



## 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. Some people suggest that these relationships begin before birth.

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 your child to trust that you will be there for them, to feel confident to explore their world, to play and learn, and to be comforted easily. This secure attachment will help your child learn about their 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 shares ways you can 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 they are 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 behaviours (e.g., safety and respect for others)
- Let your child explore their environment and enjoy child-led play with them
- 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