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Attachment

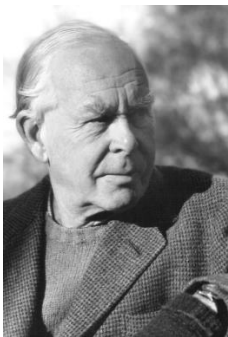
*The key (social) relationship shaping development in infancy is the **attachment** relationship between infant and carer.*

The quality of this attachment relationship affects development in many ways:

- Sense of self and self-esteem
- Expectations of others and social connections (emotional development)
- Expectations of self (self-efficacy)



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Maternal Deprivation Hypothesis

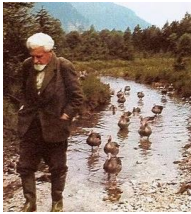
Bowlby (1953/1969)

Maternal deprivation during **critical period**

"What is believed to be essential for mental health is that the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother-substitute – one person who steadily mothers him) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment." (Bowlby, 1953)

Development of an 'internal working model' (IWM)

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Ethological Foundation

Konrad Lorenz

1935/52 – Imprinting in ducklings and goslings

'Critical period'

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Basis of Bowlby's theory

Critical period for attachment (6 months to 3 years)

Phase 1 – pre-attachment (up to 2 months)

Phase 2 – early attachment (two to seven months)

Phase 3 – attachment (seven months to 2-3 years)

Phase 4 – partnership (from 2 or 3 years)

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Research Evidence

Long-term institutional care = retardation
(e.g. Goldfarb, 1947) – social, language, cognitive

Adverse effects of long-term maternal separation
on rhesus monkeys (Harlow & Harlow, 1958, 1969)

Link to delinquency/behaviour problems
in adolescence (Allen et al, 2002)



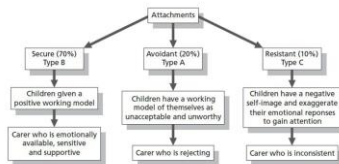
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'The Strange Situation' (Ainsworth, 1967, 1973)

1. Mother and infant in room together; infant explores room for 3 minutes.
2. Stranger enters, sits for 1 minute, talks to mum for 1 minute, and gets down on the floor to play with the infant for 1 minute.
3. Mum leaves the room, and stranger plays with infant then withdraws if possible, up to 3 minutes.
4. Mum returns and stranger leaves unobtrusively. Mum settles infant and then sits down for 3 minutes.
5. Mum leaves, and infant is alone for up to 3 minutes.
6. Stranger comes in and attempts to settle infant then withdraw if possible, up to 3 minutes.
7. Mum returns and stranger again leaves unobtrusively. Mum settles infant and sits down.

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(Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall, 1978)
(Copyright Psychology Press, 2000)

Also:

U.S. studies:

62% Secure (type B)
23% Anxious/avoidant (type A)
15% Anxious/resistant (type C)
(e.g. Campos et al, 1983)

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Attachment & Development

Secure attachment at 12 months correlated with:

Quality and sensitivity of mother-infant face-to-face interaction at 6-15 weeks
Curiosity and problem-solving at age 2
Social confidence at nursery school at age 3.5
Lack of behaviour problems (in boys) at age 6

Adolescents:

Healthy, secure attachments as children - develop intrinsic trust in others and relate warmly to them (Waters & Cummings, 2000)

No healthy attachment - often rigid and hostile interactions (Zimmerman, 1999)



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