

Attachment



Information for
Parents/Carers

Attachment Theory was pioneered by John Bowlby in the 1950s. Attachment is a process that begins in the womb and continues as the child grows. The relationship between the child and parent/carer determines whether the attachment is secure or insecure. This will go on to influence how the child interacts with others during childhood and into adulthood. We are all on the attachment continuum. We are moulded to a degree by relationships with our parents/carers. Most of us have enough experience of secure attachment to help us with any difficulties we have experienced.



South Lanarkshire Council's (SLC) Attachment Strategy aims to help parents and educators understand and support the development of secure attachments in children and young people. This strategy emphasizes the importance of positive relationships and creating emotionally supportive environments. By understanding attachment theory, parents can foster secure bonds with their children, which has a positive impact on their emotional, social, and psychological well-being.

Key aspects of SLC's Attachment Strategy for parents:

- **Understanding Attachment:**

The strategy highlights the importance of attachment as a fundamental emotional bond between a child and their caregiver, impacting various aspects of their development.



- **Creating Secure Attachments:**

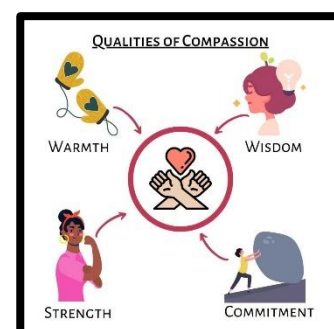
Parents are encouraged to be responsive, sensitive, and consistently loving towards their children, creating a sense of safety and security.

- **Understanding Behaviour as Communication:**

The strategy emphasizes that children's behaviours, especially challenging ones, can often be a way of communicating unmet emotional needs.

- **Respond with Compassion:**

Parents are encouraged to respond to their children's behaviours with compassion and understanding, helping them to feel supported and valued.



- **Building Strong Relationships:**

The strategy promotes the importance of building positive and strong relationships with children, other family members, and the wider community.

- **Importance of Early Intervention:**

The strategy recognizes the importance of early intervention in supporting children with insecure attachments, emphasizing the need for a developmentally sensitive approach.

How SLC supports parents:

- **Resources and Training:**

SLC provides resources, such as leaflets and posters, to help parents understand attachment theory and its implications.

- **Training for Professionals:**

SLC offers training for staff in schools and early learning settings to ensure they are equipped to support children's attachment needs.

- **Community Engagement:**

SLC works with community organizations to promote attachment-informed practices and build a supportive network for families.

Examples of Attachment-Informed Practices:

- **Creating a Safe and Predictable Environment:**

Providing consistent routines, clear boundaries, and a stable home environment can help children feel secure and safe.

- **Being Responsive to Needs:**

Responding promptly and sensitively to a child's emotional needs, such as crying, fear, or sadness, can help them feel understood and supported.

- **Using Positive Discipline:**

Instead of punishment, focusing on redirection, positive reinforcement, and teaching children how to manage their emotions can promote healthy attachment.

- **Reading and Responding to Non-Verbal Cues:**

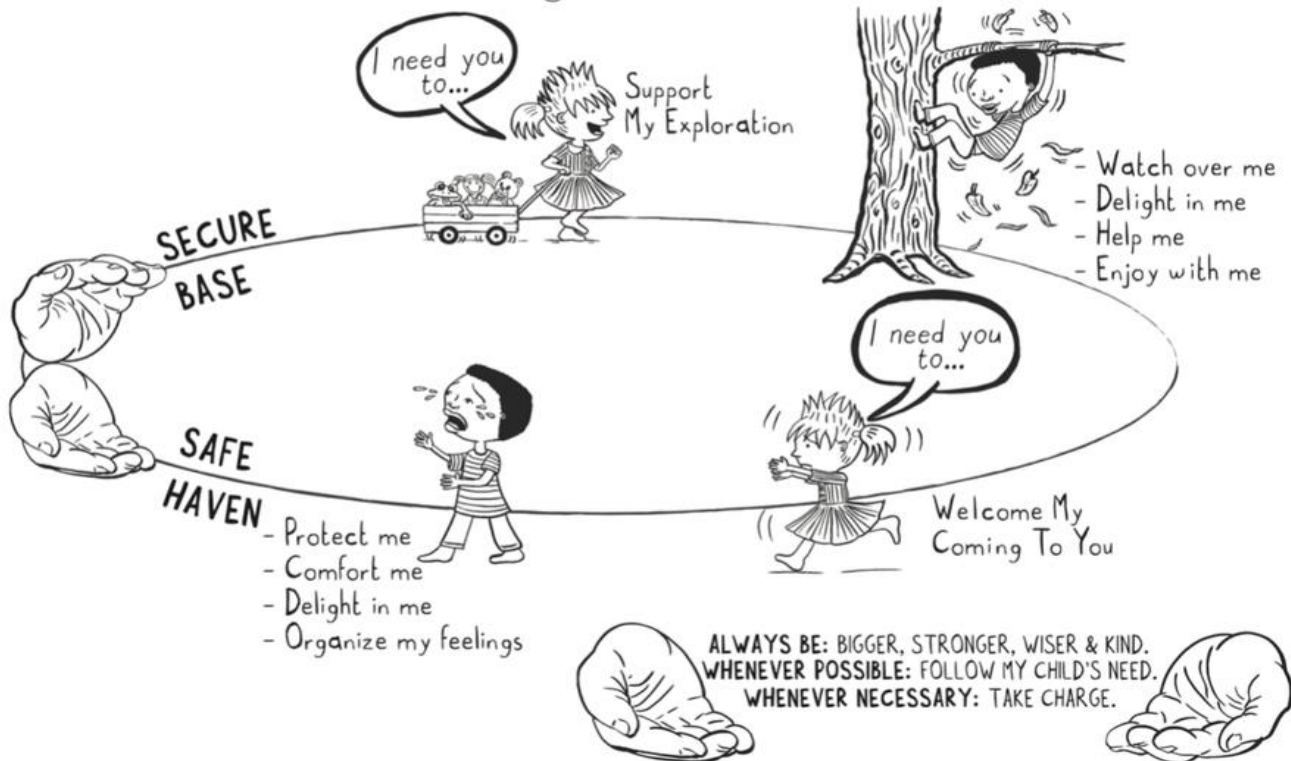
Paying attention to a child's body language and facial expressions can provide valuable insights into their emotional state.

- **Creating Opportunities for Play and Exploration:**

Providing opportunities for play and exploration, while ensuring a safe and supportive environment, can help children develop their social and emotional skills.

Circle of Security®

Parent Attending To The Child's Needs



By implementing these strategies, SLC aims to create a more supportive and nurturing environment for children and young people, fostering secure attachments and promoting their overall well-being.

What can you do to help your child?

- Provide a secure base and safe haven recognising and reducing triggers
- Stay regulated as parents/carers
- Notice, acknowledge, validate and respond to your child's emotions
- View your child's behaviour as communication and put it within a wider context
- Adopt a warm, nurturing, playful, consistent and predictable parenting style
- Spend positive, quality time with your child
- Pick your battles carefully with your child and have realistic expectations
- Set up routines, limits and structure for your child that are logical, fair, predictable
- Celebrate your child's strengths, uniqueness and positive qualities

Games are a good way to engage and support your child and the following are some examples:

Beep and honk

Press your child's nose and say 'beep' then press his/her chin and say 'honk'. Guide your child to touch your nose and chin. Make appropriate beeps and honks as you are touched. You can develop this game so that a different noise is made when you touch another part of your body.



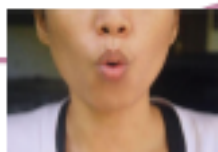
Copy funny faces

Face your child and pull a funny face. Your child copies it.



Blow me over

Sit facing your child and while holding hands have him/her blow you over. You fall backwards as your child blows. Try you blowing and your child falling over.



Fortune telling

Pretend to read your child's palm and say lots of positive things about him/her and the future.



Create a special handshake

Make up a special handshake with your child.



Handclapping games

You can use a simple chant such as 'a sailor went to sea' but there will be many more you can find on the internet.

