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Ububele Baby Mat Project : caregivers' experiences and perceptions.

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ABSTRACT

Extensive research and literature exists emphasising that the quality of the early infant attachment style and psychic structure developments are dependent on the quality of maternal care received by an infant. Infants' who experience consistent, sensitive, and reliable care are more likely to develop secure attachments and healthy psychic structures which will positively influence their future abilities to function healthily in their environments and to experience healthy interpersonal relationships. The importance, therefore, for the development and assessment of parent-infant interventions focused on improving the quality of maternal care available to infants, is clear. The Ububele Baby Mat Project, implemented at the Alexandra Health Care Clinic in Johannesburg, is one such intervention and no evaluation of this intervention has been conducted. It was deemed necessary by the team providing the service for them to gain some idea of the way in which their service is being received in the community it is serving as well as to assist them in developing their intervention further. The current research aimed to get insight into the mothers' experiences and perceptions of the Baby mat. The form of data included 8 semi-structured in-depth interviews of women who had accessed the Baby mat and thematic content analysis was used to interpret the results. The findings indicated that overall the mothers received the Baby mat very positively and spoke of the service being invaluable to them, especially in the face of the adverse conditions in which they live. Suggestions for the Ububele Baby Mat Project team are also provided.