

Information on the Marte Meo Method

from Maria Aarts

„For more than 40 years, I have been developing Marte Meo as a method of developmental support and consultation. The method provides professionals and parents with specific and practical information, obtained through a differentiated and precise interaction analysis from short video clips of everyday moments of interaction. The objective of the method is to enable professionals and parents to recognize and develop supportive interaction and communication opportunities through video images, in order to consciously apply them to daily interactions.“

The concept: „The Golden Gift“

In everyday life, there are numerous opportunities to support a child's development, giving them a „golden gift“, they will benefit from throughout their entire lives. The Marte Meo method focuses on the quality of individual interactions, e.g. between a parent and a child, that can support development and create opportunities for growth and well-being. The main focus of the Marte Meo method is not to miss these opportunities, but to use them to improve the quality of life.

Over the past 30 years, Marte Meo has developed into a wide reaching and diverse international network. Professionals from all over the world and different fields of expertise maintain an intensive exchange and inspire one another.



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Marte Meo

an **interaction/attachment** and developmentally oriented support structure centering around the premature child and his/her/their parents

A model project in our neonatal intensive care unit
„Däumling“ and the socio-medical aftercare

In collaboration with Maria Aarts (founder and director of Marte Meo International) and in cooperation with the German Federal Association „Das frühgeborene Kind“ e.V. (The premature child)



Supporting preterm infants and their parents

A preface by Maria Aarts

„Since 1980 I have been working with prematurely born children. In the course of many years of experience, I observed that many of these children had difficulties in their development and learned how helpful it can be to work with professionals and parents right from the beginning. Internationally, I have worked with numerous specialists and parents in Clinics for Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, who gave me the opportunity to develop the Marte Meo method for premature infants.



Since early 2020, I have been working with Schirin Mohraz and the neonatal team of the St. Marien- and Annastifts Krankenhaus (clinic) and have supervised the integration of the Marte Meo method in the context of psychosocial parent support and its implementation in the NICU (neonatal intensive care unit). The positive experiences of the professionals and parents, in the care and support of premature infants in everyday situations, have confirmed how valuable this particular method is for preterm infants as well as parents and professionals who accompany them.

We have also had the opportunity to document these interactions in video clips. Videos are a fantastic tool to help visualize the small and subtle signals of the infants. It is impressive to see to what extent these premature infants respond to and benefit from the Marte Meo elements of communication used by parents and professionals. A big thank you goes to Rita Schwahn for her vision regarding this model project, Stefanie Fleckenstein for her inspiration, the NICU team for their commitment, the head physician Dr. med. Ulrich Merz and the clinic management for their support, Barbara Mitschdoerfer for her encouragement and especially the families for their approachability and participation.“

A preface by Barbara Mitschdoerfer

Chairwoman of the German Federal Association „Das frühgeborene Kind“ e.V. (The premature child)

„Birth is the start of life, that our children should experience feeling welcomed and appreciated. Marte Meo accomplishes

something tremendous here: an attentive approach, respectful communication and the recognition of abilities conveyed through their implementation at an emotional level. Perfect, for feeling welcomed!“

The psychosocial parent support and consultation

Since 2018, parents have been offered Marte Meo consultations as part of our psychosocial parent support. The parents receive concrete information on how they can and already do support their child's specific developmental needs from the very beginning..

The parents then have the opportunity to be videotaped while caring for their child. The video recordings are analyzed by the consultant using the Marte Meo interaction analysis and selected video clips are viewed and discussed with the parents. The parents receive concrete information on how they can support their child in his/her/their development from the very beginning.

It is helpful for parents to see how their child reacts to the signals they send as parents. At the same time, they learn to recognize more consciously and thus interpret the child's subtle reactions. This strengthens the parents' confidence in their intuitive parenting abilities.



The training of the team

The interdisciplinary NICU team is trained to become Marte Meo Practitioners. The focus here is on integrating the basic Marte Meo information into the daily work routine. In addition to the developmentally supportive care, the professionals' application of the Marte Meo method has led to an even more empathetic and child-oriented care of the premature infants as well as an increase in the support quality for the parents.

When caring for preterm and newborn infants

The video clips demonstrating the care of premature infants with the help of Marte Meo elements illustrate that preterm infants can truly express their needs and give signals through subtle feedback. In addition, the supportive interaction skills help premature infants not only to gain more security and orientation, but also reduces the moments of stress.

When supporting the parents

The Marte Meo method offers a very clear structure of information transfer regarding the question: „**what** parents can do **when** (situation based) and **why** this element of support is important to the development of their child“. This enables them to quickly gain self-assurance and confidence in their own interactions with their premature infant. At the same time, they receive important information essential for the further development of their preterm child.

In the context of socio-medical aftercare

As families are supported even after being released from the clinic, a Marte Meo consultation strengthens the parents and reinforces the child's developmental steps.

A Marte Meo infant parent group, also enables topics to be addressed, that may arise within the first few years of a premature infant.

In the education and training of nurses

The method as well as the content is conveyed to the trainees through practical, hands-on training. To apply this training, the instructor requires the "Marte Meo Colleague-Trainee" (an advanced Marte Meo continuation course).

German Federal Association „Das frühgeborene Kind“ e.V. (The premature child)

The Marte Meo method has a particularly high relevance for premature infants with an underdeveloped ability to provide signals. To pass on the positive experiences of this model project to other perinatal centers, our association offers various Marte Meo training modules, in cooperation with Schirin Mohraz of the St. Marien- and Annastifts Krankenhaus. Further information is provided at www.fruehgeborene.de