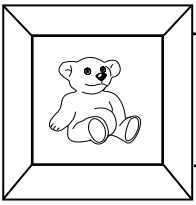




Attachment

? INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What is *interdependence*? How does it happen?
- Why is commitment important in a parent-child relationship?
- How does a baby express feelings of attachment?
- What does strong attachment lead to?
- Why should a parent let her baby have a "Teddy" or "Lovey" and keep it close?



Conceptual Overview

LOVE TOPIC 6

1. Attachment is another word for commitment. As humans we have a deep need to be emotionally connected with another human, to feel a unique sense of commitment, a sense of belonging that grows with shared experiences. This is more than just a friendship; we become *interdependent*. We feel sad when that person feels sad, we feel angry when he or she is angry; we feel confident and fulfilled when that person is happy. This emotional sharing gives us a special feeling of connectedness and safety. We are willing to alter our lives for her and to share in one another's interests and needs. We are willing to listen and comfort while also providing objective balance, modulation, and stability. We grow closer until there is a feeling of "oneness." It is in the context of this "shared space relationship" that good psychological development occurs.

The attachment between parent and child is unique because this relationship is also genetic. Biology has ensured that mothers feel committed to the survival of their offspring. Most parents make extreme sacrifices for their infants. Most parents feel this strong commitment to their babies at birth. This develops into a bond that will lead them to one of the most powerful and lasting relationships in life, one that is worth working to protect and expand. This feeling of commitment will grow into a mutual connectedness of parent and child, which is strengthened through consistent shared experiences.

2. Attachment feelings in the baby are apparent toward the end of the first year. Soon after birth, a baby begins to focus on his or her mother's face, alert to her voice and touch, and quiet to her closeness. Babies show a preference for their parents, but also reach out and show pleasure in going to other caregivers. However, after babies start to crawl and become alone in a big world, they reach out for the person who has consistently been there, the one who has shown commitment. When babies have gained the ability to recognize special people and things, most babies will select one or two people - usually their parents - and demand that they are close and attentive. Babies are seeking feelings of safety and protection, but they are also seeking a guide or model of behavior to help them understand how to manage in their bigger world.

Initially there is one primary attachment figure. That person becomes the baby's model and guide. This is usually the mother. Her baby shares her physical and emotional space, her expressions, her attitudes, laughter, and frowns. The baby copies everything the mother does, wants to try everything the mother has, and wants the mother there constantly. It is as if there were an invisible tie between them. When a baby feels confident that his mother is there, the baby will be ready to accept one or two more special caregivers. The baby will commit to other special and safe relationships.

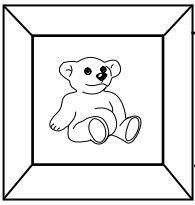
When a baby has too many caregivers at this time, the baby becomes confused

LOVE

TOPIC 6

and disorganized about relationships and about his own feelings. The child loses a sense of safety and trust. If the baby has no model and makes no commitment, the baby withdraws from any attachment.

3. **Having strong attachment figures leads babies to become confident and independent.** “Being there” as the base and the model for a baby is one of the most valuable gifts parents will ever give them. The developmental period between 9-12 months is a time when babies make firm attachments. At this time they begin to choose special people, places, and toys. Parents’ presence and consistent loving care provides emotional stability for their baby that will be lifelong. This commitment will be setting the stage for a deep love, which their baby will return.
4. **Attachment leads to values and morals.** The period from 1 to 3 years is believed to be a crucial time when sharing emotions with at least one special person leads to the development of empathy. Empathy is the core for moral development. Because babies learn to share their parents’ feelings, they learn to understand others’ feelings. These first attachments are the model for all relationships. They provide the “do’s” and “don’ts” for how we treat one another. They are the beginning of morals and values.
5. **Toddlers choose an attachment toy.** Stuffed animals, blankets, or other soft things become a representation of mother. Toddlers want this “love” object when parents aren’t there. It provides stability and comfort. The “love” reminds the child of the safety, strength, and confidence that the mother gives. It is important to let babies have their “Mom-substitute” or “love” close by as long as they want it. We believe that at about 3 years of age, toddlers can keep the memory of parents and the feelings they represent in their minds. They feel safe, which allows them to be more independent and confident when alone. Most adults still keep a “love” somewhere in their lives. We continue to define comfort items, which continue to give us feelings of stability.



Tools for Presentation

LOVE
TOPIC 6

Terms to Understand

- **Attachment**
generally, a special affection for and commitment to another person or thing; *specifically*, a reciprocal, enduring tie between an infant and caregiver, each of whom contributes to the quality of the relationship
- **Attachment figure**
the person a baby has chosen for protection and as a model to copy
- **Available**
always there; easily accessed
- **Caregiver**
any person, usually a parent, who provides care for a child for extended periods of time
- **Discriminate**
make a distinction or choice between people or things
- **Interdependence**
a pattern of interaction between two people where each needs and influences the other
- **Memory image**
an emotional connection to another when you are not there
- **Modeling**
generally, providing a pattern for someone to copy; *specifically*, acting as a model or pattern for a baby to copy
- **“Shared Space Relationship”**
an emotional sharing; merging feelings and understanding; *interdependence*; a mutual focus and sensitivity between two persons
- **Transitional object**
something to help calm or soothe in a time of transition or change; something to represent the parent when he or she is not there

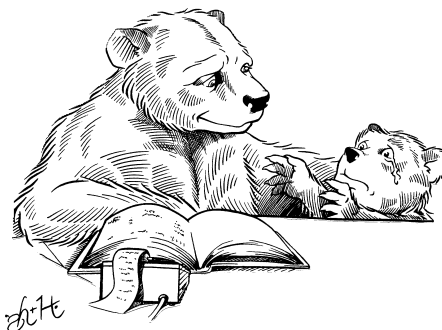
Suggested Activities

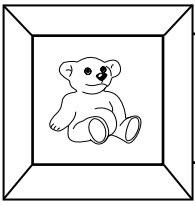
- *PIPE Activity Cards:*
2, 10, 21, 26, 33, 41, 44, 51

Other Materials & Supplies

- Construction paper strips, two colors
- Three layers of cake; ready to spread frosting; utensils and plates
- One large candle, one birthday candle; matches or a lighter
- Small cloth for Peek-a-Boo activity
- Decorations and materials to make paper bears [see patterns in Topic 2 of the *Parent Handouts* notebook]

- #134 ■ Topic Animal Artwork
- #135 ■ Inquiry Questions
[also see page 253]
- #136 ■ Attachment Is Enhanced by ...
[also see KEY page 264]
- #137 ■ Attachment
[also see page 265]
- #138 ■ Checklist of Attachment Behaviors
- #139 ■ Rules for Appropriate Peek-a-Boo
[also see page 266]





Instructional Plan

LOVE
TOPIC 6

Outcomes

- Parents will be able to define attachment and examine the meaning of this feeling in their lives.
- Parents will become aware of the timing and importance of attachment for the social and psychological development of the child.
- Parents will demonstrate the commitment necessary for their baby's attachment phase and respond appropriately to their baby's special needs.

FOUR-STEP INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS



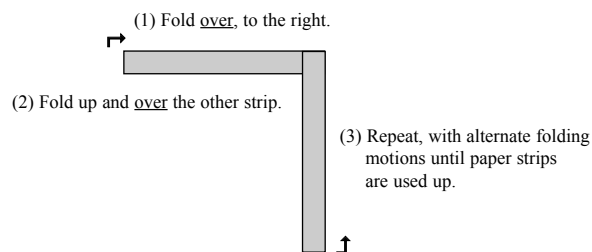
PRESENTATION OF CONCEPTS

INTRODUCTION OF TOPIC

- **As humans, we have a deep need for a feeling of attachment, a need to feel committed and connected with another** [see *Conceptual Overview #1*].
 - This is often what we mean by *love*. It is an emotional connection to another.
 - Each person maintains a unique identity but becomes stronger as a result of an emotional connection to another.
- Discuss definitions of *attachment*.
 - How is it a different kind of love than infatuation?
 - Who or what have you felt attached to in your life?
 - What kinds of experiences have you shared with that person?

To illustrate the concept of *attachment*, make an accordion-folded paper chain, following these steps:

- Alternately fold two strips of different colored paper over each other to show how two people become attached through shared experiences. (Be sure to always fold toward yourself or away from yourself.)



- When the chain is finished, describe how two people who become *interdependent* also become stronger, enriched, and interesting.

Unfold the paper chain and observe how a permanent pattern has been formed on each strip. Discuss how we will always show the influence of someone we are attached to.

KEY CONCEPTS

■ **Biology ensures that most parents are committed to protecting and providing for the needs of their infants** [see *Conceptual Overview #1*].

- This attachment begins at birth and is a unique relationship.
 - Use topic animal artwork to discuss attachment as a willingness to give of oneself.
 - How did each parent feel when he first held his baby?
 - When did each parent first really feel committed?
 - Discuss animal babies and parents and how bonding is a natural thing, perhaps part of a survival link.

■ **Babies learn attachment by the experiences they share with a consistently available caregiver** [see *Conceptual Overview #2*].

- Why is attachment important?
 - Review how Understanding (Topic 2), Trust (Topic 3), Sharing Emotions (Topic 4) and Touch (Topic 5) create a foundation to allow attachments to develop. Illustrate by making paper chains or building a layer cake to symbolize layers of love.
 - Hand out and ask parents to complete the worksheet “Attachment Is Enhanced by . . .” [see KEY pg. 264]. Give parents lots of shared positive emotions for making appropriate matches.

Discuss the importance of attachment for babies using “Attachment” as a handout or a transparency [see pg. 265].

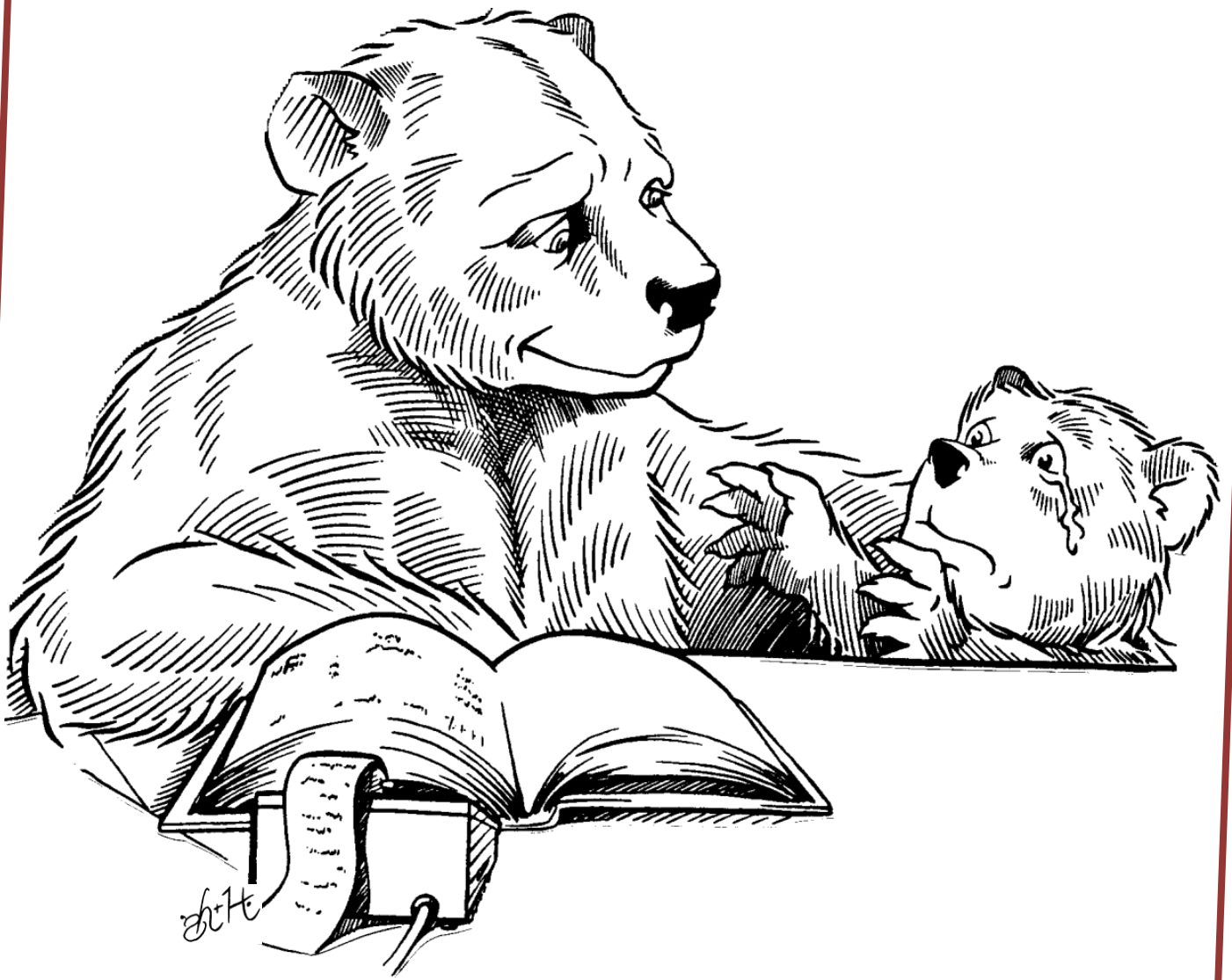
■ **Babies choose an attachment person between 9-12 months** [see *Conceptual Overview #2*].

- They become mature enough to discriminate between people.
- They identify one or two who are most often “there for them.”
- They choose those who listen and understand their needs.
 - Discuss how babies show attachment, using “Checklist of Attachment Behaviors.”
 - Ice the cake to celebrate the baby’s attachment.

The frosting represents feelings of safety and protection that tie love’s layers together for a baby. Put a candle on the cake. Light it, using a larger candle to represent a connectedness with parents. (Eat the cake, of course!)



Attachment

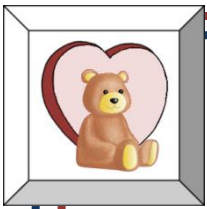




Topic 6: Attachment

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

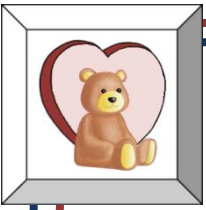
- ♥ What is interdependence? How does it happen?
- ♥ Why is commitment important in a parent-child relationship?
- ♥ How does a baby express feelings of attachment?
- ♥ What does strong attachment lead to?
- ♥ Why should you let your baby have a "Teddy" or a "Lovey" and keep it close?



Attachment Is Enhanced by ...

Match a shared experience with a suggestion of how to create this experience for your baby.

SHARED EXPERIENCE	WHAT to DO
____ 1. Trust	A. Establish a routine or pattern. Do the same things in the same way each day.
____ 2. Being Emotionally Available	B. Share skin-to-skin contact: a calming hand or a playful feather trace.
____ 3. Shared Positive Space	C. Be consistently there when the baby needs you.
____ 4. Structure	D. Become able to read the baby's signals and know when to reassure, support, or just listen.
____ 5. Guidance	E. Hold the baby next to your body. Be quiet and calm. Share rhythmic movements or soft voice tones.
____ 6. Touch	F. Provide a "Lovey" to help your baby feel an emotional connection to you even when you are not together.
____ 7. Comfort	G. Laugh, sing, play, discover and learn together.
____ 8. Understanding	H. Plan ahead for your baby's unique needs; help the baby avoid exhaustion, fear, and frustration.
____ 9. Memory Image	I. Calmly and clearly help the baby learn the rules and keep them.



Attachment

Attachment is a feeling of emotional connection that requires commitment.

Attachment provides

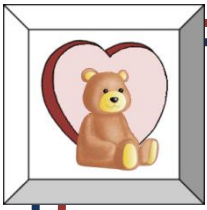
- feelings of safety, stability, and confidence
- a pattern or guide to use during unsure times

Attachment becomes

- a sharing of emotions and goals
- a feeling of belonging
- a sense of right and wrong

Attachment leads to

- reduced anxiety
- self-esteem
- independence
- conscience

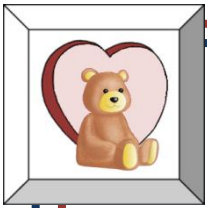


Checklist of Attachment Behaviors

Below are listed some common attachment behaviors. Check those that you have already experienced with your child.

My Baby's/Toddler's Name _____ Age _____

- ☐ My baby likes to be held and cuddled.
- ☐ My baby likes to start games that involve me (drops things on the floor so I'll pick them up).
- ☐ My baby pokes at my eyes, mouth, and ears.
- ☐ Every time I leave my baby with anyone, he or she cries when I leave.
- ☐ My baby likes to run away and have me chase him or her.
- ☐ My baby tries to copy or imitate everything I do.
- ☐ My baby has a favorite stuffed toy, teddy bear, or blanket, which he or she insists on having at bedtime or at the childcare center.
- ☐ When I'm talking to someone else, my baby begins to whine and tries to climb onto my lap.
- ☐ I find my toddler gets into things when I'm busy.
- ☐ My baby often stops crying when I come in the room.
- ☐ My baby always has been friendly. Now he or she cries when anyone smiles or tries to hold him or her.
- ☐ My toddler seems content to play alone as long as he or she can see or hear me.
- ☐ My baby is afraid of adults he or she doesn't know.
- ☐ My toddler likes to have tea parties and pretends to cook or pretends to drive the car.



Rules for Appropriate Peek-a-Boo

Peek-a-Boo is one way to show a baby that someone or something is still there when he or she can't see it. This game helps build a vision in a baby's mind - a memory image of the person. Babies are 2 1/2 or 3 years old before they can firmly remember that you and your love are not really gone but are still there for them when you are temporarily absent.

Peek-a-Boo for young babies, 4 to 8 months of age

Use a small cloth or cardboard. Cover your face. ... Then pull the cloth away and smile. Say "Hi, _____!" [Use the baby's name.] You can frighten the baby, if you say, "Boo!"

Repeat several times. To vary the task, you can pull the cloth away slowly to show your face a little at a time. The baby will see you there and laugh.

Peek-a-Boo for older babies, 8 to 12 months of age

After you have played by covering your face, cover the baby's face with a small cloth. Pull it off and laugh. Cover the baby's face again and wait for a few seconds. Let the baby pull it off.

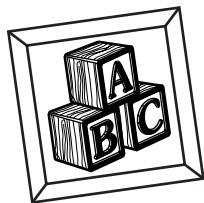
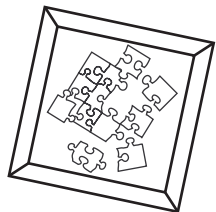
Repeat. Watch the baby's expression. Does the baby look amused ... or scared? If the game is not fun for the baby, go back to covering your face and let the baby pull the cloth away from you.

Large blankets or dish towels are *too* big. Babies get tangled trying to remove them, or they are in the dark too long. Most babies do not like this game and cry to get away.

Teasing babies is very detrimental. They cannot understand your "joke" and they may feel frightened, helpless, or confused. It is a parent's job to structure games so that babies are successful and can share fun.



BABY IS S-O-O-O BIG!

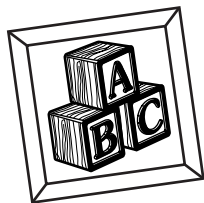
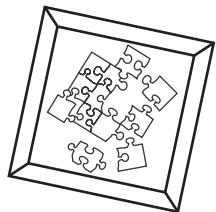


Directions: Lay the baby on his/her back on a soft surface in front of you. Let the baby grasp your index fingers while you wrap the rest of your fingers around his or her wrists. Gently raise your baby to a sitting position as you sing, “Baby is s-o-o-o big!”

Gently return baby to the surface and repeat.

Older babies can do this same activity by putting their hands over their heads and saying “Baby is s-o-o-o big!”

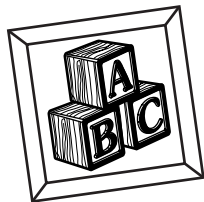
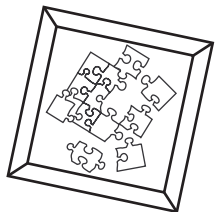
HIDE & SQUEAK



Materials: A squeaky toy or rattle

Directions: Squeak the toy while the baby/toddler is watching and can see where the sound comes from. Move the squeaky toy/rattle out of the baby's/toddler's line of vision and make the sound again. With older babies and toddlers, you may want to hide the toy under a blanket, behind a pillow, etc. Talk to them about where the sound comes from and make the sound again. Help them find the toy. When the baby, toddler finds the toy, laugh and clap for a job well done. Let the toddler hide the toy from you.

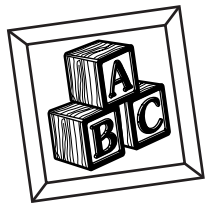
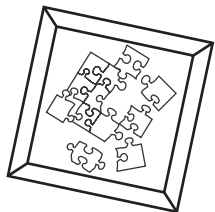
PEEK-A-BOO MIRROR



Materials: Hang a baby blanket over a big mirror

Directions: Sit with baby on your lap in front of the mirror. Talk about the baby you see there. Drop the blanket over the mirror. Ask “Where’s (baby’s name)?” Lift the blanket and say, “There he/she is!” Drop the blanket over the mirror again and see if baby will search for an image in the mirror. Act SURPRISED when baby finds it.

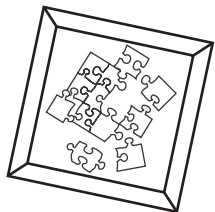
PRETTY SCARF



Materials: Long brightly colored scarves or long piece of light weight material

Directions: Let toddler dance around with a scarf twirling in the air behind him or her. Join the toddler by twirling and dancing with your own scarf. Try some dress up fun by tying the scarf in your hair or around your waist.

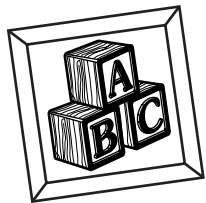
SILLY SOUNDS



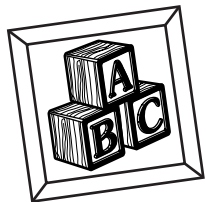
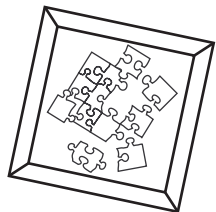
Directions: Sit with baby on your lap, facing you. Make silly sounds and funny faces.



Try: Gently whistling OOOOO, kissing smacks, clicking your tongue, popping your cheek with your finger, animal sounds – meow, moo, etc.



SILLY SOUNDS



Directions: Sit with toddler facing you and take turns making animal sounds.

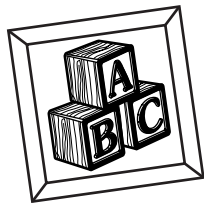
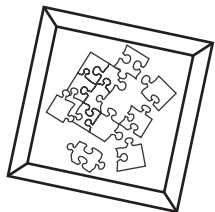
The kitty says meow, meow

The dog says whoof, whoof

The cow says moo, moo,

Etc.

TONGUE FUN



Directions: Sit with baby in your lap, facing you. Stick out your tongue and make fun noises. Try to touch your chin, your nose. Move your tongue in a circle. Watch for baby to try to imitate. Encourage baby to keep trying. Do the same thing over and over.