

# NEURAL-TO-BRAIN SYNCHRONY IN PARENT-CHILD DYADS FOLLOWING PRETERM BIRTH COMPARED TO TERM BORN CHILDREN

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## Methods

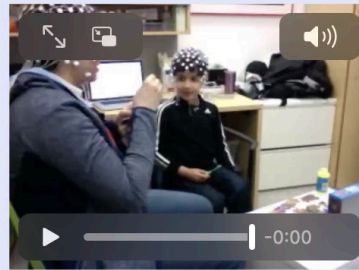
**Participants:** Ten dyads (Mother-Toddler) will be recruited, of which five will be typically developing children and five will be born preterm. All toddlers will be between the ages of 2 and 6 years old. For the purpose of this poster, we recruited one dyad with a typically developing child of 5.5 years to show proof of principle of the hyperscanning method in a naturalistic setting.

**Experimental procedure:** All mother-toddler dyads will participate in three different conditions. In the baseline condition, both the mother and toddler will sit in front of a screen and watch a child friendly video independently. They will not interact or speak to each other during this session. There will be two different social interaction conditions in a naturalistic environment. In both these conditions, the mother and child will sit facing each other across a small table. The first social interaction condition will be to play a game using soap bubbles. The mother will blow bubbles and encourage her child to catch them with a bubble wand. During the second task the dyad will work on a puzzle together. Mothers and toddlers will be instructed to engage in free verbal conversation during each task. Each task will be 3 to 5 minutes. The complete procedure will be video recorded.

**Data acquisition and preparation:** Simultaneous EEG data will be recorded from participants using 64-channel EGI system (EGI, Eugene Oregon). Two separate computers and amplifiers will be used which are connected to a clock box for synchronization. The start of each experiment will be marked on both data sets by the experimenter pushing a button which is connected to the same clock box.

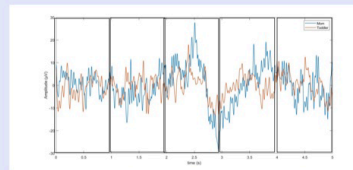
Preprocessing steps include Re-referencing (to the average of all channels), filtering (0.5 - 35 Hz) and Independent Component Analysis.

## Results



$$PLV = \left| \frac{1}{N} \sum_{k=1}^N e^{i(\phi_i(k) - \phi_m(k))} \right|$$

Signal from channel F3 (as an example channel) corresponding to the video



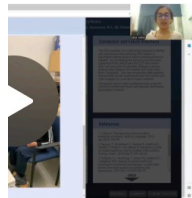
## Conclusion and Future Directions

This first example of an interaction between a mother and child shows that collecting hyperscanning data in a naturalistic setting using a hyperscanning method is feasible. By correlating the PLV (observed in the video) with the PLV (observed in the EEG data), we were able to calculate the PLV locking value between the mother and child in the three conditions. This very preliminary result showed that neural coupling between a mother and child changed as a function of the social interaction condition.

Our goal is now to collect additional data from a larger protocol in additional dyads including term and preterm children.

## References

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2. Nguyen T, Schleithauf H, K Vrticka P, Hoehl S. The effect on neural synchrony during resolving. *cortex*. 2020 Mar 1;119:1-11
3. Robbins CL, Hutchings Y, Callaghan WM. History of preterm birth and subsequent cardiovascular disease: a review. *American journal of obstetrics and gynecology*. 2014 Apr 1;210(4):483-491



Parent and child shapes the child's skills starting from around the infancy period, behaviour, symbolic play, and correlated with parental

Interactions during early infancy are linked to social behaviours in the literature. It is argued that preterm birth impacts the child's action.

Preterm birth may expose the child to different stimuli, as well as

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