

### **Abstract**

Mentalizing defines as the impulse to deliberately perceive and interpret the mental states of others' behaviors through imaginative mental activity. Existing literature has proposed that parents' mentalizing capacity facilitates the child's development of mentalizing capacity. Given that there is a significant overlap of the empathy (an ability to understand others' emotional experience while maintaining a sense of self) and mentalizing, the new concept of "affective mentalizing accuracy" is proposed as the accuracy of predicting others' emotions from the person's behaviors in a specific context, with reference to studies of empathic accuracy.

Mentalizing capacity was mostly assessed by self-report measurements. The actual performance of mentalizing in mother-child dyad has rarely been investigated. The parents' self-perceived mentalizing capacity cannot directly reflect the actual capacity compared with the accuracy of their mentalizing attempts on children.

In the current study, mother-child pairs were separately presented with daily scenarios that elicit tolerable emotions. They chose emotional reactions from six provided emotions for their own and the other party towards the same scenarios. Their accuracy in mentalizing with each other, their predicted emotional arousals and their perceived closeness with each other were computed for dyadic analysis using Actor-Partner Interdependence Model.