



## Attachment

Attachment is the deep and lasting connection that your child forms with you and other people who provide regular care. Children begin to develop attachment relationships at birth and some suggest even before. Children form secure attachments to those who provide safe, consistent, and loving care. All children need to feel safe, cared for and protected.

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The relationship that your child forms with you is important. A secure attachment relationship helps her to trust that you will be there for her, to feel confident to explore her world, to play and learn, and to be comforted easily. This secure attachment will help your child learn about her emotions and how to manage and control them, learn about relationships, and develop self esteem and self confidence. Secure attachment relationships also help foster healthy brain development.

### **Helping Your Child Form a Secure Attachment to You**

The most important factor for your child developing an attachment to you is the way that you behave and respond to your child's needs. The list below provides 9 things you can do that help young children develop secure attachments.

- Think about your child before birth, talk gently and sing to your baby
- Learn to understand and sensitively respond to your child's cues (body language)
- Provide loving care, even when doing routine care, e.g., feeding, changing
- Provide close, safe physical touch to your child, e.g., cuddling or rocking
- Comfort your child when he is distressed, e.g., crying, frightened, sick, or tired
- Adapt to your child's needs, e.g., if you are in a noisy environment that is upsetting your child, remove yourself and your child to a quieter space
- Keep your child safe and teach appropriate behaviors, e.g., safety and respect for others
- Let your child explore her environment and delight with your child in child-led play
- If you are not able to respond immediately to your child's needs (this will happen to every parent sometimes), acknowledge that this has happened and work to repair your relationship as soon as possible