

STEFANIE HÖHL, PHD GETTING ATTUNED TO OTHERS: INTERPERSONAL SYNCHRONY IN EARLY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Caregiver-child interactions are characterized by interpersonal rhythms at different timescales, from nursery rhymes and interactive games to daily routines. These rhythms make the social environment more predictable for young children and enable interpersonal biobehavioral synchrony with their caregivers. By using simultaneous measures of neural and physiological activities from caregiver and child during live interactions, e.g. dual-ECG and dual-fNIRS, we can deepen our understanding of early interactional dynamics and their rhythmicity. I will present our recent research identifying factors critical to the establishment of caregiver-child synchrony, such as eye contact and interaction quality. I will further discuss some of the potential functions of interpersonal neural synchrony in early social-cognitive development, from social learning and communication to effective cooperation and interpersonal coordination.

Stefanie Höhl is head of the Research Unit of Developmental Psychology at the University of Vienna and leads the Wiener Kinderstudien (www.kinderstudien.at). She completed her undergraduate studies in psychology at Heidelberg University and received her PhD from the University of Leipzig in 2008. She completed her Habilitation at the University of Heidelberg in 2013. From 2016 to 2019 she led the Max Planck Research Group on Early Social Cognition at the MPI for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences in Leipzig. Her research focuses on social and cognitive development in early childhood.