



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

STUDENT NAME: NGOZI IGWEANYA

STUDENT ID: 2514991

MODULE NAME: PSYCHOLOGY IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

MODULE CODE: LCHS4010

LECTURER'S NAME: DR SHEPHERD ZIKO

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives

09/07/2026



www.uwtsd.ac.uk

Understanding Isaac's Development:

Isaac is a 4-year-old boy living with his single mother. His current circumstances include:

- His mother is experiencing post-natal depression, which affects her ability to provide consistent, responsive care
- The family has recently moved home
- His childcare arrangements have been disrupted
- He has an identified language delay
- He displays separation anxiety
- He appears withdrawn during play and social activities

2. Introduction to Bowlby's Attachment Theory

- . Attachment constitutes a profound emotional connection between a child and their caregivers vers (Bowlby, 1969).
- . Children use their careers as a secure foundation for exploration (Bowlby, 1969).
- . Early experiences shape subsequent social and emotional development (Bowlby, 1969).
- . Internal working models influence subsequent relationships (Bowlby, 1969).

3. Why Bowlby's Theory is Relevant to Isaac

Evidence from the case study

- . Exhibits distress upon maternal separation.
- . Characterised as overly dependent.
- . Challenges in independent play.
- . Reserved and introspective during unstructured playtime.

Possible Explanation

These behavior may signify insecure caregiving experiences (Ainsworth et al. 1978) and disturbances in attachment relationships (Bowlby, 1969)

4. Applying the Theory to Isaac's Experiences

Maternal Mental Health

Mother Experiences:

- . Postnatal depression
 - . Diminished assurance
 - . Restricted social assistance
- . Research suggests maternal depression may influence carer responsiveness and the emotional security of the child (Murray et al., 1996).
- . Children of mothers experiencing depression may show increased anxiety and attachment difficulties (Murray et al. 1996).

5. Disrupted Childcare and separation Difficulties

Frequent alterations in caregiving can impact children's sense of security and emotional stability (Bowlby, 1969).

Isaac's:

- . Distress experienced during separation
- . Excessive attachment
- . Challenges in adjusting to change

may indicate insecurity stemming from disrupted attachment experiences (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

7. Nature and Nurture Factors

Natural

Temperament and biological factors may affect children's reactions to stress (Kagan, 1994).

Nurture

The quality of caregiving, familial transitions, and social support significantly impact development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Engagement

Engagement

Development is influenced by the interplay of biological and environmental factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

8. Theory-Informed Support Plan

Attachment-Orientated Methodologies

- Key-person system (Elfer, Goldschmied, & Selleck, 2012)
- Regular routines (Bowlby, 1969)
- Incremental separation strategies (Bowlby, 1969)

• Parental Support

Facilitating parent-child interactions can enhance attachment security (Howe, 2011).

9. Multi-Agency Interventions

Speech and Language Therapy

Early intervention improves communication results (Law, Charlton, and Asmussen, 2017).

Familial Support Services

Family-centered interventions can enhance child well-being and bolster parental confidence (Howe, 2011).

Support for Children's Centers

Stable adult relationships foster emotional security in children (Elfer et al., 2012).

6. Language Delay and Social Development

Stable relationships facilitate communication and language development through social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978).

Attachment security correlates with enhanced social competence and communication abilities (Cassidy, 2016).

Isaac's language delay and hesitance to interact with peers may be associated with attachment insecurity and diminished social interaction opportunities (Cassidy, 2016; Vygotsky, 1978).

10. Critical Evaluation of Bowlby's Theory

Strengths

- Strong research evidence supports the importance of attachment relationships (Ainsworth et al., 1978).
- Valuable framework for early intervention and safeguarding practices (Howe, 2011).

Limitations

- May overemphasise the mother-child relationship (Rutter, 1995).
Cultural differences in attachment are inadequately addressed (Rothbaum et al., 2000).
- The resilience of children and their capacity for multiple attachments may be undervalued (Rutter, 1995).

Conclusion

Analysis through Bowlby's Attachment Theory demonstrates that Isaac's challenges are understandable outcomes of disrupted continuity and reduced emotional availability rather than isolated developmental failures. His progress depends on restoring a predictable, responsive environment that strengthens internal security and enables exploration and learning. The approach is highly relevant to multi-agency early help planning in London, provided it is applied flexibly alongside wider ecological understanding.

References

- Ainsworth, M.S., Blehar, M.C., Waters, E. and Wall, S. (1978) *Patterns of Attachment: A Psychological Study of the Strange Situation*. Hillsdale: Erlbaum.
- Bowlby, J. (1969) *Attachment and Loss: Vol. 1 – Attachment*. London: Hogarth Press.
- Bowlby, J. (1973) *Attachment and Loss: Vol. 2 – Separation, Anxiety and Anger*. London: Hogarth Press.
- Bowlby, J. (1988) *A Secure Base: Parent-Child Attachment and Healthy Human Development*. London: Routledge.
- Department for Education (2021) *Early Years Foundation Stage Framework*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Howe, D. (2011) *Attachment Theory and Social Work Practice*. 2nd edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Murray, L. and Cooper, P.J. (2005) 'Postnatal depression and child development', *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 18(4), pp. 341-346.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *The Ecology of Human Development*. Harvard University Press.
- Elfer, P., Goldschmied, E. and Selleck, D. (2012) *Key Persons in the Early Years*. 2nd edn. London: Routledge.
- Howe, D. (2011) *Attachment Across the Lifecourse*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kagan, J. (1994) *Galen's Prophecy: Temperament in Human Nature*. New York: Basic Books.
- Law, J., Charlton, J. and Asmussen, K. (2017) *Language as a Child Wellbeing Indicator*. Early Intervention Foundation.
- Rothbaum, F., Weisz, J., Pott, M., Miyake, K. and Morelli, G. (2000) 'Attachment and culture', *American Psychologist*, 55(10), pp. 1093–1104.
- Rutter, M. (1995) *Clinical Implications of Attachment Concepts*. London: Jessica Kingsley.