

**Symposium ‘Social inequality:
effects on cognition and language in
the first 1001 days’**

4 June 2019

Dynamics of Youth, Utrecht University



Social inequality has a major impact on the chances children have in society. During this symposium, three internationally renowned speakers (prof. Erika Hoff, prof. James Law en dr. Natasha Kirkham) will talk about the influence of social inequality on the cognitive and linguistic development of children.

What: Symposium about the effects of social inequality on cognition and language

Where: Room 0.32, Drift 21 in Utrecht

When: 4 June 2019, 13.00

Program:

13.00 Doors open

13.15 Opening by prof. Catrin Finkenauer & prof. Frank Wijnen

13.30 prof. Erika Hoff – ‘*Language skills at 1001 Days: Antecedents and Long-Term Outcomes in Immigrant Children*’

14.15 Q&A

14.30 prof. James Law – ‘*Interventions to promote early language development - the pros and cons of a public health approach*’

15.15 Q&A

15.30 Break – coffee/tea

16.00 dr. Natasha Kirkham – ‘*Neuro-Adversity: The Developmental Neuroscience of Poverty Outcomes on Child Development*’

16.45 Q&A

17.00 Drinks at Lodewijk

We welcome all those interested (free of charge), but please register [here](#).

Team ‘1001 Critical Days’ of the strategic theme Dynamics of Youth, Utrecht University.
www.uu.nl/1001days

Language skills at 1001 Days: Antecedents and Long-Term Outcomes in Immigrant Children

Prof. Erika Hoff, Florida Atlantic University

Differences in early experience are known to create differences among children in their language skills at the age of 2 years. These differences at 2 years predict longer-term language and academic outcomes. The question I ask in this talk is how these findings do and do not apply to children in immigrant families. Data from a longitudinal study of U.S.-born children from Spanish-speaking homes suggest the story is a little different for children acquiring two languages from an early age. Dual language development, when one language is the language of the host country and the other a minority, heritage language, has a different typical course and early skills bear a different relation to later outcomes than they do in monolingual children.

Interventions to promote early language development - the pros and cons of a public health approach

Prof. James Law, Newcastle University

Over the last year Public Health England and the Department of Education have come together to develop the government's social mobility strategy. Key to this is closing the "word gap", a term developed from the seminal work of US psychologists Hart and Risley in the mid nineties. In this presentation we consider the work that has been commissioned - training for health visitors, a measure for 2 years olds and a "pathway" for practitioners - in the light of population data about language trajectories and what we understand about the effectiveness of intervention for young children. Finally, we ask whether the metaphor of the first 1000 days really starts too late and ends too early as Shonkoff and others have suggested.

Neuro-Adversity: The Developmental Neuroscience of Poverty Outcomes on Child Development

Dr. Natasha Kirkham, Birkbeck - University of London

Globally, almost 385 million children are currently living in extreme poverty. In Europe, figures show that a quarter of households right now are experiencing at least one form of poverty (e.g., income poverty, severe material deprivation, low work intensity, social exclusion). In addition, 23.5% of the EU-28 population are currently at risk of poverty or social exclusion, with 43 million of those suffering from severe material deprivation (i.e., unable to afford a quality meal every second day). The latest figures from British housing charity Shelter show that at least 320,000 people are homeless in Britain. This amounts to a year-on-year increase of 13,000, a 4% rise, with one in 200 people homeless. This is a crisis that is both acute and chronic, producing generation after generation of children born in disadvantaged environments, with depressed developmental outcomes. At the Centre for Brain and Cognitive

Development we are currently focussed on creating a consortium of private and public sector sites that will join together on technologically advanced and neurologically-informed explorations into how poverty affects infant and child development, across a range of contexts. In this talk, I will discuss some work by myself on the relation between SES and chaos in the home, specifically looking at attention, and some work by colleagues discussing the idea of how the deficit model of poverty needs to be reframed.