

The Psychoanalytic Observation of Children
Origins and Recent Developments -- Training and Research
Its Significance for Psychotherapy and other Fields of Psychosocial Work
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**Bifokal Young Child Observation in families and parent-toddler groups – and beyond:
The research design of the *Vienna Parent-Toddler Group Study* with special respect
to a casuistic example**

Saturday, April 20, 11:30 a.m. / Hörsaal 30 / Parallel session A3

Abstract:

The parent-toddler group concept was developed at the Anna Freud Centre in London. Since 2021 it has also been used at the Child Guidance Clinic in Vienna. The "Vienna Parent-Toddler Group (PTG) Study" is investigating the significance of participation in such a therapeutic group for changes in children's developmental problems in the context of their relations in their families. Among other research tools, a bifocal use of Young Child Observation is applied: The children are observed as continuously as possible in their interactions and relations once a week for one hour at home or for one and a half hour fortnightly in the group. In addition, interviews are conducted with the therapists and the parents. These interviews also deal with the history and current life situation of the families and help the project team to embed what is observed in a broader context of understanding.

With reference to accounts from the observation of a child with eating problems it is shown in what respect bifocal observations provide a deeper understanding of the eating problem. With reference to excerpts of the interview with the child's mother, the research team will also illustrate at least two dimensions of a deeper understanding of the emotions and interactions the family members share.

Keywords:

Parent-toddler group, Young Child Observation according to the Tavistock Concept, bifocal observation, Vienna Parent-Toddler Group (PTG) Study

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