The Baby Care Questionnaire (BCQ) is a new measure of parenting principles and practices in three specific contexts – sleeping, feeding and soothing. The BCQ measures the parenting principles structure and attunement.

Hypothesis
Parental support of the structure principle leads to increased maternal attention-directing.

Measures
Parent-Infant Interactions: 10 minute free play session with mothers and their babies in a lab setting with standardised set of toys
Baby Care Questionnaire: completed BCQ online after observations
Cardiff Antenatal Inventory: completed to provide demographic information

Main variables
Structure: parent’s support of routines & schedules in their infant’s day-to-day life
Type of attention-directing (Bornstein et al., 1990)
Social: caregiver encourages attention to self
Didactic: caregiver encourages attention to an aspect of an object, environment or event

Directive strategies (Landry et al., 2000)
Directiveness: any verbal request, with or without a nonverbal behaviour, providing structured information about what was expected with less choice

Results
Structure and attention-directing

Structure and directiveness

Conclusions
Structure
• Not related to attention-directing behaviours
• Not related to directiveness

Implications
• Structure not related to attention-directing play behaviours as hypothesised
• Structure could be the less pervasive principle of the two – more related to caregiving opposed to attunement which is seen reflected in other parenting contexts

Future work
• Exploration of alternative observable behaviours linked to structure
• Identifying how structure and directiveness could be multi-faceted
• Examine parenting practices using the BCQ across cultures and with parents of children with additional needs
• Longitudinal study to examine the effects of caregiving strategies on children’s cognitive development

Structure was unrelated to social \( r = .214, p = .340 \) and didactic \( r = .191, p = .294 \) attention-directing