

What is attachment?

- A strong emotional connection that develops between you and your child
- A healthy attachment forms when you respond quickly in a warm and sensitive way, especially when your child is angry, scared, upset, sick, or hurt
- Attachment influences how your baby's brain develops and affects how your child thinks, feels, learns and behaves for life



Attachment... Building Your Child's Emotional Health

A healthy attachment with at least one adult increases brain development and wires a child's brain to deal with stress, anxiety, and new life experiences

For more information and support on building a healthy attachment with your child, contact
York Region *Health Connection*

1-800-361-5653

TTY 1-866-252-9933

www.york.ca/childandfamilyhealth



York Region Community and Health Services

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Early experiences help to shape the way your child learns, thinks, and behaves now and in the future.

What can a parent or caregiver do to make a difference?

Tips for building your child's emotional health



Be warm, loving and responsive

- Babies are born with a need for human contact and stimulation
- Communicating calmly helps your baby feel safe
- Expressing love and respect for your child develops trust

Respond to your baby's cues

- Crying infants who receive a quick warm response will usually learn to cry much less and sleep more at night
- Babies cannot be spoiled by too much attention

Talk, read and sing to your baby

- Babies are learning language long before they speak
- Talk to your baby when playing, bathing, diapering and feeding
- Cuddling with a story or song shows your child that words and good feelings go together
- Language and communication skills are best taught by you, not through television



Establish routines and rituals

- A bath and song before bedtime help babies learn what to expect from their environment
- Sit with your child and enjoy mealtime together
- Spend enjoyable time interacting with your child on a daily basis

Take care of yourself

- Take time for yourself, eat well, take walks, sleep while baby sleeps and get out each day
- Time for yourself will give you more energy and patience to provide loving and responsive care
- Allow others to build a relationship with your child through play

Encourage safe play and exploration

- Provide opportunities for your baby to roll, crawl, walk and explore
- Play face-to-face at your baby's level
- Follow your child's lead in play

Use discipline as an opportunity to teach

- Provide consistent loving adult supervision for your baby to explore safely
- Try to see things from your baby's point of view
- Use simple words and remain calm

Recognize that each child is unique

- Responding sensitively to your baby's cues and temperament will nurture positive self-esteem
- Discover and get to know your child's personality

Choose quality childcare and stay involved

- All caregivers have an impact on your baby
- Seek childcare arrangements that provide a loving, nurturing and safe environment for your child

