

# Comparison of self-reports of mothers with socially withdrawn and normally behaving infants

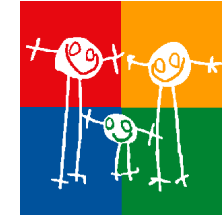
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# Introduction



- n in adverse conditions infants can express their distress by becoming **socially withdrawn** (Guedeney & Fermanian 2001)
- n unsatisfying infant-caregiver interaction is a common cause for infant **social withdrawal** (Keren, Feldman, & Tyano, 2001; Dollberg et al., 2006)



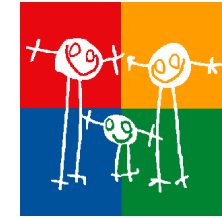
# Why current study?

## n Hypotheses:

- caregivers may not always detect or recognise infant social withdrawal as a sign of distress
- caregivers may not always be aware or report their own problems affecting parent-infant interaction (e.g. Kemppinen 2007)

## n easy measures would be of use in detecting interaction problems in primary services

# Aims of the study

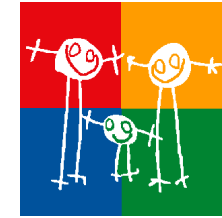


- n To compare maternal self-reports on
  - Parenting stress
  - Mothers' perinatal health
  - Mothers' feelings toward their infant
  - Mother's attitudes toward their infant

Between socially withdrawn (ADBB+) and normally behaving infants (ADBB-)

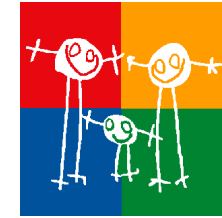


# Material and design

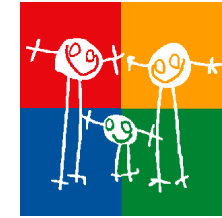


- n 127 mother-infant pairs, infants full-term and healthy
- n recruited from well-baby clinics in Tampere
- n population based sample, enriched with families at risk
- n assessed when the infant was 8-11 weeks old

# Methods



- n Interview: mother's general and mental health (SCID, Spitzer et al., 1992) , demographic information, risk factors
- n Parenting Stress Index, short form (Abidin 1990)
- n Videotapes rated
  - 1) with the Global Rating Scales for Mother-Infant Interaction -method (Murray et al., 1996) by two independent evaluators
  - 2) with the ADBB (KP)



# Methods

## n ADBB

- 8 items, scored 0 to 4, sum score of 5 or more deviant
- 47 infants (37%) scoring above the cutoff (ADBB+)

## n GRS scales

- inf 1: positive engagement-avoidant, range 1-5,
- lowest 15%: score 2 or less
- inf 2: inert-fretful, range -1 to 1, mean -0.20
- lowest 15%: score -0.70 or less
- deviant if inf1 = 2 or less or inf 2 = -0.70 or less



# Characteristics of the sample (N= 127).

	ADBB+	ADBB-
Gender of the child	%	%
Boy	45	54
Family structure		
Mother married or cohabiting	92	96
Mother single	8	4
	Mean	Mean
Age of mother	29	30
Age of partner	31	32
Household's net weekly income (euro)	2708	2789
Birth weight of the child (kg)	3.6	3.6

Comparison of maternal self-reports between mothers of socially withdrawn (ADBB+) and normally behaving infants (ADBB-)

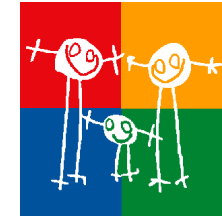
	ADBB+ (n= 47)	ADBB- (n= 80)	p
Mean (sd) for Parental distress in the PSI	24.9 (6.6)	25.9 (7.3)	Ns
	% (n)	% (n)	
Positive attitude towards pregnancy	63.8 (30)	65.0 (52)	Ns
Anxiety during pregnancy	38.3 (18)	56.3 (45)	0.04
Mental health during pregnancy good	93.6% (44)	83.8 (67)	0.09
Positive representation of the baby	66.0 (37)	55.0 (44)	Ns
Anxiety after birth	47.6 (20)	58.3 (42)	Ns
Enjoyment of the baby	74.5 (35)	61.3 (49)	0.09
Positive attitude towards the baby	61.7 (29)	66.3 (53)	Ns

The means scores of the GRS scales for infants scoring below and above the cut off point of 5 points in the ADBB.

GRS scales	ADBB under 5 mean	ADBB 5 or more mean	Sig
Mat 1 (engagement)	3.75	3.43	0.006
Mat 2a (intrusive behavior)	0.15	0.30	0.05
Mat 2b (withdrawn behavior)	0.15	0.23	ns
Mat 3 (warm affect)	4.07	3.70	0.005
Inf 1 (engagement)	3.44	2.25	0.001
Inf 2 (inert-fretful)	-0.04	-0.41	0.001
Interaction	3.46	2.42	0.001



# Results



Despite observed poorer mother-infant interaction, mothers of withdrawn infants

- did not perceive parenting or their infants more difficult
- reported less anxiety and other mental health problems



# What should we make out of this?

- n Infant observation can reveal problems distressing the infant before they are expressed by the parent (e.g. Matthey et al 2005, Kemppinen 2007)
- n Infant observation should be used routinely in front line services - the ADBB is a feasible tool for that
- n ADBB could also serve as an intervention method for helping parents recognise and deal with infant distress