Lausanne Trilogue Play: Assessment and Intervention

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2011 Canadian Census Data:

- With married parents: 68.4% (2001), 63.6% (2006), 58.4% (2011)
- With common-law parents: 12.8% (2001), 16.3% (2006), 17.6% (2011)
- With lone parents: 18.0% (2001), 19.3% (2006), 24.2% (2011)
2015 US Census Data

- 2 parents
- Mother only
- Father only

- Parents
- Grandparents
- Column1
### Children Aged Up to 17 in Household, by Type of Household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Household</th>
<th>Distribution by Type of Household</th>
<th>Children aged up to 17 in the household (thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-family households(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>94.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple with children aged up to 17</td>
<td></td>
<td>87.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone parent with children up to 17</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-family households with others(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Population</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The table provides data on the number of children aged up to 17 in Israel in 2015, categorized by type of household.*
Multi-person Relationships

- Infants begin life already wired for multi-person interactions
- Infants understand their own experience by seeing and understanding adults respond to one another
- The family and other multi-person interactions foster the infant’s emerging understanding of other’s motivations
- The infant in turn, can contribute to the family system

Fivaz-Depeursinge & Corboz-Warnery, 1999; Fivaz-Depeursinge & Philipp, 2014
Understanding the Family System in the Infant and Preschool Population

- Lausanne Trilogue Play - A semi-structured play assessment examining the family alliance

- The first *observational tool* to assess the family alliance in the infant and preschool population

- Observe and assess family functioning, yielding information beyond dyadic observations
Lausanne Trilogue Play
Fivaz-Depeursinge & Corboz-Warnery, 1999

We ask you to play together as a family, following the directions for the four separate parts of the exercise. In the first part, one of you plays with your child, while the other is simply present. In the second part, your roles are reversed. In the third part, you both play with your child together. In the last part you will talk with each other for a bit; and it will be your child’s turn to be simply present. It is up to you to decide the inclination of the seat, in which direction to orient it, and how long each part is to last. The whole thing should take about 8-12 minutes. Please signal when you are done.
Longitudinal Study

- Non-referred sample of volunteer families (38)
- 23/38 cooperative
- 15/38 families struggled
- Stable in their own trajectories
- Patterns identified
- Followed the sample from the prenatal period and ongoing (sample now in their teens).
LTP at 9, 18, 36 months and prenatal

- The setting and the task are adjusted as the child grows...
- 9 months
- 18 months,
- 3 years
- In the prenatal version, the infant to be born is represented by a doll.
The Family Alliance

- Degree of coordination reached by the mother, the father, and the baby when completing a task
  (Fivaz-Depeursinge & Corboz-Warnery, 1999)

- 3 types of Family Alliance:
  - **Cooperative:**
    - work as a team, participation, mutual respect, triadic affect sharing and empathy…
  - **Cohesive coparenting, coparents as the executive subsystem**
    - 65-75%
The Family Alliance

- **Conflicted:**
  - competition between the parents, interferences, forced affects, mockery, aggressiveness...
  - 15-25%

- **Disordered:** massive exclusion or withdrawal, chaotic interactions
  - Problematic coparenting, role reversal, negative child outcomes
  - 15-25%
FA in normative families

- **Ratios of Cooperative, Conflicted, and Disordered FAs in normative samples** (Favez et al., 2006, Favez et al. 2011)
  - Cooperative: ~ 65-75%
  - Conflicted: ~15-25%
  - Disordered: ~ 5-15%

- **Patterns of Evolution** (Favez et al., 2006)

  ![Graphs showing patterns of evolution](image)

  - **High stable (61%)**
  - **Decrease (18%)**
  - **Low stable (21%)**

LTP 3 together (FAAS scores); clusters, (Z-scores), Ward's hierarchical method with squared Euclidian distance
Typical infant behaviours:

- The child is “flexible”:
  - Engaged with one or both parents (according to roles)
  - In part IV
    - Accepts being on his own
    - Good self-regulation
    - At the same time…..not over-compliant…..

- Affect ratio: positive > negative

- Triangular bids:
  - Successively shares the same affect with both parents
  - Sharing delight, enthusiasm, interest, tension, frustration, etc…
A triangular bid in a “2+1”

- Mother-child active, father as “third party”
- Question: “Lucas, will you spontaneously turn towards the third party parent, showing your awareness of the triadic context…”
- “…and your capacity to initiate triadic affect sharing?”
- Lucas’ answer is, “Yes, I can!!!”
- Mother-child active, father as “third party”
- Lucas shares his experience with dad
- Then returns to mom
Cooperative families: longitudinal perspective

- At the 5 year follow-up:
  - Multiperson communication including sibling
  - Better emotion regulation
  - More advanced Theory of Mind (Lavanchy-Scailola, 2014)
  - Better affective outcomes (Favez et al, 2012)
FA in normative samples: Conclusions

- Most families in normative samples have a cooperative FA
- Parents show support, involvement, creativity, pleasure to be together with the child
- Child’s triangular engagement style contributes to the building of a cooperative FA,
  - with triangular skills (primary, secondary, and “symbolic” intersubjectivity) helping to regulate the interaction
- What about problematic alliances?
Infant Engagement Styles.

- Triangular engagement
- Role-reversal
- Split engagement
- Go-between/withdrawal

- May have one predominant problematic style
- May cycle through all 4 types of engagement
Infant styles of engagement

• Role reversal
  ▫ Child as the “problem” – misbehaving
  ▫ Child as the victim or ill
  ▫ Child as the entertainer

• Managing tension
## Coparenting patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infant style of Engagement</th>
<th>→</th>
<th>Coparenting Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Triangular</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>Cohesive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Reversal</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>Child-at-center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Split</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>Excluding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go-between/Withdrawal</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
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</table>
Data

• In the original sample:
  • 23/38 triangular engagement
  • 15/38 problematic

  ▫ Most split in parts I and II
  ▫ In parts III and IV 9 remained rigidly stuck with a predominant pattern of role-reversal, split or go-between/withdrawal
  ▫ Tended to shift between the various styles (better prognostically)

• In clinic we see
  ▫ much higher proportion of problematic infant engagement and corresponding problematic coparenting styles and family coalitions.
  ▫ Greater incidence of rigid patterns
Clinical Relevance

- Early family experiences serve as a template for social interactions
  - The more functional the alliance in infancy, the more warmth, flexibility and inclusion of the whole family during interactions at age 5.

- Theory of mind
  - A cooperative family alliance correlated with higher scores in false belief task at age 5.

- Autonomy
  - Parents with greater coparenting cohesion were more able to play independently in PNG

- Affect
  - Lower rates of aggression and confrontation in story completion tasks for children coming from cooperative families
  - Lowest scores on the CBCL
## Clinical Relevance

<table>
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<th>Infant Engagement System</th>
<th>→ Coparenting</th>
<th>→ Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Triangular</td>
<td>→ Cohesive</td>
<td>→ Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Split</td>
<td>→ Excluding</td>
<td>→ Binding Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Role Reversal Coalition</td>
<td>→ Child-at-center</td>
<td>→ Detouring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Go-between/Withdrawal</td>
<td>→ Competitive</td>
<td>→ Triangulation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Predictors of unfavourable outcomes:

- Support of the partner associated with better outcome (Heinicke et. al., 2000)
- Meta-analysis of treatments showed involvement of partner improved outcomes (Backermans-Kranenburg et.al., 2003)
- Predictors of less favourable outcomes (Herve et. al., 2009)
  - The frequency of problems
  - Intensity of problems
  - Absence of the father at more than 2/3 of the consultations
Clinical consultation: The LTP with videofeedback

- LTP is incorporated into a complete assessment of the infant and his/her family
  - Initial intake with whole family
  - Play assessments
    - Roseanne Clarke dyadic (adapted)
    - LTP
  - Parent interviews (adapted AAIs)
  - Colateral information
Reflective Family Play

- Four parts from RFP
- Instructions to follow the lead
- Part IV parents are asked to reflect on what they observed
  - In their child
  - In their coparenting
- Therapist joins them and they discuss +/- watch video clips from the play
- Same formula repeated for 8 sessions.
References