

## MOTHERS' ATTITUDES TO SINGING TO THEIR INFANTS

*Alison Street*

*Susan Young*

*Johannella Tafuri*

*Beatriz Ilari*

CIRME, University of Surrey, Roehampton, London, UK

### Background

Mothers' infant-directed singing has been analysed acoustically in laboratory settings and has been found to express emotion through its repetitive melodic contours and engaging sound quality. This study is contributing to the current stream of interest in this area by investigating mothers' attitudes and perceptions of their singing in home settings. Although mothers seldom consider themselves as singers, the relatedness of singing has been seen to have an impact on their relationship with their infants, and upon their own self concept. This abstract refers to the survey, the first part of a study which involves observations of maternal singing and interviews.

### Aims

This survey aims to find out to what extent mothers use infant-directed singing as part of their caregiving routines and how they perceive the functions of their singing. It aims to investigate singing in the home and how it is used both intentionally and spontaneously.

### Method

A questionnaire is given to 100 mothers with infants under one year old. A balance of closed questions, rating scales and open-ended questions are used to elicit information about:

- Age, sex and position of infant in the family;
- Mothers' attitudes and experiences of singing;
- Recognition of the influence of their singing on their infants;
- Purposes of singing to infants.

### Results

In the pilot questionnaire with 14 respondees, scores showed positively that mothers recognise that singing has purposes, both in relation to their infants' responses and to how mothers feel about themselves.

### Conclusions

On the basis of the pilot, it is anticipated that the report of the main survey will show that infant-directed maternal singing is used for a variety of purposes related to both handling in daily routines and to expressions of emotion.