cross-cultural communication were prominent issues impeding the provision of transcultural care for Chinese women and their families. Differences in the family structures and social networks of Chinese migrant women were perceived to result in conflicting care expectations. **Conclusion:** The cultural competence of maternity care providers is critical to ensuring quality and equitable care for Chinese migrant women. Our findings reinforce the call for healthcare practitioners, policymakers, and researchers to collaborate and implement.

Oral Presentation V

Language of the heart? Examining the influence of maternal acculturation and literacy-related activities on children's language development

Jessica Carolyn Weiner¹, Ankica Jurkic², Simone Halliday², Leila Schächinger Tenés¹, Alexander Grob¹

¹Universität Basel, Switzerland; ²Universität Bern, Switzerland; jessica.weiner@unibas.ch

Immigrant children must learn the societal-language (SLA) alongside acquiring their family's heritage-language (HLA). Research shows that parent-child-interactions greatly advance language-learning. Yet differences exist in how parents help their children learn language, and this may depend on parents' cultural orientations. Little research examines how immigrant children's dual language-learning depends on how well their parents feel acculturated towards the heritage- or host-country, or on parents' language-skills. Or, how and if immigrant families partake in literacy-activities.

We investigate 42 dual-language-learning (DLL) mother-child dyads (children's mean age = 58.46 months) from culturally-diverse backgrounds. Data is analyzed with multiple-linear-regression-analyses with interaction-effects. DLL-children's mothers who report strong SLA-verbal-skills engage more in SLA literacy-activities with their children ($p < .001$), irrespective of acculturation-attitudes ($p > .62$). HLA literacy-activities are more frequent in mothers with strong heritage-oriented acculturation-attitudes ($p = .04$), regardless of mothers' HLA-verbal-skills ($p = .37$). Plus, DLL-children show better SLA-vocabulary-outcomes ($p = .01$), when mothers report high host-country-oriented acculturation-attitudes and high SLA-skills. But children's HLA-vocabulary-outcomes are principally driven by frequent HLA-based literacy-activities ($p = .05$).

The present findings show that mothers of DLL-children seem to engage in literacy-activities within the SLA and HLA for different reasons: Heritage-oriented mothers likely use literacy-activities to boost HLA-skills and to impart heritage-culture and -knowledge. In turn, mothers skilled in SLA with strong host-country-oriented acculturation-attitudes likely aim to train their children's SLA-skills. Understanding the specific motivations behind immigrant mothers' language-use likely aids to develop tools to better assist DLL-children when learning either language.

Symposium I 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Early Life Adversity and Epigenetics: Moving from Community to High-Risk Samples

[Daniel S. Schechter](#)¹, [Maria Meier](#)^{2,3}, [Eva Unternaehrer](#)³, [David Bürgin](#)^{3,4}

¹University of Lausanne Hospital and Faculty of Biology & Medicine, Switzerland.; ²Department of Psychology, University of Konstanz, Konstanz, Germany; ³Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Research Department, University Psychiatric Clinics Basel (UPK), University of Basel, Switzerland; ⁴Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development, University of Zurich; Daniel.Schechter@chuv.ch, maria.meier@unibas.ch, eva.unternaehrer@unibas.ch

Children and adolescents who have experienced early life adversity, such as prenatal stress, family violence exposure, child abuse and/or neglect, are at risk for physical and mental disorder later in life. These effects might depend on gene-environment interactions and may be mediated through epigenetic modifications including DNA methylation.

In this symposium, we will present results from studies on associations between early life adversities and epigenetic patterns in high risk groups. First, Prof. Dr. Daniel Schechter will present results on DNA methylation of the NR3C1 gene in mothers and their children in relation to maternal post-traumatic stress after exposure to interpersonal violence. Then, MSc. Maria Meier will present findings on the link between early life adversity and epigenetic age acceleration in a high risk sample of young adults with previous out-of-home placement. Drawing from the same sample, Dr. Eva Unternaehrer will then present findings on the association of early life adversity and oxytocin genotype with patterns in DNA methylation of genes relevant for the oxytocinergic system.

The findings will be discussed in the light of how research in high-risk samples will help us move forward in the field of behavioral epigenetics and how these findings might inform treatment approaches in the clinical setting.

Symposium II 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Early Childhood Intervention and Immigrant Families

[Maren Zeller](#)¹, [Selina Steinmann](#)¹, [Bettina Grubenmann](#)¹, [Fabienne Bohler](#)², [Franziska Vogt](#)², [Patsawee Rodcharoen](#)³, [Nadia Baghdadi](#)¹

¹Ostschweizer Fachhochschule, Switzerland; ²University of Teacher Education St. Gallen (PHSG); ³University of Teacher Education in Special Needs (HfH); maren.zeller@ost.ch, selina.steinmann@ost.ch, bettina.grubenmann@ost.ch, Fabienne.Bohler@phsg.ch, franziska.vogt@phsg.ch, Patsawee.Rodcharoen@hfh.ch, nadia.baghdadi@ost.ch

This symposium aims to highlight the underestimated issue of early childhood intervention and immigrant families in Switzerland. There are two core questions that all three papers address: (1) To what extent do early childhood interventions focus on immigrant families, either covertly or overtly? (2) To what extent do early childhood programs refer to concepts such as integration, inclusion or belonging?

Oral Presentations VI-X | 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

OP VI: "Individual and public barriers to participation in ECEC".

OP VII: "Parental Well-Being as an Outcome of Early Childhood Special Education: Preliminary Evidence on Effectiveness and Mechanisms".

OP VIII: "Promoting belonging in communities by co-designing with children: the example of inclusive playgrounds".

OP IX: "Relationships between Teacher-child Interaction Quality and the Quality of Children's Play".

OP X: "The LifeStories Project- Impact of infant institutionalization under psychosocial deprivation across the life span – a 60-year follow-up study".

Oral Presentation VI

Individual and public barriers to participation in ECEC

[Susanne Kuger](#)^{1,2}, [Kerstin Lippert](#)¹, [Theresa Kayed](#)¹, [Lisa Lessner](#)¹

¹German Youth Institute, Germany; ²LMU Munich, Germany; kuger@dji.de

The overwhelming majority of children in Germany enter early child education and care (ECEC) between 10 and 38 months of age. For many of them, ECEC is the first chance outside their family to meet and interact with a group of peers regularly, to learn from each other, and develop a sense of belonging. The great variance in age of entry can be attributed to individual child and family factors and additionally may be determined by public childcare provision, rules of admission or other regulations.

Since 2016, the German KIBS study provides a unique data set, asking about 33.000 parents each year about their need for and use of ECEC services. The data is representative at state level and we thus use it to analyze children' age at entry including federal regulations in each of the 16 German states. In multilevel regression, typically confounded individual and family factors such as parental education, family structure, mothers' employment, migration background, and socio-economic status but also the child's gender are included. At level two we include regional data on average availability of places as well as state regulations on admission and childcare fees.

First results based on single level regression analyses show inequalities in childcare use along family factors and marked differences between eastern and western states, still confirming the discrepancy in ECEC traditions between the once divided regions. The discussion includes how current policy making in Germany (i.e., the childcare quality law) contributes to de- or increasing inequalities in children's access to group playing and learning contexts.

Oral Presentation VII

Parental Well-Being as an Outcome of Early Childhood Special Education: Preliminary Evidence on Effectiveness and Mechanisms

[Christina Koch](#), [Simone Schaub](#)

University of Teacher Education in Special Needs, Switzerland; christina.koch@hfh.ch

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) focuses on children with special needs within their social context. Family-centred interventions are deemed vital for the sustainable and effective promotion of child development and participation. Parental well-being is therefore considered a key outcome of ECSE. Due to the complex mechanisms of ECSE and the small and heterogeneous population, empirical evidence of effectiveness is scarce. Single Case Experimental Designs (SCED) offer a solution as they validly test the effectiveness and monitor the individual process during the intervention. A pilot study examined the effects of ECSE on parental well-being in a series of SCED studies. Over 10 weeks, 21 mothers and fathers completed daily well-being questionnaires, starting at various intervals before ECSE initiation (multiple baseline SCED). Results indicate that one-third of participants experienced decreased, unchanged, or increased well-being, each. Effectiveness correlated with pre-intervention well-being; lower initial well-being linked to a more positive ECSE effect. Pre-intervention well-being was positively related to family and child resources. Family resources additionally significantly influenced the process trajectory after the beginning of ECSE. Mainly, low-resource families experienced an initial well-being decline, followed by substantial improvement. Overall, the pilot study emphasizes the sensitive early phase of ECSE for families and supports the suitability of SCED to capture individualized effects and to account for the heterogeneity of families.

Oral Presentation VIII

Promoting belonging in communities by co-designing with children: the example of inclusive playgrounds

[Ines Wenger](#)^{1,2,3}, [Christina Schulze](#)¹

¹Zurich University of Applied Health Sciences; ²Luleå University of Technology; ³University College Cork; ines.wenger2@zhaw.ch

Background: Inclusive playgrounds in communities should be places where all children can meet, play together, and experience a sense of belonging. However, designing inclusive playgrounds is a complex task and requires the combination of different knowledge and expertise from different perspectives, such as playground designers, children, and their families. **Aim:** The presentation outlines how co-designing inclusive playgrounds with community members, including children with different abilities and their families, is one way to create inclusive and welcoming environments in communities.

Methods: The research was informed by two studies within a larger research project. The first study was a qualitative evidence synthesis conducted in health and social sciences databases that identified children's need in relation to play and inclusion from their perspectives. The second study was a qualitative study that used interviews to explore the experiences of experts in designing inclusive playgrounds. Data of this study were analyzed with qualitative content analysis.

Findings: The combined analysis of both studies showed that for children and other community members, such as parents or grandparents, factors from the physical and social environment contribute to a sense of belonging in playgrounds. Factors of the physical environment referred to natural elements, play equipment, amenities in the playground, and layout of space. Social Environment Factors related to creating opportunities for social interaction and developing awareness of the diverse needs of community members through co-designing. Conclusion: A co-design process involving the most diverse community members can be a useful strategy for promoting inclusive play environments in communities that are beneficial to their health, well-being and sense of belonging.

Oral Presentation IX

Relationships between Teacher-child Interaction Quality and the Quality of Children's Play

[Cornelia Rüdüsüli¹](#), [Isabelle Duss²](#), [Patricia Lannen²](#), [Corina Wustmann Seiler¹](#)

¹Zurich University of Teacher Education (PHZH); ²Marie Meierhofer Children's Institute (MMI);
cornelia.ruedisueli@phzh.ch

Playfulness describes the quality of children's play and is assumed to be influenced by the social environment at home and in pedagogical settings. To date, however, little is known about what teachers in ECEC can contribute to the development of children's playfulness. Previous studies have demonstrated the importance of the teacher-child-interaction-quality in predicting positive outcomes for children's social-emotional development, but no studies have so far been identified that address how the teacher-child interaction relates to children's playfulness. Therefore, the present study examined cross-sectional and longitudinal associations between children's playfulness and teacher-child interactions assessed with CLASS Toddler. 78 teachers in ECEC were observed at the first measurement (t1) and assessed on the eight dimensions of interaction quality (positive/ negative climate, teacher sensitivity, regard for child perspectives, behavioural guidance, facilitation of learning/development, quality of feedback, language modeling). The playfulness of 830 children (Mage = 5.0, SD = 1.46) at t1 and of 743 children one year later at t2 were assessed by teachers and parents with an online questionnaire using the Children's Playfulness Scale. Results indicated that language modeling ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.05$) was positively and behavioural guidance ($\beta = -0.40$, $p < 0.05$) was negatively related to children's playfulness in the cross-section. Longitudinally, no significant effects were found. Generally, proactive behavior of teachers is required for high ratings of interaction quality as assessed by CLASS. We discuss whether this proactive behavior might be hindering children's playfulness and the possible importance of children's self-determination in their free child-centered play.

Oral Presentation X

The LifeStories Project- Impact of infant institutionalization under psychosocial deprivation across the life span – a 60-year follow-up study

[Patricia Lannen](#)¹, [Hannah Sand](#)¹, [Fabio Sticca](#)², [Flavia Wehrle](#)³, [Clara Bombach](#)⁴, [Oskar Jenni](#)³

¹Marie Meierhofer Institut für das Kind, assoziiertes Institut der Universität Zürich; ²Interkantonale Hochschule für Heilpädagogik; ³Universitäts Kinderspital Zürich; ⁴Universität Zürich; lannen@mimi.ch

Early childhood is a crucial period for human development across the life span. Proper stimulation and a responsive caregiver during the early years are essential for healthy development. Consistent with current global scientific data on the detrimental effects of institutionalization, Dr. Marie Meierhofer found significant developmental delays due to psychosocial deprivation in a population-based survey of 431 infants placed in infant care institutions in the 1950-ies in Switzerland, compared to a community sample not affected by institutionalization (Zurich Longitudinal Studies, ZLS). Different starting conditions – as would have shown in differences in birth weight for example – were ruled out as an explanation. In a follow-up study implemented under the NRP76 since 2018, 96% of individuals residing in Switzerland were found through population registry. Some 52% of eligible participants (N = 127) took part in the 60-year follow-up. They were assessed with questionnaires, neuropsychological assessments and biographical narrative interviews on health, abilities and life trajectories. Importantly, preliminary analyses showed that participation in the 60-year follow-up was not selective in terms of gender or developmental quotient assessed during infancy. Former participants of the ZLS comparison group were followed-up in parallel. Qualitative and descriptive data revealed heterogeneous life trajectories and ways of dealing with the past in the group of formerly institutionalized individuals. In preliminary linear regression analyses of the quantitative data, we found poorer physical health ($B=0.21$, $p=0.03$), poorer mental health ($B=-0.09$, $p=0.01$), worse cognitive abilities $B=0.89$, $p<.001$, lower life satisfaction ($B=0.3$, $p=0.01$), worse attachment security ($B=0.47$, $p<.001$) and less emotion regulation skills ($B=-1.09$, $p=0.027$), lower scores on socio-economic indicators ($B=0.43$, $p<.001$) and a 2.6 times higher mortality for males in the formerly institutionalized individuals compared to the non-affected comparison group of the ZLS. Due to the robust design of this population-based, non-selective, 60 -year follow-up using a non-affected comparison group and standardized assessments, the study is not only relevant from a scientific perspective, but the results are relevant for the reconciliation process of Social and Compulsory Measures before law reform in 1981 in Switzerland and relevant for the millions of children still in similar care circumstances across the globe. The findings also demonstrate, how essential nurturing care for healthy human development is, even when physical and medical needs are well met.

Symposium III I 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The interdisciplinary study of childhood maltreatment – from data-science approaches towards better understanding maltreatment trajectories and disclosure of maltreatment

[David Bürgin](#)^{1,3}, [Meret Wallimann](#)², [Julia Quehenberger](#)², [Eva Unternaehrer](#)³

¹Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development, University of Zurich; ²School of Social Work, ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences; ³Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Research Department, University Psychiatric Hospitals, University of Basel; david.buergin@jacobscenter.uzh.ch, walp@zhaw.ch, queh@zhaw.ch, eva.unternaehrer@unibas.ch

Childhood maltreatment, including different forms of interpersonal trauma, abuse, and neglect, is an unfortunately common phenomena often resulting in long lasting consequences - particularly a heightened risk for psychopathology but also low social participation and functioning. Studying maltreatment is inherently difficult as maltreatment includes different co-occurrent subtypes and forms, acts of commission and of omission, that often persist over and along different phases of childhood. In contrast, maltreatment is often measured retrospectively with crude and aggregate measures.

Within this interdisciplinary symposium, we aim to address the questions: 1) how can we analyze such nested and multidimensional data, 2) how do we assess and describe maltreatment trajectories across different developmental stages, and 3) how can maltreatment be disclosed studying young people in maltreating contexts. First, Dr. Unternaehrer will present recent advances in the study of maltreatment providing an overview of recent state-of-the-art analytical approaches from data science and their application in different settings. Second, Dr. David Bürgin will present data on age trajectories of different forms of childhood maltreatment within young adults previously placed out-of-home. Third, Mrs. Wallimann and Dr. Quehenberger will present on the role of early childhood in the disclosure of emotional abuse presenting data from a representative school sample of adolescents.

The presented findings and approaches will be discussed to advance the study of early maltreatment and its consequences, highlighting the need for interdisciplinary exchange in theory, measurement, and modelling to better understand adversity within complex evolving ecosystems along development.
