

# UPF Düsseldorf

Düsseldorf, Germany, 16. July 2016



By Anja Brina and Petra Heuwind

On 16.07.2016, UPF Düsseldorf held an event featuring a presentation by Hildegard Piepenburg on the topic 'The family as the foundation for autonomy and education - results of psychological research on attachment'. About 45 guests attended.



Sergio Brina opened with a short introduction to UPF, before Hildegard Piepenburg (B.Sc. in Psychology, director of UPF Germany) spoke about scientific findings which show the importance of the parent-child bond in the first two years of life. This is the time when the foundation is set for the

further development of the child and his ability to establish relationships.

She dealt with the attachment theory, first proposed by John Bowlby, and supported by empirical research carried out by Mary Ainsworth.

Secure attachment to its parents encourages the child's autonomy and love of discovery, because he feels securely connected. This is also an important foundation for education.

Disturbances of bonding to important attachment figures may, for example occur when the child is put too early in the care of strangers (day-care, nursery, groups for toddlers...). This can have considerable consequences for the child's future. Scientific findings show that it is very important for education and interpersonal relationships, that the child, especially in the first two years of life, spends a lot of time with its primary attachment figure (mother or father). In this way, he has the opportunity to bond with this person. It is in the interest of society to encourage the family.

A very lively question and answer session followed this very instructive power-point supported presentation, and discussions continued afterwards on a more informal and personal level over refreshments.

Certainly this topic always generates discussion, and we would like to thank Hildegard Piepenburg once more for her exceptionally interesting contribution.