Mind matters

On mothers’ and fathers’ mentalizing about their child

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The fact that we try to make sense of our own and others’ behavior in terms of thoughts and feelings is unique to us as humans. This capacity is termed mentalizing, or theory of mind, and has proven to be a hugely influential construct for understanding individual differences in development across the life span. Over the last two decades, mentalizing has become embedded in theories that attempt to explain child-parent attachment security as well as children’s socioemotional functioning. This dissertation aimed to a) review the existing literature on parents’ and children’s mentalizing in relation to child-parent attachment security, b) extend the existing research on parents’ mentalization by investigating whether mothers’ and fathers’ mentalizing (i.e., mind-mindedness) predicts variation in children’s emotion regulation and behavioral functioning, and c) investigate whether parents’ mentalizing is changeable through intervention.
MIND MATTERS

On mothers’ and fathers’ mentalizing about their child
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Moniek Zeegers

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# CONTENTS

Chapter 1. General introduction and outline of the dissertation 7

**Section 1: Summarizing research on parent and child mentalization**

Chapter 2. A meta-analysis on parental mentalization and sensitivity as predictors of infant-parent attachment 19


**Section 2: Mothers’ and fathers’ mentalizing**

Chapter 4. Does mothers’ and fathers’ mind-mindedness predict physiological emotion regulation of infants across the first year of life? 103

Chapter 5. On the joint effects of mothers’ and fathers’ mind-mindedness on preschoolers’ social competence and behavior problems 139

**Section 3: Adapting parents’ mentalizing**

Chapter 6. Evaluating Mindful with your toddler: feasibility, acceptability, and parent reported effects 167

Chapter 7. Evaluating Mindful with your baby/toddler: observational changes in maternal sensitivity, acceptance, mind-mindedness and dyadic synchrony 195

Chapter 8. Remediating child-parent attachment insecurity: evaluating the Basic Trust intervention in adoptive families 219

Chapter 9. General discussion 245

References 260

Supplementary materials 299

Summary 322

Samenvatting (Dutch summary) 326

Publications and contributions of co-authors 332

Acknowledgements 334

About the author 339