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## The 7th International Meeting on the Neuroscience of Parenting

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We are delighted to present this special issue of the Journal of Neuroendocrinology based on contributions from speakers and attendees of the 7th International Meeting on the Neuroscience of Parenting, which was organized by Professor Thierry Charlier and Dr Jodi Pawluski in the picturesque city of Saint Malo in Brittany, France on 16–18 May 2022. This was the latest in a series of highly successful conferences, which launched with The Maternal Brain meeting in Bristol, UK in 1999, followed by The Mother and Infant meeting in Montreal, Canada in 2003. To reflect that fathers play an important role, too, a name change to The Parental Brain was instituted when the meeting was held in Boston in 2007, followed by subsequent meetings under the same umbrella in Edinburgh, Scotland in 2010, Regensburg, Germany in 2013 and Toronto, Canada in 2018. The aim of this series of conferences is to bring together international experts with an interest in the neuroscience of parenting, the brain adaptations that facilitate successful rearing of the next generation, and parental physical and mental health, from both fundamental and clinical perspectives.

The meeting was highly anticipated, especially given the enforced postponement due to the global Covid-19 pandemic. We were delighted that over 150 delegates, ranging from postgraduate students to established senior scientists representing over 20 countries, participated in the meeting. The conference kicked off with a pre-meeting workshop on how to utilise social media for science communication and outreach, led by Dr Cindy Hovington, founder of Curious Neuron, a resource that translates scientific parenting and child development research into relevant and comprehensible advice for parents. The scientific programme covered an array of topics. The symposia focused on lifelong maternity-induced brain plasticity; the cells, circuits and mechanisms that mediate parental behaviour; and parent-offspring-environment interactions and included talks on a wide range of species from fish to birds, rodents to monkeys, and of course, humans. Stimulating keynote lectures were delivered by Professor Pilyoung Kim (University of Denver, USA), who described how stress influences brain adaptations to motherhood; Professor Dave Grattan (University of Otago, New Zealand), who championed the central role of prolactin in the parental brain; and Clémentine Sarlat (French journalist, Influencer, La Matrescence podcast) who discussed the importance of engaging the public with our research on the parental brain. Both speakers and poster presenters at the meeting demonstrated the impressive breadth of current parental brain research from animal models to human studies, and further highlighted the need to share our findings with the general public.

The conference also hosted the traditional Journal of Neuroendocrinology Young Investigator Symposium, generously supported by Wiley. Six early career investigators were the worthy recipients of the Parental Brain 2022 Journal of Neuroendocrinology Young Investigator awards and presented their research in a dedicated symposium at the meeting: Luisa Demarchi (University of Regensburg, Germany); Hannah Lapp (University of Texas at Austin, USA); Magdalena Martínez-García (Instituto de Investigación Sanitaria Gregorio Marañón, Spain); Sejal Mistry (Texas A&M University, USA); Shannon Powers (University of Denver, USA); and Judith Swart (University of Otago, New Zealand).

We are especially grateful to the Journal of Neuroendocrinology for their continued and generous support of the Parental Brain Conference series and for publishing this special issue. We also would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the other meeting sponsors, namely Wiley; Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology (Elsevier); Biogen; the Institut de recherche en santé, environnement et travail (Irset); the Region Bretagne; and the University of Rennes.

The diverse, but complementary, research topics and experimental models featured during the 7th International Meeting on the Neuroscience of Parenting is reflected in the articles published in this special issue. It contains an eclectic collection of 18 papers, comprised of five review and 13 original research articles covering a broad range of topics related to the parental brain. These include parental behaviour, motivation and reward; the integration of sensory cues to elicit parental behaviour and how parenthood impacts sensory processing; the influence of parental experience; parent-offspring interactions; sleep disturbances in pregnancy; adverse and enriched environmental influences on parenting; and the impact of perinatal maternal stress, mood and drug treatment on the brain, behaviour, and physiology.

We believe this special issue contributes new knowledge to our understanding of the complexities of the parental brain and hope it inspires future research focused on further unravelling the multifaceted neurobiological, behavioural, and physiological mechanisms that facilitate the transition to parenthood, and its continuance thereafter.

It was our pleasure to serve as Editors for this Parental Brain special issue of the Journal of Neuroendocrinology, and we extend our thanks to all the contributors for their excellent articles, as well as the many reviewers who generously gave their time. We sincerely hope that you enjoy each of the articles as much as we did when putting together this special issue.

We now look forward to the 8th International Meeting on the Neuroscience of Parenting, which will be held in Spain in 2025 and organized by Dr Susanna Carmona and Dr Oscar Vilarroya (for updates, please follow @ParentalBrain on Twitter or Instagram). We hope to see you there to discover and discuss the latest developments and new approaches in parental brain research.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Jodi L. Pawluski: Writing – review and editing. Paula J. Brunton: Writing – review and editing. Oliver J. Bosch: Writing – original draft; writing – review and editing.

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors report no conflicts of interest.

#### PEER REVIEW

The peer review history for this article is available at <https://www.webofscience.com/api/gateway/wos/peer-review/10.1111/jne.13321>.

#### DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.