



**Department of Clinical and Experimental Sciences
Observatory of Perinatal Clinical Psychology**

SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION:

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INTRODUCTION

Perinatal Clinical Psychology has progressively developed since the 1990s as a specialized research area of Clinical Psychology. With this name, first time in Italy, it was organized as an interdisciplinary field by the chair of Clinical Psychology of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery at the University of Brescia. Over time, Perinatal Clinical Psychology has integrated, in the methodological framework of Clinical Psychology, the different health and social disciplines that deal with the perinatal period.

Thus, our Perinatal Clinical Psychology is not simply focused on the needs and the discomforts of the woman who is becoming a mother, but, above all, it is concerned with the development of a new individual in relation to the psychic and social events of the mother and the family, therefore in the first thousand days of life starting from conception.

Obstetrics Sciences, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Neonatology, Pediatrics, Child Neuropsychiatry, Nursing Sciences, Health Assistance, Social and Educational Assistance and other health, educational and social professions therefore contribute in the context of Clinical Psychology.

OBJECT AND OBJECTIVES OF PERINATAL CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

The clinical and experimental researches in Psychological Sciences in the area of Infant Research and those of the Neurosciences have shown to some extent how the human brain develops. During the fetal age, the brain's development is caused partially by the genome, while it is during the last months of pregnancy and then from birth that its progressive neural networks are generated due to interpersonal experiences (including intrauterine) of the baby first and of the child later.

This construction, towards an optimality rather than a pathology, depends on the quality of non-verbal communication that occurs with the caregivers and, at the same time, this quality depends on the neuromental structure of the same caregiver, as well as the possibility that they can interact and care for the baby (infant care).

The quality of the neuromental structure that is built in the brain in the first thousand days of life, is also the defining and fundamental matrix for the quality of the construction of any further development of the brain: hence the importance of the perinatal age.

For these reasons, the Perinatal Clinical Psychology has for its object of study the couple that generates and can generate a child: the objective is the prevention of the possible deficiencies of the parental neuromental endowment, as well as of the environment, in their function of generators of the neuromental structure of the baby, the child and the future individual.

Such prevention is carried out by an adequate assistance to the couple, the child and the family in the events that precede and follow the filiation project. This means an assistance in the "transition to parenthood" which includes the conception, the gestation, the birth, the puerperium and above all the period of neonatal and early life care, which neuroscience has shown to be fundamental for any physical and mental development of the individual.

In this framework, it is fundamental to organize a multidisciplinary training for all the professionals of birth, both healthcare and psychosocial professionals, so that they can decline their skills in the most effective ways to help each couple. Therefore, in the framework of Perinatal Clinical Psychology, obstetric, gynecological, neonatological, pediatric, child neuropsychiatric and social, health and educational contributions are collected.

These professionals could develop projects of assistance to parents, also future ones, with the aim of preventing pathologies. At the same time, they could ensure that the transgenerational chain (for which the parental quality, good, bad or pathogenic, determines the optimal or deficient construction of the child's brain) can prevent deficits and problems in the social and physical psychic development of future generations, rather than perpetuating or worsening their conditions.

Health and Wellness cannot be promoted without adequate prevention and assistance which, to be truly preventive, will have as a specific object of interest the couple who is preparing for parenting.

The developments of research imply the need to organize, as in other countries, adequate care services and the training of the health and psychosocial staff.

Since the 1990s, studies in Perinatal Clinical Psychology at the University of Brescia, first in the Maternal Infant Department and subsequently, since 2010, in the Department of Clinical and Experimental Sciences, has developed clinical and research topics related to the formation of the mind and the brain, from fetus to the first years of the child's life in relationships with his caregivers.

In these years, the collaboration with the Spedali Civili of Brescia, in particular with the Department of Prof. Gaetano Chirico (UOTIN), a member of the Observatory, and the collaboration with the University of Bologna, has allowed the development of several research projects in Perinatal Clinical Psychology through PRIN funding.

From 2012 to date, the Observatory has organized Training Courses such as the Post Graduate Course in "Perinatal Clinical Psychology", which includes every year 6 modules. Each module develops a multidisciplinary theme on perinatal period.

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Department of Clinical and Experimental Sciences, researchers and scientists of National and International Universities constitute the corpus of the integrated teachings of the modules of the Course.

The Observatory is an authorized center for perinatal research in which converge the contributions of professionals of perinatal clinic, with various skills and with different approaches.

It will be possible to create a network of multidisciplinary collaborations for clinical and experimental research projects, in a synergy of views for the prevention and promotion of the mental health of women, couples, children and families.

The results of the scientific research and the skills acquired by this University can be summarized in the organization of various International congresses and seminars, as well as in the scientific articles published in national and international journals and in some volumes:

(1991) Imbasciati, Cena, "La vita psichica primaria", Masson, Milano;

(2005) Imbasciati, "Constructing a Mind", Routledge, London;

(2006) Imbasciati, "Il Sistema Protomentale", LED, Milano;

(2007) Imbasciati, Dabrassi, Cena, "Psicologia Clinica Perinatale", Piccin, Padova;

(2010) Imbasciati, Cena, "Il bambino e i suoi caregiver", Borla, Roma;

(2010) Cena, Imbasciati, Baldoni, "La relazione genitore/bambino", Springer Verlag, Milano;

(2011) Imbasciati, Dabrassi, Cena, "Psicologia Clinica Perinatale per lo sviluppo del futuro individuo", Express Edizioni, Torino;

(2012) Cena, Imbasciati, Baldoni, "Prendersi cura dei bambini e dei loro genitori", Springer Verlag, Milano;

(2014) Cena, Imbasciati, "Neuroscienze e teoria psicoanalitica", Springer Verlag, Milano;

(2015) Imbasciati, Cena, "Psicologia Clinica Perinatale per le professioni sanitarie e psicosociali", vol. I Neonato e radici della salute mentale, FrancoAngeli, Milano;

(2015) Imbasciati, Cena, "Psicologia Clinica Perinatale per le professioni sanitarie e psicosociali", vol. 2 Genitorialità e origine della mente nel bambino, FrancoAngeli, Milano;

(2015) Imbasciati, "Nuove Teorie sul funzionamento della mente", FrancoAngeli, Milano;

(2017) Imbasciati, Cena, "Psicologia Clinica Perinatale: neuroscienze e psicoanalisi" vol III, FrancoAngeli, Milano;

(2017) Imbasciati, "Mindbrain, psychoanalytic Institutions and psychoanalysts", Karnac, London;

(2018) Imbasciati, Cena, "I primi mille giorni di vita: Psicologia Clinica Perinatale" Vol IV, FrancoAngeli, Milano.

SITO LINK WEB

<https://www.unibs.it/dipartimenti/scienze-cliniche-e-sperimentali/osservatori-e-laboratori/osservatorio-psicologia-clinica-perinatale-profssa-l-cena>

➤ **STUDY AND RESEARCH IN THE PERINATAL CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY AREA**

1- Screening and early intervention in anxiety syndromes and perinatal depression. Prevention and promotion of mother-child-father mental health.

A research project in agreement of a scientific collaboration between the Observatory of Perinatal Clinical Psychology, the University of Brescia and the Italian National Institute of Health -Rome

2- Perinatal Clinical Psychology: perinatal events, child development and mother-child-father relationships

Perinatal Clinical Psychology: perinatal events that covers the first thousand days of life from the conception up to 18 months of age, neurodevelopment of the child and the mother-child-father relationships. The mother-fetus-father relationships shape the events of the childbirth and the breastfeeding and the subsequent psychic and psychosomatic child-neurodevelopment . Researches are developed in the Department of Clinical and Experimental Sciences in collaboration with the UOTIN of the Spedali Civili (Brescia main Hospital). The main research areas that constitute a topic of specific scientific interest in Perinatal Clinical Psychology examine the prenatal age. Problems relating to the psychosomatic of pregnancy, childbirth and puerperium are addressed. In particular, the researches focus on the specificity of the mother-child unit and on the study of the mother-fetus/child-father relationships in their prenatal and postnatal communication, as a matrix that organizes and constructs the neuropsychic structures of psychic and psychosomatic development of the baby.

Other areas of researches concern aspects of the function of neonatal massage in the parent-child relationships.

3- The development of attachment in preterm birth: a longitudinal research "The influence of attachment and parental dyadic sensitivity on the neurodevelopment of the preterm born child. The role of the paternal function to support parenting.

Researches attachment-based with preterm births and their parents: from biological newborn to two years of the child.

Inter-university collaborations with the University of Bologna, Department of Psychology Faculty of Psychology and Intra-university Collaborations between Observatory of Perinatal Clinical Psychology of the Department of Clinical and Experimental Sciences and the UOTIN- Intensive Unit of Neonatal Therapy and Neonatology (Prof. Gaetano Chirico) of the Spedali Civili (Brescia main Hospital)

➤ **STUDY AND RESEARCH AREA: PERINATAL LOSS/ DEATH**

- Survey on the "needs" of parents and health care professionals (HCP) in relation to perinatal death for the prevention of perinatal psychopathology and for the promotion of mental health.
- Early interventions to support parenting and health care professionals (HCP) during the perinatal period.
- Specific research areas on intrapartum foetal death (IPD) to be developed with health care professionals (HCP).
- Specific study on the personality of women who had perinatal death → search for relevant testing materials

➤ **STUDY AND RESEARCH IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AREA**

5) Bullying and Cyberbullying: research, training, prevention, intervention for health promotion, biopsychosocial wellbeing and legal protection

Interdepartmental project of the University of Brescia (Developmental Psychology and Jurisprudence) longitudinal multidisciplinary from pre-school to pre-adolescent (3-14 years) and adolescent.

1-Training for teachers, young people, parents

2- Research through questionnaires to schools, families and children to detect any forms of emotional distress and manifestations through the epiphenomenon of bullying and cyberbullying