

## Brooke Weston Trust Primary SEND Newsletter—December 2023

Welcome to the December SEND newsletter. This month's newsletter is all about Attachment. We hope you find the information useful. If you have any questions please contact your child's class teacher or SENDCo at your school who will be more than willing to discuss anything with you.

### What is Attachment?

Attachment can be defined as a deep and enduring emotional bond between two people in which each seeks closeness and feels more secure when in the presence of the attachment figure. The initial and perhaps most crucial emotional bond forms between infants and their primary caregivers, such as their mother. Distinct behaviours characterise attachment in children, such as seeking closeness with the attachment figure when distressed or threatened.

#### Attachment Styles

Attachment styles refer to the particular way in which an individual relates to other people. The style of attachment is formed at the very beginning of life, and once established, is a style that stays with you and plays out today in how you relate in intimate relationships and in how you parent your children.

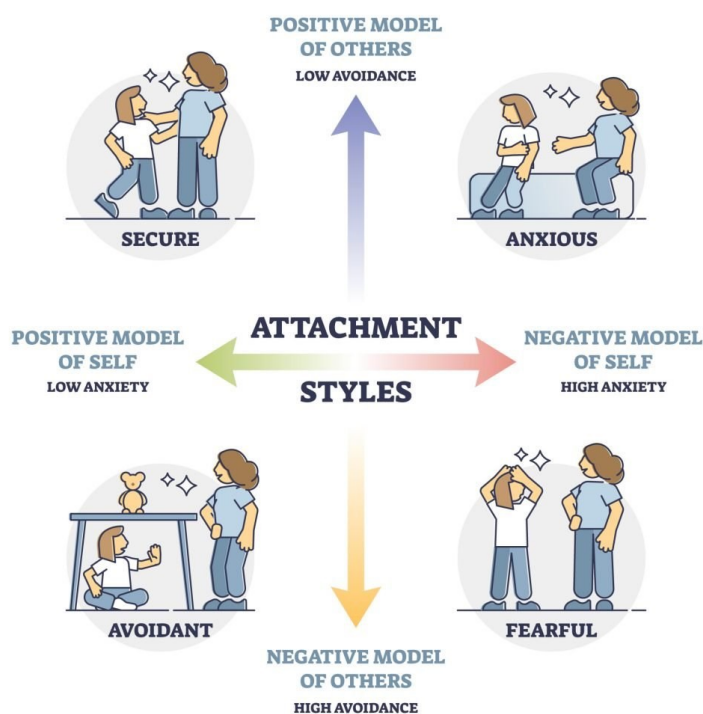
#### Attachment issues

##### Factors affecting attachment

Some circumstances can make it more challenging for a child and their caregivers to form a pattern of secure attachment. These may include:

- Abuse, maltreatment and trauma experienced by the parent or child.
- Parental mental health difficulties.

- Parental substance misuse.
- The child having multiple care placements.
- Parents being separated from their baby just after birth, for example if the baby is receiving neonatal care.
- Stress such as having a low income, being a single parent, or being a young parent.
- Bereavement or loss of another caregiver that a child had an attachment with.



## Signs that a child may have attachment issues

Children's behaviour can be influenced by a wide range of circumstances and emotions. Indicators that a baby or toddler might not have a secure attachment with their caregiver will emerge as a pattern of behaviour over time, particularly during moments of stress or exploration. This pattern might include:

- Being fearful or avoidant of a parent or carer.
- Becoming extremely distressed when their carer leaves them, even for a short amount of time.
- Rejecting their caregiver's efforts to calm, soothe, and connect with them.
- Not seeming to notice or care when their caregiver leaves the room or when they return.
- Being passive or non-responsive to their carer.
- Seeming to be depressed or angry.
- Not being interested in playing with toys or exploring their environment.



As children with attachment issues get older, these behaviour patterns might evolve. As well as being evident during times of stress, some behaviours may start to become obvious at other times. These may include the child:

- Finding it difficult to ask for help.
- Struggling to form positive relationships with adults and peers.
- Struggling to concentrate.
- Struggling to calm themselves down.
- Both demanding and rejecting attention or support at the same time.
- Becoming quickly or disproportionately angry or upset, at times with no clear triggers.
- Appearing withdrawn or disengaged from activities.
- Daydreaming, being hyperactive or constantly fidgeting or moving.

## Benefits of secure attachment

When caregivers react sensitively to ease their child's distress and help them regulate their emotions, it has a positive impact on the child's neurological, physiological and psychosocial development. Children with secure attachments are more likely to develop emotional intelligence, good social skills and robust mental health.

## Effects of insecure attachment

Not receiving comfort and security in the early years can have a negative effect on children's neurological, psychological, emotional and physical development and functioning.

Babies and young children who have attachment issues may be more likely to develop behavioural issues, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or conduct disorder.

**If you think a child may have attachment issues, you should refer them to a suitably trained health and social care professional, such as your community paediatrician, for a full assessment.**

The Schools SEND information report can be found at :

<https://www.oakleyvaleprimary.org/page/?title=Equalities%2FSEND&pid=49>

The Local Offer can be found at:

<https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/send/local-offer/Pages/default.aspx>

If you have any questions, contact the SENDCo Becky Annetts on [rebecca.annetts@oakleyvaleprimary.org](mailto:rebecca.annetts@oakleyvaleprimary.org)