

What is ATTACHMENT?

+ Attachment is the bond between a child and his/her caregiver that serves to provide the child with physical and emotional security.



Attachment

Strange r Anxiety Around 7-12 months, infants demonstrate fear of new people, often clinging to their primary caregiver. This is normal and signifies an attachment has formed.

Secure Base Infants and children use their attachment figure as a “secure base” from which to explore: they “check in” with him/her every once in a while. Children also return to their caregiver for comfort if they are afraid or upset.



Attachment Style	How does this child behave?	What might you do?
Secure	Smiles & seems happy and comfortable with the caregiver. Eagerly & actively explores the environment, yet welcomes affection. Shows a healthy range of emotions.	Continue responding to child’s cues, as well as engaging him/her in positive interactions. Observe how attachment needs change with age.
Insecure-Avoidant	Independent at the expense of connection. Most interactions with the caregiver are not drawn out. Shows little positive emotion, & does not seem to require much attention.	To work toward a more secure bond, you might try setting aside time in the day for just you & the child, during which you play & connect with him/her.
Insecure-Anxious	Clingy, dependent, & easily distressed. Cries frequently & less easily comforted. Stays close to caregiver & appears afraid to explore. Needs a lot of attention & comfort.	You might encourage independence by rewarding the child for expressing feelings in a “grown up” way. You might also work to support child exploration.
Insecure-Disorganized	Mix of avoidant and anxious behaviors. Seems frightened around caregiver & shows odd emotions, such as confusion or anger.	Try to maintain stable & safe caregiving. If you’re dealing with grief or trauma, it may help to seek professional help .