

Healthy Attachment (0-36 months)

Infant birth to two months: preferences for primary caregiver are not obvious. Child is limited by cognitive immaturity. Infants have capacity to discriminate mother from others, however, preferences are limited to olfactory and auditory cues. (mother or father's voice or smell, infant will turn head toward primary caregiver)

Caregiver

emotionally available, responds in nurturing manner to infants cues, feeds, changes often, talks to baby, smiles at baby, seeks to protect baby from possible harm, adapts environment to accommodate baby's needs, self-care and support.

two to three months: infants are far more socially responsive, however they do not seek any particular figures for social engagement or comfort seeking. Most any responsive caregiver can offer care, and infant will respond.

Care giver: all of the above, and provides age appropriate stimulation for optimal developmental growth, responds effectively to infants need for comfort and nurturance, appears confident in role as parent, responsive to information, advice or other forms of help

three to seven months: infant may seem more comfortable with primary caregiver. However, infants at this age orient readily to adult caregivers, and they are comforted by unfamiliar adults.

Care giver: all of the above, and knowing and valuing the infant as an individual, provide comfort and availability when infant is in distress, maintains close proximity to baby, speaks to baby often, knowledgeable about health, nutrition, and child development, family has adequate housing, transportation, finances, and child care.

seven to twelve months: Infants develop attachment to primary caregiver. Here only a small number of primary caregivers can comfort baby when in distress. Separation protest begins, stranger wariness apparent, and infant displays proximity seeking behavior.

Care giver: all of the above, and , provide reassurance and

availability, especially in strange situations, sets reasonable limitations on baby's behavior when necessary, parent acknowledges baby's efforts and achievements, flexibility and patience

twelve months: most infants are crawling and walking. Primary caregiver is seen as a "secure base" to which the infant can return after exploring environment. Primary caregiver is "safe Haven" from any anticipated danger.

Care giver: all of the above, and allow child to explore, being available when child needs reassurance and a "secure base", recognizes child's unique personality style or temperament, takes opportunity to help child learn, uses simple words and phrases when talking to child, allows freedom of movement and watches for danger, anticipates child's needs (blanket, packs diaper bag with adequate supplies)

twelve to twenty months: proximity to primary caregiver promotes an internal feeling of security. Balance between exploration and reassurance from primary caregiver. Here, the internal representations of the relationship with their primary caregiver are strengthened and infant develops internal working models that will begin to guide the emotional process for future relationships.

Care giver: All of the above, and parent behaves and talks about child in generally positive way, parent allows child to be curious, parent seeks support when needed

twenty to thirty six months: Verbal skills increase as does ability to relate to symbolic representations. Increasing need for autonomy, and continued reliance on primary caregiver produces conflict. Cooperation during this phase of attachment is critical for relationship to grow in healthy direction. Core issue: Independence balanced with relationship.

Care giver: all of the above, and parent expresses pride in child's development, parent responds to child's need for comfort and care, parent seems capable of handling child's emotional outbursts, parent and child pay attention to each other's feelings and behaviors, parent and child show pleasure in each other's company