CultureCase

The effect of music and movement on mother-infant interactions

This research was conducted by **Wendy Vlismas, Stephen Malloch** and **Denis Burnham** at the **University of Western Sydney, Australia.**

Summary:

In this work, a group of researchers investigated the effects of music and movement (M&M) on the interactions between first time mothers and their 2–6-month-old infants. They also evaluated the effects of performing the M&M programme both in a group and as a self-instructed method. They found that the M&M programme resulted in changes to both mothers' and children's behaviour. Mothers reported increased perception of attachment with their infants over time, and this was also true when M&M was performed in groups.

The study assessed maternal postnatal attachment

The mothers' emotional attachment to their children was examined through considering their reported experience regarding music and enjoyment, play, social, movement, and touch after the M&M activities, which included lullabies that incorporated rocking/swaying and gentle use of touch and playful gestural interactions (e.g. tickling). The programme was carried out over a period of 5 weeks.

Mother-infant musical interactions are positive for their relationship

How mothers express their affection in the mother-infant relationship is reliant on the reciprocity of their interactions: taking turns to respond, displaying mutual pleasure and satisfaction. Embodied mother-infant musical interactions

seem to have a positive impact on their relationships and might be essential for future child development.

This summary is by **Ailin Buzzi, King's Knowledge Exchange Associate.**

Keywords

mothers **movement** **children** **music**

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