

KEEPING IN TOUCH

CHILDMINDING MONITORING ADVISORY & SUPPORT

September 2005

Volume 3, number 3

Attachment in Children

One of the most important factors in understanding how children experience changes and separation is that of attachment. Attachment is a deep and lasting connection that develops between a child and a specific caregiver in the early years of life particularly between 0 and 5 years.

Babies form an emotional attachment with their primary caregiver (usually the mother) around six to eight months of age, but other people such as child care providers can also be very important attachment figures for children as well.

Attachment is a mutual relationship between

a child and caregiver. Children instinctively reach out to a caregiver for security and protection and caregivers instinctively protect and nurture children. This relationship creates a secure base for early development and is critical to the emotional well being of children.

Secure attachment occurs when children have caregivers who:

- ✓ Are available
- ✓ Are in tune with their needs
- ✓ Affectionate
- ✓ Demonstrate pleasure in being with their children
- ✓ Are able to comfort stressed children

Secure children:

- ✓ Want to be close to their caregiver
- ✓ Keep in physical contact with caregiver
- ✓ Continue to interact with their caregiver
- ✓ Settle down quickly when caregiver is present and are able to go back to exploring

Providing warm, responsive and consistent care strengthens the systems that control emotions. A child who experiences 'secure attachment' is more able to adapt, and develop trust.

What secure attachments mean to a child:

- ✓ Caregivers are trustworthy and reliable
- ✓ I am worthwhile and lovable
- ✓ My world is safe and offers pleasure
- ✓ I deserve to have my needs met

Research shows that strong secure connections impact on a child's relationships throughout life.

Although attachment or 'bonding' is universal, parent's attachment beliefs, values and practices differ around the world. We all do things differently!

Attachment practices are those practices that parents use to develop that lasting connection with their child and to respond to their infants attachment behaviours. We all feed, carry, sleep, read, sing, touch, teach and talk with our children, but we may do these in differing ways. In LINC childminding programs we have the opportunity to support families through the learning, understanding, and recognition of these practices.

Adapted from: "The Role of Attachment in Transitions and Separation", Childcare Chronicle, 2001, NJ Child Care Resource Agency

Carrying, Culture & Attachment

Mothers/families all over the world carry their babies in different ways – in their arms, in cloth slings on their fronts, backs or sides, in commercially available versions of slings, front packs, and back packs. In many countries, babies and infants spend most of each day carried by their mother or

a family member or even an older sister who could be as young as 5 or 6. Canada is among the countries where children have the least physical contact with their parents or other caregivers.

Carrying children has an important role in promoting attach-



ment. The close physical contact between mothers, other caregivers and children provides a sense of security to children. It enables mothers and other caregivers to quickly respond to their children's needs. Carrying children is also an effective way of soothing them when they are distressed.

Based on: Granju, KA and Kennedy, B., Attachment Parenting, 1999.

A Magical Conference ...

World Forum on Early Care and Education

We want to hear from you!

In the spirit of KEEPING IN TOUCH, we are pleased to include an article from Stacey Richardson-Banks of the Algonquin College LINC program, in Ottawa.

This past May, I had the wonderful opportunity to attend this year's World Forum on Early Care and Education, which was held in Canada for the first time. The host city for the conference was beautiful and historic Montreal.

Four years ago, I had attended my first World Forum Conference in Athens, Greece. a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet and learn from my fellow Early Childhood Educators around the world.

This year, the World Forum on Early Care and Education exceeded over 800 participants from 81 different nations. The World Forum motto is "Everyone has something share, something to learn". It is an amazing gathering of people from a variety of cultures with different languages, beliefs and life stories, all sharing in one common interest: children.

This was the sixth World Forum On Early Care and

Education and it was designed to promote an on-going global exchange of ideas on the delivery of quality services for children in diverse settings. They have two goals for delegates: first, that they acquire a wealth of new ideas and new perspectives to enrich their work; and second, that they develop meaningful relationships that continue into the future with their peers from other nations. This was certainly the case in my own personal experience as highlighted during the welcome reception, where I was reunited with friends from Nepal, Australia, United States, and many other countries.

This World Forum focused on the "power of early childhood education." Topics addressed included language and literacy, advocacy, HIV/AIDS, early childhood as a force in reconciliation after conflict, curriculum models, indigenous culture, male involvement, center design, outdoor education,

infants and toddlers, leadership, teacher education, and parents.

The four day forum was jammed packed – not only did you get to choose from over 60 workshop sessions to attend, but there were also opportunities to network, participate in a group art project demonstrating the unity in the world community of Early Care, a bookstore to purchase great resource books, an opportunity to share artwork from your program and an opportunity for global sharing by bringing your favorite young children's book to randomly exchange with another conference participant..., to name a few.

If my once in a lifetime opportunity comes around again, I will not hesitate to take it.

Stacey

For more information on how you can participate in the World Forum on Early Care and Education log on to:

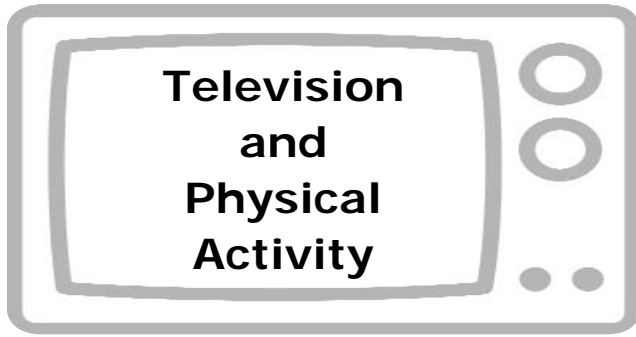
www.childcareexchange.com

Did You Know ... ?

The human body, including the brain, is entirely made up of cells. **At birth, a baby has 100 billion brain cells that will make connections as the brain matures.** The brain connections that are made are crucial. Among other things, they allow thinking and learning to take place. These connections are made as a result of the environmental input the child

receives after birth.

The first three years are especially important. When it comes to brain development, it's mostly a case of use it or lose it. **The child's earliest experiences affect the way the brain is organized.** When a connection is used repeatedly in the early years, it becomes permanent.



Without the support of an extended family or an already established network of friends, many parents new to the community may come to rely on TV to keep children busy, and may not have access to a playground that is easily accessible or safe.

According to recent data from the Canadian Paediatric Society, the average Canadian child watches nearly 14 hrs of television a week. And by their high school graduation will have spent more time

watching television than in the classroom. Television limits a child's time for other activities such as playing, participating in regular exercise and developing other necessary physical, mental and social skills.

We know that being active is essential to a child's physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. That's why we have a great opportunity to 'get moving' in our programs on a daily basis.

Physical activity can be accomplished in many creative ways through games, dancing, at circle times and throughout the day. Even babies need to exercise.

Since many children attend LINC childminding programs for much of their week, we are in a unique position to provide a safe environment that promotes physical activity. Healthy habits can begin at a very early age!



Health and Safety

Why Sanitize?

It's important to start first with the fact that while cleaning removes dirt that can be seen, along with some germs, some surfaces that are high in the number of germs require an additional step to reduce the number of organisms that cause illness. This step is called sanitizing and requires the use of chemicals, such as bleach, that can kill disease-causing bacteria, viruses and fungus.

Critical areas, especially in infant/toddler settings, that need the correct application of sanitizers include: food preparation/serving areas, diapering/toileting areas, and areas or surfaces that are frequently mouthed or touched.

What are the alternatives to bleach?

There are alternatives to bleach that can be used to sanitize the early care environment. There are quaternary ammonium compounds

("quats"), phenols, and alcohol. Like bleach, they all have disadvantages and warnings that must appear on the label. They all have some degree of toxicity either to the eyes, skin or respiratory tract, and most require the use of protective equipment (gloves, safety glasses) and ventilation while mixing. They generally require a longer contact time—the time needed from application to the time the germs are killed—and their labels will indicate this. For instance,

while bleach requires two minutes of contact time, a quat may require up to 10 minutes, which could be impractical for a busy diaper-changing area. And some sanitizers, unlike bleach, leave a residue when they dry that must be rinsed off with fresh water before an area is safe to use again.

Check with your local public health department to find out what sanitizers they would recommend for early care programs.

Published by: California Childcare Health Program (CCHP), Child Care Health Connections, Nov. - Dec. 2004

Staff Health

Be careful about ...

Proper Lifting and Carrying

Did you know that back injury is the most common type of occupational injury for child care providers? Exercise, proper nutrition, and practicing good body mechanics in everyday movements are

vital to staying healthy and avoiding back injuries. Back injuries can be reduced and prevented by implementing the following recommendations:

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- 1 Learn proper lifting and carrying techniques
- 2 Encourage independence in children – e.g., walk up stairs with toddlers, rather than carrying them.
- 3 Avoid carrying a child on one hip. Hold the child in front of you, with the child's legs straddled around both your hips.
- 4 Use full-sized tables or desks, not child-sized.
- 5 Lower crib rails before lifting infants or toddlers out.
- 6 Use adult-height changing tables. Use a ramp or small steps to allow children, under supervision, to climb up to changing tables.
- 7 Sit against a wall, furniture or pillow for back support when on the floor.

Reference: California Childcare Health Program, "Health and Safety in the Child Care Setting: Prevention of Injuries", *Child Care Health Connections*, Nov. - Dec. 2004

In the News

Buckling Up in Booster Seats

It has been estimated that when correctly used and installed, child car and booster seats can reduce the risk of serious injuries by 70 % in a sudden stop or collision.

Some families new to Canada may not be familiar with provincial safety laws and unaware of the risks of potential injury. Please share this information with parents in your program.

A new law goes into effect September 1st making it mandatory for anyone transporting children to make sure children are properly secured in either an infant seat, child seat, or booster seat. This would apply to all caregivers, from babysitters to grandparents.

The Ontario government's new legislation will require the use of booster seats for children who have outgrown a car seat but are too small for a regular seatbelt.

Booster seats are required for children under the age of eight, weighing more than 18 kg but less than 36 kg (40-80 lbs) and who stands less than 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall.

As well, the government will no longer collect the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) on booster seats, effective September 1, 2005.

Child and infant seats are already PST-exempt.

A child can start using a seatbelt alone once any one of the following criteria is met:

- ✓ child turns eight years old
- ✓ child weighs 36 kg (80 lbs)
- ✓ child is 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall.

Upcoming Events & Related Websites

FYI ... *International Literacy Day* was created in 1956 at the World Conference of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy, held in Tehran, Iran. At this meeting it was recommended that September 8, the date of the inauguration of the conference, be proclaimed International Literacy Day, and that on this day each year individuals, organizations, and countries throughout the world would renew their efforts to combat illiteracy and would demonstrate their commitment to providing education for all.

SEPTEMBER

- 8 **International Literacy Day** www.abc-canada.org
- 18 **Terry Fox Run** www.terryfox.org
- 25 **Aids Walk Canada**
www.aidswalkcanada.ca/awc/home.htm

OCTOBER

- Breast Cancer Awareness Month** www.cancer.ca
- Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Month**
www.redcross.ca
- Eye Health Month** www.opto.ca
- Flu Prevention Month** www.lung.ca
- SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) Month**
www.sidscanada.org
- Women's History Month** www.swc-cfc.gc.ca
- 2-8 **Fire Prevention Week** www.fipreca.ca
- 3-9 **National Family Week**
www.familyservicecanada.org
- 15-23 **Week of the Child** www.voicesforchildren.ca
- 16-22 **Amnesty International Week** www.amnesty.ca
- 16 **World Food Day** www.unac.org
- 17-21 **National School Safety Week**
www.safety-council.org
- 24-30 **Healthy Workplace Week**
www.ngi.ca/chw
- 31 **UNICEF Day** www.unicef.ca

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