

**Module:Psychology in Health and
Social Care**

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Introduction

- Scenario overview of Isaac, a 4-year-old attending a London Children's Centre.

Case Study Summary

- • Withdrawn during play
- • Separation distress
- • Language delay
- • Difficulty joining groups
- • Disrupted childcare
- • Maternal post-natal depression

Overview of Bowlby's Theory

- Attachment is a lasting emotional bond between a child and caregiver (Bowlby, 1969).

Key Concepts

- • Secure attachment
- • Insecure attachment
- • Internal working model
- • Secure base
- • Separation anxiety

Why Bowlby is Appropriate

- The theory helps explain Isaac's clinginess, distress during separation and difficulties with confidence and exploration.

Applying Theory: Childcare Disruption

- Frequent childcare changes may reduce attachment security and consistency.

Applying Theory: Maternal Mental Health

- Post-natal depression can affect caregiver responsiveness and emotional availability.

Applying Theory: Social and Language Development

- Limited interaction may affect communication skills, peer relationships and confidence.

Nature and Nurture

- Nature: temperament and early brain development.
- Nurture: caregiving, relationships, social experiences and transitions.

Support Strategy 1

- Attachment-based approach: assign a consistent key worker to act as a secure base.

Support Strategy 2

- Play-based learning to encourage exploration, confidence and social interaction.

Support Strategy 3

- Language-rich environment with storytelling, conversations and group activities.

Support Strategy 4

- Parental support, modelling positive interactions and strengthening home-centre relationships.

Multi-Agency Working

- Children's Centre staff, GP, Health Visitor, Speech and Language Therapist and family support services.

Emotional Regulation

- Visual timetables, predictable routines, emotional vocabulary and co-regulation strategies.

Critical Evaluation: Strengths

- Strong research base, practical relevance and influence on early years practice.

Critical Evaluation: Limitations

- Overemphasis on mothers, cultural criticisms and underestimation of wider social influences.

London Diversity Considerations

- Different family structures, cultures and migration experiences should be considered when applying attachment theory.

Conclusion

- Isaac's early experiences may influence his emotional, social and language development. Attachment-informed interventions can support positive outcomes.

References

- Berk (2018)
- Bee & Boyd (2020)
- Bowlby (1969)
- DfE (2024)
- Murray et al. (1996)
- Rutter (1981)
- Plus additional academic sources.