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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