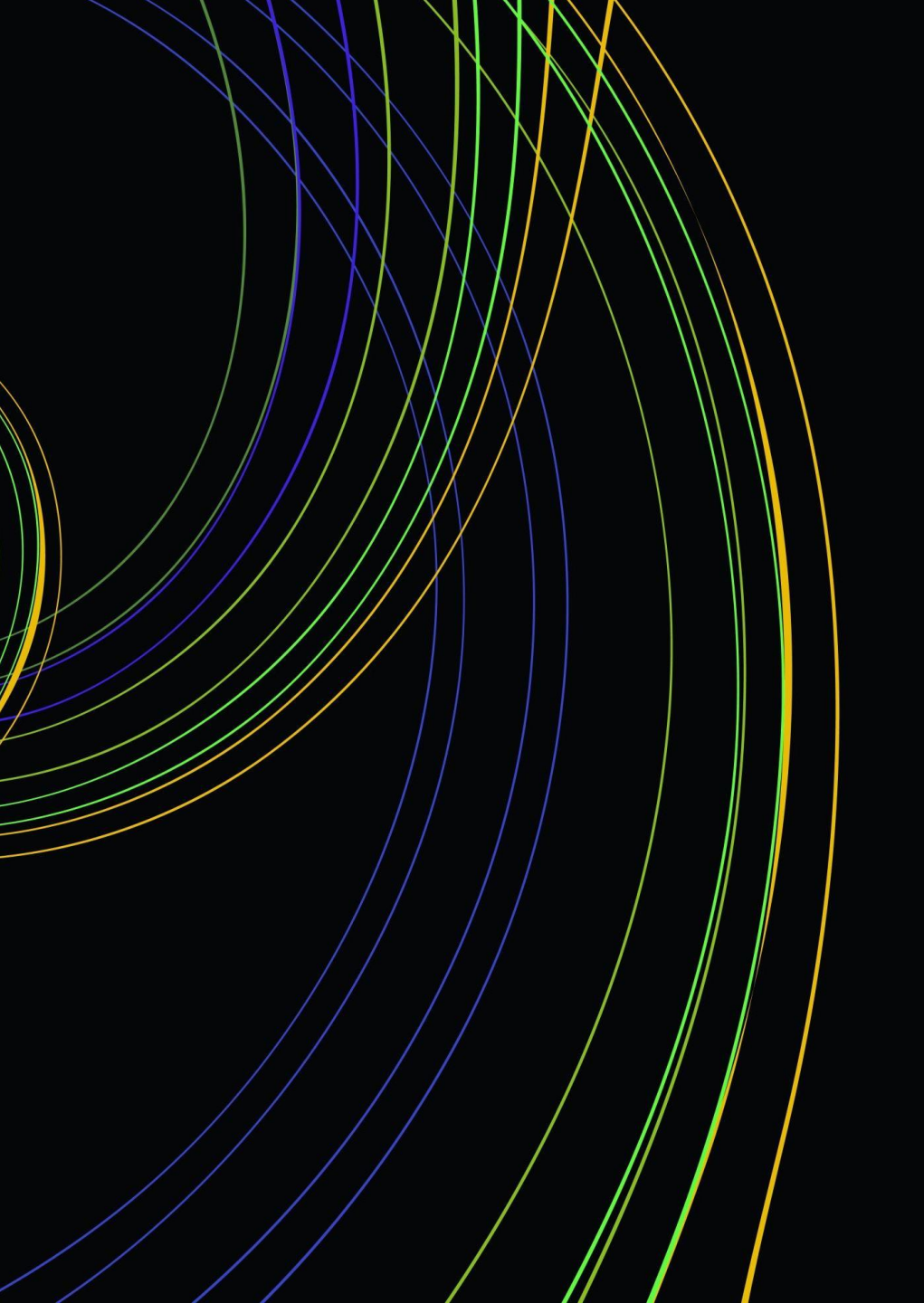




LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION APPLYING BOWLBY'S ATTACHMENT THEORY TO ISAAC'S DEVELOPMENT

Assessment Component 1: Lifespan Development

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INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE

- Isaac is a four-year-old boy attending a Children's Centre in London. Staff have observed that he is withdrawn during play, becomes distressed when separated from his mother, struggles to participate in group activities and shows delays in language development.
 - His mother is a single parent experiencing post-natal depression, low confidence and limited social support. The family has recently relocated and Isaac has experienced disrupted childcare arrangements.
 - This presentation will examine Isaac's development through Bowlby's Attachment Theory and propose practical interventions informed by psychological evidence.
 - *(Bowlby, 1969)*
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BOWLBY'S ATTACHMENT THEORY

- John Bowlby argued that children are biologically programmed to form close emotional attachments with their primary caregiver because attachment promotes survival.
 - Key concepts include:
 - Attachment as an innate behaviour
 - Secure base for exploration
 - Internal Working Model
 - Sensitive period (birth to approximately 2.5 years)
 - Effects of separation and deprivation
 - According to Bowlby, responsive caregiving leads to secure attachment, whereas inconsistent or disrupted caregiving may result in insecure attachment patterns.
 - (Bowlby, 1969)
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WHY BOWLBY'S THEORY FITS ISAAC

- Bowlby's theory helps explain Isaac's behaviour because attachment relationships influence emotional regulation, confidence and social development.
 - Isaac demonstrates several characteristics associated with insecure attachment:
 - Separation anxiety
 - Clinginess
 - Withdrawal from peers
 - Reduced confidence exploring independently
 - Difficulty engaging socially
 - Disrupted childcare and maternal depression may have affected the consistency of caregiving, increasing emotional insecurity.
 - (Ainsworth et al., 1978)
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APPLYING THE THEORY TO ISAAC'S EXPERIENCES

- Isaac's disrupted childcare may have prevented stable attachment relationships developing.
 - Maternal post-natal depression may reduce sensitive responsiveness, making emotional attunement more difficult.
 - Limited social interaction may reduce opportunities for language learning and peer relationships.
 - These experiences may contribute to:
 - Emotional insecurity
 - Delayed communication skills
 - Poor social confidence
 - Anxiety during transitions
 - Reduced independence
 - Attachment security influences later emotional wellbeing and social competence.
 - (Murray et al., 2010)
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NATURE AND NURTURE

- Isaac's development reflects an interaction between biological and environmental influences.
- Nature
- Individual temperament
- Brain development
- Genetic vulnerability to anxiety
- Nurture
- Maternal mental health
- Quality of caregiving
- Childcare disruption
- Limited peer interaction
- Family stress following relocation
- Development occurs through interaction between biology and experience rather than either factor alone.
- (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006)

SUPPORT PLAN

- Using Bowlby's theory, the Children's Centre could implement:
 - • Key-person approach to develop secure relationships
 - • Consistent daily routines to increase predictability
 - • Attachment-based play activities encouraging trust and interaction
 - • Language-rich storytelling and conversation sessions
 - • Parent-child play sessions to strengthen attachment
 - • Referral for maternal mental health support
 - • Speech and language therapy assessment
 - • Multi-agency working involving health visitors, SENCO and family support workers
 - These interventions strengthen attachment security while promoting communication and emotional development.
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CRITICAL EVALUATION OF BOWLBY'S THEORY

- Strengths
 - Strong evidence linking attachment and emotional development
 - Widely applied within early years practice
 - Supports interventions promoting secure caregiver relationships
 - Limitations
 - May overemphasise the mother's role
 - Less attention to fathers and multiple caregivers
 - Cultural differences exist in attachment practices
 - Children's resilience varies despite early adversity
 - In London's diverse communities, attachment should be understood within different family structures and cultural caregiving practices.
 - (van IJzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz, 2008)
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CONCLUSION

- Bowlby's Attachment Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding Isaac's emotional and social difficulties.
 - Early disrupted relationships and maternal depression may contribute to insecure attachment and developmental delay.
 - Early intervention through supportive relationships, family support and multi-agency working can improve emotional security, communication skills and long-term wellbeing.
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