

**The Psychoanalytic Observation of Children**  
Origins and Recent Developments -- Training and Research  
Its Significance for Psychotherapy and other Fields of Psychosocial Work  
An International Conference at the University of Vienna, April 19-21, 2024

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**"Markus has changed so much. He is so well behaved now."**

**Exploring the change of relational experiences of a child in risk by the use of Young Child Observation as a research tool**

***Sunday, April 21, 11:00 a.m. / Hörsaal 30 / Parallel session C3***

**Abstract:**

This paper focuses on the findings of a single case study of the two-and-a-half-year-old Markus and the development of his relationship and interaction with his mother in the family environment during participation in a psychotherapeutic parent-toddler group. This study is part of the research project "The Significance of Parent-Toddler Groups for the Development of Children in the Context of Family Relations: The Vienna Parent-Toddler Group (PTG) Study".

The parent-toddler group takes place at the Child Guidance Clinic in Vienna and is based on the concept of Parent-Toddler Groups developed at the Anna Freud Centre in London. As part of a research co-operation with the Austrian Association of Individual Psychology (ÖVIP) and the research unit "Psychoanalysis and Education" of the Department of Education at the University of Vienna, weekly observations of approximately four to five young children take place over the course of at least one year, both in the parent-toddler group and in the children's family environment. The aim of this paper is to present the findings of a single case analysis using the Tavistock Method of Young Child Observation as a research tool. With reference to the concept of "patterns of experience", the focus is on the question of how the relationship dynamics between a boy named Markus and his mother changed in everyday family situations during the months in which the parent-toddler group was attended. It also outlines links between identified changes and the experiences that were made in the parent-toddler group.

**Keywords:**

Psychotherapeutic parent-toddler group, Vienna Parent-Toddler Group (PTG) Study, Child Guidance Clinic in Vienna, patterns of experience, Austrian Association of Individual Psychology (ÖVIP), Anna Freud Centre

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Frederika Wagnerová, BA MA is a former student assistant, student tutor and a research project member of the research unit "Psychoanalysis and Education" of the Department of Education at the University of Vienna. She is currently managing director of the Austrian Association of Individual Psychology (ÖVIP).

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