



Attachment Disorder

What is Attachment Disorder?

Attachment Disorder is a broad term that is used to describe a series of emotional and behavioural problems that can develop in young children who struggle to form expected bonds to primary caregivers, usually their parents.

What difficulties might children with attachment difficulties encounter?

- they may hurt or bully other children
- they may be extremely clingy
- they may not smile very often
- they may exhibit intense bursts of anger
- they may struggle to make eye contact
- they may lack affection for care-givers
- they may exhibit oppositional or self-destructive behaviours
- they may enjoy watching other children play but be reluctant to join in
- they may become withdrawn or listless
- they may have poor impulse control

Children may have some of these difficulties or they may exhibit all of these difficulties.

How can you help at home?

- be realistic with your expectations and celebrate any signs of success
- remain patient when setbacks occur and keep calm
- take care of yourself and try to keep stress to a minimum
- turn to others for support before things get to breaking point
- stay positive and optimistic and turn to others for reassurance when feeling low
- set limits and boundaries to make your child's world seem predictable and less scary
- remain calm during conflict and available to reconnect after this happens
- own up to mistakes and try to reconcile quickly as this will help to strengthen the attachment bond
- offer consistent and familiar routines as this provides comfort to children with attachment disorder
- listen, talk and play with your child to help them feel loved

Useful website

www.helpguide.org