

BAPS2022

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75th-Anniversary Meeting
of the
Belgian Association of Psychological Sciences
June 2-3, 2022
Leuven



To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Belgian Association of Psychological Sciences, the 2022 annual BAPS meeting will be a festive two-day edition, to be held in the beautiful city Leuven on June 2-3. We are excited to announce the two international key note speakers for our 2022 scientific meeting: Professor Marian Bakermans-Kranenburg (VU Amsterdam) and Professor Chris D. Frith (UCL & London University). Other highlights include the many invited symposia with both international and Belgian speakers, 3 interactive poster sessions, flashtalk and thematic symposia. Last but not least, the Junior Board of BAPS will also offer a range of activities directed at young researchers prior to the official opening of the main conference on June 2. Please find out more details about the conference on the above tabs and get excited to meet colleagues and hear about and discuss each other's latest work.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Leuven for the 75th anniversary festive edition of the annual scientific meeting of BAPS!

The Organising Committee

Keynote Speakers 2022:

Professor [Marian Bakermans-Kranenburg](#) (VU Amsterdam, The Netherlands).

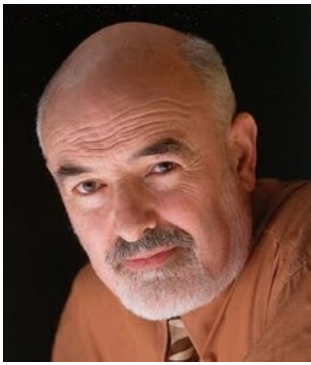
In the best interest of the child: Research findings and implications



The “best-interest-of-the-child” standard is often referenced in decision-making on child protection and child custody. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates that “in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration” (Article 3.1). However, it is not always clear what is the best interest of the child, and as a result in the courts inconsistent or even contradictory conclusions are drawn with reference to attachment theory and research. In this presentation, I will present a (meta-analytic) overview of research on antecedents and consequences of attachment. Next, I will discuss research on neurobiological dimensions of parenting in typical and at-risk groups. These include correlational and experimental studies with neural measures assessing brain responsivity to infant signals, and studies on adult’s hormone levels (e.g., oxytocin, testosterone, and vasopressin) in relation to behavioral observations. In contrast to most research on parenting, I will not only focus on mothers, but also highlight studies on fathers. In closing, I will address the issue of translation of research findings to clinical practice and policy.

Professor [Chris D. Frith](#) (University College London & Institute of Philosophy at London University, UK).

Mentalising - the heart of social cognition



Mentalising is a special human ability which allows us understand the behaviour of ourselves and others in terms of hidden mental states, such as desires and beliefs. We can use this knowledge to predict what people will do. I will distinguish two forms of mentalising. Implicit mentalising is apparent early in life and has been demonstrated also in some other animals. In contrast, explicit mentalising, with its links with language, is unique to humans and is permeated by cultural learning. It first emerges around 4-6 years of age but has a protracted development up until adulthood. I will briefly discuss the hypothesis that the specific social impairments associated in autism can be neatly explained by a problem in implicit mentalising.

It is autism that persuaded researchers that mentalising has a neural basis that is vulnerable to the hazards of brain development. There have by now been a great many brain imaging studies of mentalising, and they all converge on a circumscribed system specialised for this ability. I will speculate on roles for the three major hubs of this hierarchical system, with mPFC/ACC acting as controller, pSTS/TPJ as a connector between prior expectations and incoming sensory evidence, and PCC/precuneus as a navigator in social space. I suggest that explicit mentalising involves the highest layer in this hierarchy, being placed on top of an implicit mentalising system.

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