

# Building a Secure Attachment With Your Baby



## What is a secure attachment?

It is the ideal attachment response when a child responds with joy at being united with their primary caregiver.

## Attachment Milestones

### Pre-attachment Phase

- Infants show no visible signs of attachment, between 0-3 months

### Social Smile

- First real smile, happens around 2 months old.

### Attachment in the Making

- When baby starts to slightly prefer the primary caregiver, between 4-7 months

### Clear-cut Attachment

- Critical attachment phase, defined by separation anxiety and stranger anxiety, about 7 months- toddlerhood

### Separation Anxiety

- A normal behavior for babies, when a baby gets upset about the primary caregiver leaving.

### Stranger Anxiety

- Also a normal behavior, babies become wary of people other than the primary caregiver.

### Social Referencing

- When baby checks back and monitors a caregiver for cues about how to behave while exploring.

## Why is this Important?

### It's good for baby

- Helps develop fulfilling intimate relationships
- Helps maintain emotional balance
- Helps them feel confident and build self-esteem
- Helps them enjoy interacting with others
- Helps them cope with disappointment and loss
- Helps them share feelings and seek support

### It's good for you too

- Increases joy
- Helps with fatigue from lack of sleep
- Helps with stress
- Increases energy
- Increases motivation

# Tips for Creating a Secure Attachment

**It Starts With You:** it is important to make sure that you take care of your own physical, mental and emotional health.



Do your best to get enough sleep.



Ask for help from family, partners, or friends.



Make time for yourself.

Make sure your baby's needs are met.



Learn your baby's unique cues.



Talk to, laugh with, and play with your baby.

