

Call for Papers: The Nature of Love Revisited: How Social Bonds Shape Development

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In his seminal paper *The Nature of Love*, Harlow (1958) set the stage for the scientific study of love. His work has provided an empirical basis for attachment theory and many other traditions that emphasize the importance of warm, responsive, and loving relationships in children's healthy development. *Developmental Science* welcomes empirical papers for a Special Issue that will bring together new boundary-crossing research that aims to provide a mechanistic understanding of love in humans and other species. Theoretical/review-only articles will not be considered.

Topics of particular interest for this special issue:

- Empirical mechanistic work testing the consequences of loving relationships for children's well-being, mental health, and long-term development, as well as their psychological, neurobiological, and hormonal underpinnings.
- Empirical studies that provide a precise understanding of the nature of loving relationships or the critical mechanisms through which they impact children.
- Empirical studies on the causal effect of interventions aimed at improving relationships quality in critical developmental periods.
- Empirical studies examining the mechanisms by which loving relationships may improve children's outcomes or buffer the impact of early adversity.

We welcome a wide variety of designs, such as mechanistically driven daily diary, longitudinal, experimental, and intervention studies, as well as a wide variety of methods, such as behavioral coding, fMRI, epigenetic analysis, and hormonal assays, and we are interested in development throughout the lifespan and we encourage translational work integrating animal and human empirical data.

Authors interested in submitting a manuscript should send a pre-submission inquiry via email to [all Special Issue Editors](#), with the subject line "pre-submission inquiry for DevSci Special Issue on The Nature of Love" including a tentative abstract, title and author list, and a one-paragraph cover note summarizing the topic, sample, methodology, novelty, and any relevant information about its potential fit to the Special Issue (max 800 words in total).

Timeline:

01 Feb 2023: Pre-submission inquiries due (but may be submitted at any time before this date).

15 Feb 2023: Invitations for full manuscript submissions sent.

01 July 2023: Complete manuscripts due via Developmental Science's ordinary Manuscript Central portal.

Late 2023/Early 2024: All articles published.

All invited manuscripts will undergo the standard peer-review process. An invitation to submit a manuscript will not imply eventual acceptance of the manuscript. Authors unsure of the fit of their research to this call for papers are encouraged to contact the Special Issue Editors informally to discuss a potential submission and timeline. We hope to maximize the breadth of representation in the Special Issue and so we welcome inquiries from anyone who might not typically submit their research to *Developmental Science*.