

# What can we do to support healthy attachment?

**TIPS FOR BUILDING STRONG  
BONDS**

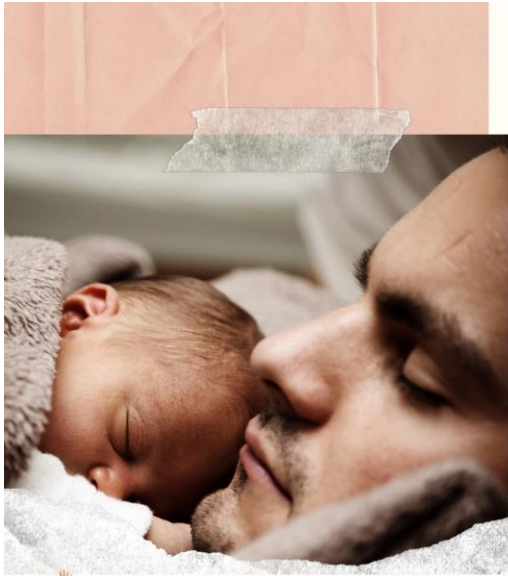


## Self Care

**MEET YOUR OWN NEEDS BEFORE YOU CAN  
MEET THOSE OF OTHERS**

Attachment isn't a magical thing and doesn't just happen, looking after a child can be hard, tiring and challenging at times, prioritising your well-being is a key part to support children. It is not selfish and should come with no guilt or shame.





## Touch!

### **IT'S A SCIENCE**

Being touched by a person you trust actually releases the 'love hormone' oxytocin and all you need is seven seconds. . Tickle, stroke, put your hand on a shoulder. For children who do not want to be touched they need to see unconditional care- be there, stay with them during times when needed. The human body will mirror another in order to regulate itself so calming touch and communicating calm and safety is crucial. Being there is enough until trust develops.



## Provide a safe environment

### **PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY**

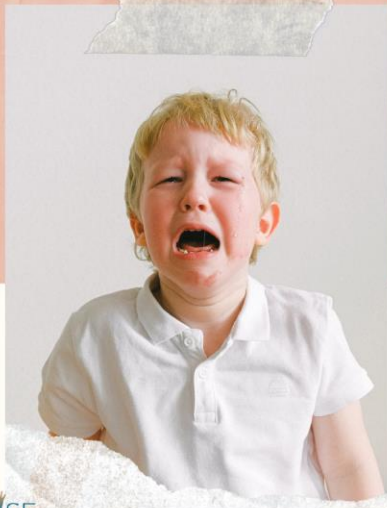
As adults we can often find making the environment physically safe for children easier than making it emotionally safe. We need to be shown children they are safe but also communicate so they feel safe this is more about us than the environment. We do this by being predictable and consistent.



## Support to explore

### **IN ALL AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT**

Be a safe base a child can go and explore the environment physically, support them emotionally when challenges or hurdles arise, show them what can be expected of them socially and what can happen in social situations, support them to learn new things and think new things. This includes some risk taking and making mistakes.



## Tune into feelings

### **ITS OKAY NOT TO BE OKAY**

We all experience a range of emotions none of them are good or bad (it is the behaviour that follows that is often not okay). It is important we communicate our understanding of this. Name feelings we think children are feeling, model facial expressions and body language related to emotions and over time a child will learn the communication not just the language of feelings and also come to understand that no matter what they feel you are there for them. \* Don't assume older children have developed this





## Make small moments matter

### **MAKE ORDINARY TASKS EXTRAORDINARY**

There are lots of things you do for a child daily use these times to create routine, fun rituals together, repeat and repeat again. Lots of little things over time will build up quickly. Be silly, make funny faces. noises, make jokes. Quality time is more important than quantity. See these as investments in your child to form building blocks they can always go back to.



## Be present in the moment

### **PUT YOUR WHOLE SELF IN**

Phone's away, computers off just you and them, be in that moment physically and emotionally give your best self these small moments, we don't have to be our best selves all the time. Just you and them. Notice what they do, name it label it. Think about your body language, facial expressions and gestures- all in remember!



## Wonder out loud

### **SPEAK YOUR MIND AND WHAT YOU THINK IS IN THEIRS**

Talk to a child about what you are doing, give them a running commentary about the everyday things. Let them know what's about to happen next. This helps a child feel safe and start to understand the world around them. 'I wonder if... you are hungry, sad, tired. Oh your laughing I wonder if that funny noise make you happy?' problem solve feelings out loud with babies. Over time children will feel seen, heard and understood.



## Find your inner child

### **LAUGH, LEARN AND HAVE FUN TOGETHER**

Get your Zest for life back! Relive the wonder and awe about the world like your new to it- forget being an adult silliness matters! Dance, sing laugh like no one is watching, your child will not judge you but love you for it. Find joy in small things. Being an adult can be unrewarding, tiring and challenging and we often don't feel in the mood to be child like you only have to be child like for small moments often. Try it you may find you like it!



## Involve me

### **NURTURE COMMUNICATION**

We are naturally social beings and babies need to be included in things! involve them in the conversation during the school run, on the bus, meal times. Turn take model conversation notice things with them, name it and label things involve them and they will naturally start to respond even from a young age with gestures and signing.