



Parent-Child Interaction

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Goals and Objectives

1. Discuss the definition of attachment and its importance
2. Learn about positive parent-child interaction
3. Explore how home visitors can educate families on the importance of parent-child interactions



I tried to teach my child with books.

He gave me only puzzled looks.

I used clear words to discipline.

But I never seemed to win.

Despairingly, I turned aside.

“How shall I reach this child?” I cried.

Into my hand he put the key: “Come,” he said, “play with me.”



What is Attachment?



Attachment is a pattern of interaction that develops over time as the infant or toddler and caregiver engage.

- Infants and toddlers use visual gaze, facial expressions, body language, and vocalizations to build powerful, lasting ties.

Why is Attachment Important?

- Attachment security makes a difference in young children's immediate and long-term behavior.
 - When infants and toddlers continually feel secure or insecure in their relationships, there are lasting effects, which can even impact how they parent when they are older.

Children with Secure Attachment Relationships:

- Trust that their physical needs will be met;
- Trust that adults will be emotionally available to them;
- Learn to communicate in a variety of ways; and
- Begin to self regulate their strong reactions and emotions with the help of adults.

Children with Insecure Attachment Relationships:

- Behave as if they know that adults are seldom available;
- Stay close to an adult to get their needs met;
 - This may inhibit their exploration as a mobile infant or toddler
- Become distressed, but do not seek an adult to help them deal with their emotions;
- Hide their feelings and withdraw to avoid distressing events or to organize emotions; and
- Seem disorganized and confused about how to behave in relationships.

How do home visitors promote and support secure attachments with children and caregivers?



Indicators of Attachment Birth to 15 months

- Newborns recognize human language and prefer their own mother's voice
- Prefer human faces
- Early social interaction is a smile and mutual gazing
- Crawls away but checks back visually, calls and gestures to ensure adult contact
- Prefers familiar adults
- Acts anxious around strangers
- Uses a blanket or stuffed toy for security and reassurance

Indicators of Attachment

12 months - 2 ½ years

- Relates to others by exploring things with them
- Pulls up, stands holding furniture, then walks away alone
- Goes through a phase of clinging to primary caregiver
- Experiences periods of intense feelings when separating or reuniting with a parent
- Sees others as a barrier to immediate gratification

What is Parent-Child Interaction?

- Parent-Child Interaction is the basis from which children are able to explore and experience the world of relationships, objects, cause and effect , and problem solving. *
- Parent-Child Interaction is considered a crucial influence on a child's functioning and is the most important factor in child behavior and development.
 - These interactions Influence such things as:
 - Child's personality formation
 - Academic achievement
 - Behavior
 - Empathy

- When parents have warm, trusting, and reliable relationships with peers, family, community members, and service providers, they are more likely to have positive relationships with their children.
- Warm, sensitive, and responsive caregiving provides the foundation for healthy brain development and increases the odds for success in school.

Positive Parent-Child Interactions

Positive parent-child interactions are powerful protective factors for children. These interactions are characterized as:

- Child focused
- Responsive
- Warm
- Sensitive

And are combined with the following:

- Clear expectations
- Limits
- Logical consequences
- Attention to safety

Positive Interactions Create Resilient Children by Fostering:

- Trust
- Security
- Curiosity
- Autonomy
- Belief in child's ability

Parent-Child Interactions Significantly Influence

- Physical growth
- Behavior patterns
- Social-emotional development
- Early language formation
- Literacy
- Academic outcomes

- Both directly and indirectly, poverty impacts children's development, parent-child interactions, and family functioning.
- Families living in poverty are more likely to have limited education, to be unemployed, dependent on public assistance and raising their children as single parents.

Emotional Literacy...

Is the capacity to identify, understand and express emotion in a healthy way...

Is the capacity to recognize, label and understand feelings in one's self and others.

Activity

Using books to support Social Emotional Literacy in infants and toddlers:

- Pick a book to share within your small group.
- Talk about how you would use the book with the families you work with.
- As a small group, make a list of the feeling words in the book or feeling words you would use to enhance the book for infants and toddlers.

Activities to Promote Parent-Child Interaction

Birth to eight months:

- Nursery rhymes
- Peekaboo
- Read repetitive and rhyming books
- Blowing bubbles



What other activities would you use to promote healthy parent-child interaction?

Activities Continued:

Eight to twenty-four months



- Large sheets of paper and large crayons
- Reading time at least once a day
- Help with chores (toddlers and older)
- Water play
- Exploration - walks outside

What other activities would you use to promote healthy parent-child interaction?

Activities Continued:

Twenty four to 36 months

- Cooking
- Dress up play
- Reading
- Singing
- Exploration



What other activities would you use to promote healthy parent-child interaction?



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