

The Emotional Environment

Children who are securely attached as babies have a sense of trust and confidence in themselves, because they know that if something happens that they cannot cope with there will always be someone there to sort it out.



If I know I am loved then I am more likely to have positive feelings and grow in confidence.

I pick up on your emotions. If you are happy and calm, so am I. If you are stressed or anxious, I could be too.

I will thrive when my needs are met. Know my special cry and what it may mean.

I like people singing to me. It can make me feel calm, happy and loved.

Follow my signals. Notice when I am happy to play or ready to stop.

Make nappy changing a special time for me and my key person to laugh, sing and chat.

Notice when I am ready to stop. If I start fussing, crying, turning away, arching my back, I may be in need of a reassuring cuddle or some rest.

Notice when I want to be with you and take part. I might be smiling, chuckling, bright eyed, babbling, reaching out, turning towards you or the resource.

Role of the adult

Loving and meaningful interactions are key to a baby's development. Everyday routines such as mealtimes and nappy changes are wonderful opportunities to talk, sing and laugh with your baby. Mealtime should be a social experience and nappy changing a special time with the key person. Close interactions are the curriculum. Care routines should not be rushed to fit in with everything else.

Babies cannot sooth themselves. Most babies stop crying when they are picked up. The smell of a familiar person calms distressed babies. Gentle touch releases 'feel good chemicals' opioids and oxytocin which help to grow a healthy brain. Support crying babies by saying calmly 'Oh you are crying; I think you are feeling sad. I think you are telling me you want to be picked up. I wonder why you are feeling unhappy.'

Singing is an emotional experience which babies find soothing, can alleviate anxieties, and enhances feelings of love, trust and bonding.

Tune in to your baby. Notice and respond to their attempts at communicating with you through their smiles, waves, cries, facial expressions, body movements and eye contact.