

Children's
Workforce (Early
Years Educator)
Level 3

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Polite reminder

- Please keep yourself muted unless you are participating, then unmute yourself



Unit 9 Support attachment when working with children in early years settings

4000 word essay

For this assignment you need to:

- 1 Understand the theories of attachment
 - 1.1 Explain the theories and research on attachment
 - 1.2 Explain the styles and stages of attachment
 - 1.3 Analyse the potential problems associated with attachment

2 Understand the significance of attachment on child development

- 2.1 Analyse the significance of attachment on children's development
- 2.2 Analyse the impact of attachment on the role of the Early Years Educator
- 2.3 Explain approaches available to promote attachment within early years education

3 Be able to plan and promote attachment within an early years setting

- 3.1 Plan activities and settling in programmes for children which support attachment
- 3.2 Implement activities and settling in programmes which support attachment – **Carry out your activity**
- 3.3 Reflect on the effectiveness of planned strategies to promote attachment and make recommendations – **Evaluate your activity**



1.1 Explain the theories and research on attachment

Background

John Bowlby observed orphaned infants after World War II (1940s)

- Concluded that early social attachment between an infant and a caretaker is essential for normal social development
- Determined that babies and mothers have an innate tendency to form an attachment

Mary Ainsworth continued Bowlby's research

- Proposed that infants' attachment to a caregiver differs in the degree of security in the attachment
- Differences in security of attachment influence personality and social relationships in infancy and beyond

Attachment Theory

- Infants need a “secure base” (i.e. are able to trust) their primary caregiver
 - A Secure Attachment leads to subsequent healthy development
 - An Insecure Attachment leads to unhealthy development
- Attachment style affects relationships throughout life



Attachment Theory

Secure base: A responsive caregiver provides security to explore the environment

- If the caregiver's responses to the child's needs are appropriate, then the child will feel confident to explore a strange environment, occasionally returning to the caregiver for confirmation
- If the caregiver's responses to the child are inappropriate, the child becomes insecure and are less likely to use the caregiver as a base for exploring a strange environment

Caregiver

- Typically the infant's mother
- May include others who respond to an infant's needs

Methodology

Strange Situation: Experimental task for infants

- Infant, parent, and experimenter go into a laboratory room
- Eight episodes of about three minutes apiece are used to determine the security of the infant's attachment to the parent

Secure Attachment: Explore environment with parent

- distressed when parent leaves, delighted when parent returns

Insecure Attachment

Resistant: Clings to parent, cries when the parent leaves, angry when returns

Avoidant: Not care if mother leaves and ignores the parent upon return



Strange Situation

	Event	Attachment Issue
1	Parent and baby enter playroom.	
2	Parent sits quietly while baby plays.	Parent as secure base for exploration
3	Stranger enters and talks with parent.	Baby's response to new adult
4	Parent leaves the room. Baby is alone with the stranger.	Baby's response to separation
5	Parent returns. Stranger leaves.	Baby's response to reunion
6	Parent leaves. Baby alone in the room.	Baby's response to separation
7	Stranger enters and offers comfort.	Baby's ability to accept comfort from a stranger
8	Parent returns and offers comfort if needed and tries to get the baby to play.	Baby's response to reunion

Why is attachment important?

- Helps with psychological development
- Better health development
- Feel wanted and loved
- Provides a sense of security

1. 2 Explain the Styles and Stages of Attachment





Watch the video

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Polylv5GPUc>

1.2

The Attachment Styles

Secure

1. Can trust fairly easily
2. Is attuned to emotions
3. Can communicate upsets directly
4. Leads with cooperative and flexible behavior in relationships



Anxious

1. Has a sensitive nervous system
2. Struggles communicating needs directly
3. Tends to "act out" when triggered (i.e. makes partner jealous)

Avoidant - Dismissive

1. Downplays importance of relationships
2. Is usually extremely self-reliant
3. Can become more vulnerable when there is a big crisis



Avoidant - Fearful

1. More dependent in relationships than avoidant dismissive
2. Strongly fears rejection
3. Has low self-esteem
4. Has high anxiety in relationships

Attachment Styles

Securely Attached: Belief that the caregiver will protect and provide for them

- Explores the environment with the parent
- Might protest separation from parent but smiles more often when the parent is present
- Shows pleasure at reunion with parent
- 65% of middle-class American infants

Insecure-Avoidant: Belief that the caregiver will not protect or provide. The caregiver is not a safe haven in stressful circumstances

- Does not protest at parent's departure
- Responds the same to the stranger and the parent, or more positively to the stranger
- Avoid parent upon return
- 20% of middle-class American infants

Attachment Styles

Insecure-Resistant: Uncertainty about whether the parent will protect or provide safety in stressful circumstances

- Remain close to parent. Refuse to explore the new environment
- Distressed at separation of parent
- Mixture of approach and avoidance when reunited
- 10% of middle-class American infants

Disorganized or Disoriented: No consistent way of dealing with the stress

- Exhibits contradictory behavior at the strange situation
- Typical attachment style when the infant is abused or neglected
- Less than 5% of middle-class American infants



1.3 Potential Problems Associated with Attachment

The Attachment Theory: How Childhood Affects Life

- <https://youtu.be/WjOowWxOXCg>

Potential Problems Associated with Attachment

Attachment depends on:

1. Caregiver's sensitivity to the infant's needs

- Children are less likely to develop a secure attachment if they are raised in an orphanage
- Parents living in poverty tend to provide less sensitive environments
- Sensitivity to infants can be taught to mothers, that then leads to a higher probability of secure attachment (Van den Boom, 1994)

2. Family stress

- Infants exposed to verbally aggressive fighting among their parents form more insecure attachments

Potential Problems Associated with Attachment

Attachment depends on:

- *Parental psychopathology: Depressed mothers tend to have lower quality interactions with their infants*
- *Infant's temperament: If an infant is irritable and the mother has no social support, then the child is more likely to develop an insecure attachment*

Potential Problems Associated with Attachment


- Attachment Theory predicts that the quality of the attachment predicts subsequent development
- An infant's attachment style to a caregiver predicts:
 1. Effective social functioning during childhood and adolescence
 2. Sociability through early, middle, and late adulthood
 3. Self-esteem
 4. School grades
 5. Teenage sexual activity
 6. Quality of attachment to their own children
 7. Attitudes toward their own children

Potential Problems Associated with Attachment

Disinhibited Social Engagement Disorder

A classic sign of disinhibited social engagement disorder (DSED) is overfriendliness with strangers. A child may seek comfort from a stranger, sit on a stranger's lap, and not exhibit any distress when a caregiver isn't present.

Children with DSED also show little interest or desire to check in with trusted adults before leaving a safe place and entering a situation that is strange or even threatening. Kids with this condition show little preference for trusted adults over strangers and may seek out affection from people they do not know.



Potential Problems Associated with Attachment

Reactive Attachment Disorder

- *Reactive attachment disorder is a disorder of infancy or early childhood that involves a failure to seek comfort from a caregiver. A child with reactive attachment may resist physical comfort from a caregiver, avoid eye contact, and be hypervigilant.*
- *Most children with reactive attachment disorder display a variety of behaviors.*
- *Such behaviors can include irritability, withdrawal, lack of comfort-seeking, not interacting with other children, and avoiding physical touch.*

Symptoms of Attachment Disorder

infants may have attachment issues if they:

Avoid eye contact.

Don't smile.

Don't reach out to be picked up.

Reject your efforts to calm, soothe, and connect with them.

Don't seem to notice or care when you leave them alone.

Cry inconsolably.

Don't coo or make sounds.

Don't follow you with their eyes.

Aren't interested in playing interactive games or playing with toys.

Spend a lot of time rocking or comforting themselves.

Symptoms of Attachment Disorder

Signs that a child may have an attachment disorder include:

Bullying or hurting others

Extreme clinginess

Failure to smile

Intense bursts of anger

Lack of eye contact

Lack of fear of strangers

Lack of affection for caregivers

Oppositional behaviours

Poor impulse control

Self-destructive behaviours

Watching others play but refusing to join in

Withdrawn or listless moods

1.3



RAD – Watch this clip

- <https://www.counselling-directory.org.uk/attachment-disorder-children.html#whatisattachmentdisorder>

Can you now:

- 1.1 Explain the theories and research on attachment
- 1.2 Explain the styles and stages of attachment
- 1.3 Analyse the potential problems associated with attachment



2 Understand the significance of attachment on child development

- 2.1 Analyse the significance of attachment on children's development
- 2.2 Analyse the impact of attachment on the role of the Early Years Educator
- 2.3 Explain approaches available to promote attachment within early years education

3 Be able to plan and promote attachment within an early years setting

- 3.1 Plan activities and settling in programmes for children which support attachment **Completed on activity planner**
- 3.2 Implement activities and settling in programmes which support attachment – **Carry out your activity**
- 3.3 Reflect on the effectiveness of planned strategies to promote attachment and make recommendations – **Evaluate your activity**

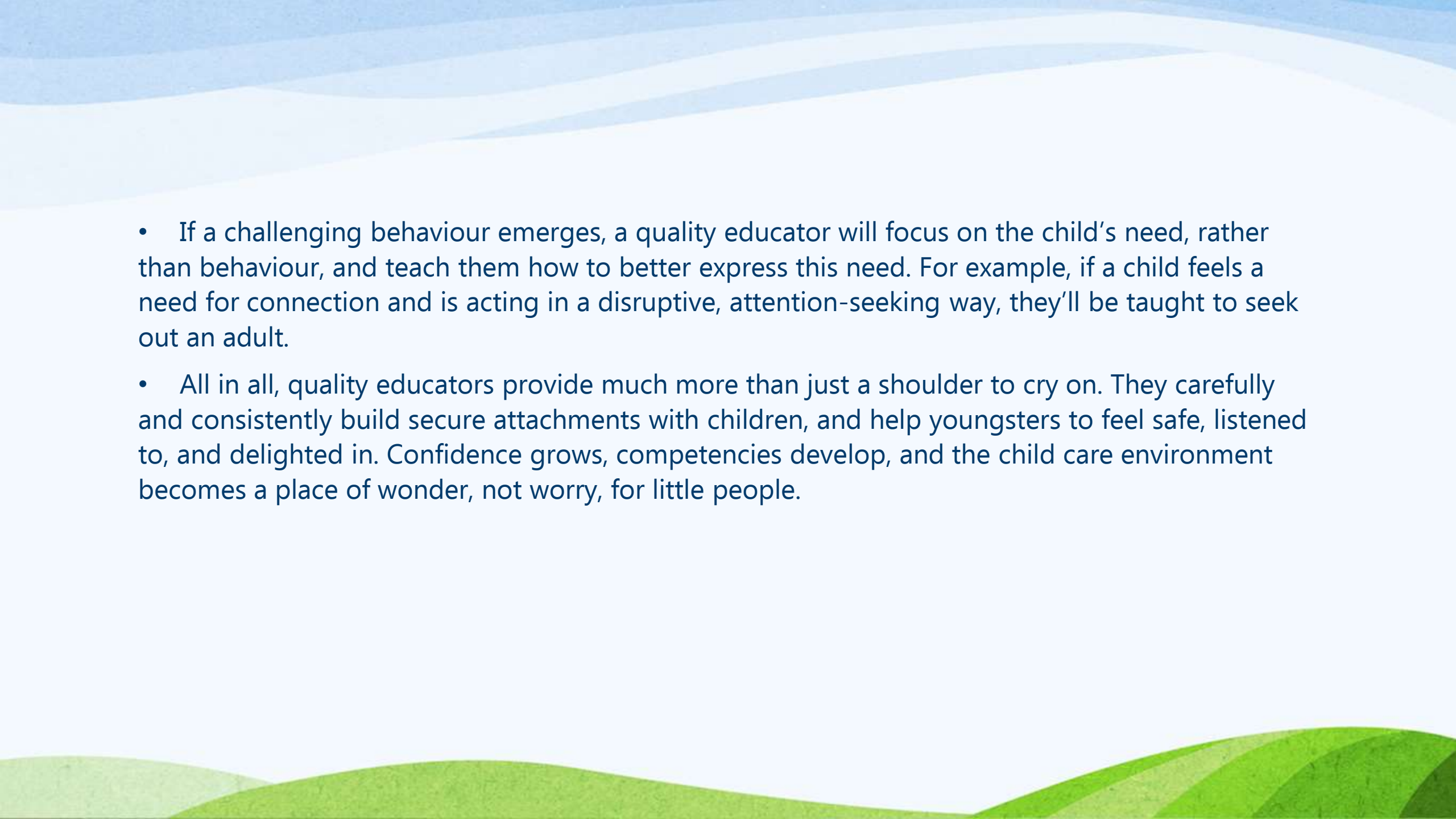
2.1 Analyze the impact of attachment on the role of the Early Years Educator

In the early years setting, educators build and shape relationships with the children in their care by taking responsibility for improving relationships and encouraging positive interactions.

- They help children to develop a sense of self and of others by providing warm and caring interactions that support each child's sense of self-worth, self-esteem, and confidence.
- They support under fives' cognitive development by offering children interactions that help to 'wire' their brains and promote lifelong learning.
- Educators also make children feel safe and secure, so they can focus their time and energy on play, exploration, and learning, instead of negative feelings, like fear or stress.

- Educators tailor their interactions to suit individual children, reading and responding to their signals, and being 'emotionally available'. This means they're sensitive and responsive to children's needs and help children to make sense of their emotions and cope with life's challenges.
- They partner with children's families to learn about each child and support the development of secure attachments. For example, an educator might mirror home routines around soothing or feeding, so that new experiences feel familiar to a young child.
- Educators model regulated behaviours that help children learn what's expected of them, and they respond in a calm, consistent, predictable, and supportive way in different situations.



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- If a challenging behaviour emerges, a quality educator will focus on the child's need, rather than behaviour, and teach them how to better express this need. For example, if a child feels a need for connection and is acting in a disruptive, attention-seeking way, they'll be taught to seek out an adult.
 - All in all, quality educators provide much more than just a shoulder to cry on. They carefully and consistently build secure attachments with children, and help youngsters to feel safe, listened to, and delighted in. Confidence grows, competencies develop, and the child care environment becomes a place of wonder, not worry, for little people.

Analyze the impact of attachment on the role of the Early Years Educator

10 pointers for healthy settling

1. children confidently leave their main carer over time
2. children feel secure and safe in their play
3. home-provision links support transition and separation, including links made prior to the child starting and settling
4. a phased-in, gentle and child centred settling approach meets the individual child's needs
5. parents and main carers feel confident to leave their children and are supported in the separation
6. children are supported and understood in their emotions as they express them
7. children are comforted and have their needs met if or when they cry
8. children are listened to when they express sadness or any emotion
9. children are listened to if they want to go home or see their main carer
10. children have a named and present key person who supports them and meets their individual needs

2.2 Analyse the impact of attachment on the role of the Early Years Educator



- **The key person helps the child to feel known, understood, cared about, and safe.** The key person helps the baby or child feel confident that they are “held in mind”, thought about and loved. This experience of being cared for by reliable adults who meet their physical needs and remain attentive and playful, affectionate and thoughtful allows children to form secure attachments. Such a grounding provides a “secure base” from which children feel confident to explore the world and form other relationships.
- **The key person role involves a “triangle of trust” with the child and family.** A key person approach is a way to ensure that all children and families have one or more persons within the setting with whom they have a special, nurturing relationship. The presence of a key person helps the child to feel emotionally secure when away from home and provides a reassuring point of contact for parents. There are different ways to ensure a key person is always available (e.g. shared and paired caring, or support partner or buddy)

Strategies and techniques

- Early childhood educators are consistently learning and creating opportunities to build healthy attachments with the children in their care and [supporting families](#) in their own attachment with their children. The educator's role is to create connections between the home environment, community and childcare setting.
- Educators can use many strategies to create healthy attachments in the classroom, which includes:
- Being consistent, responsive, understanding the needs and signals (e.g. if they are tired or hungry) of the children in their care.
- Encouraging positive behaviors and [play](#).

- Secure attachment promotes self-regulation, empathy, prosocial behavior and a positive sense of [emotional well-being](#) and self-esteem. When children don't have secure attachments they spend less time exploring and playing in their environment because the adult they rely on is not present.
- **Remember to:**
- *Be sensitive and empathic:* Children need your consistent responsiveness and warmth, especially during the early years. By responding and being sensitive to their signals (e.g. their cries) will help the child trust you to meet their needs.
- *Respond calmly:* Model good behavior and control your own emotions and behaviors. Children learn from us and how we interact with them.
- *Be involved:* It is important to interact, be present and positively engaged with your child. For example, sing to them, read to them, and smile at them.
- *Be nurturing:* Show positive behavior through body language (e.g. eye contact, touch, facial expressions and laugh) when you interact with your child. Show them that you are interested in them to help develop their sense of attachment and security.

- **The educator's role**
- As an educator, you can support a family's child attachment by helping them recognize they are the most important person to their child, encouraging them to understand the different signals children send and how to respond appropriately, and show parents how to get involved in their children's play to build that connection with their child.
- Creating an environment that builds trust, promotes positive behaviors and builds a connection between the child and adult, are key parts to creating a healthy relationship with children. When adults build a relationship with children, this promotes healthy attachments during the early years.

2.3 Explain approaches available to promote attachment within early years education

- As attachment theory in early childhood education is considered critical in a child's development, its principles can be applied to great effect in a daycare setting.
- One of the best techniques to use in relation to the principles and concepts of attachment theory is the practice known as emotion coaching.
- Emotion coaching focuses on helping children to develop an awareness of their emotions and helping them to manage feelings especially when "misbehaving" A skilled emotion coach is able to create an atmosphere of positive learning while having the confidence to defuse volatile emotional situations when misbehavior can present challenges.
- Emotion coaching is not so much about traditional coaching, rather it involves supporting children to learn about and regulate their behaviour and emotions. The concepts of rewarding good behaviour and punishing bad behaviour are not part of the emotional coaching model.
- Emotion coaching entails
 - Teaching children about "in the moment" emotions
 - Sharing ways to deal with emotional highs and lows;
 - While never accepting negative behaviour being able to empathise with and accept negative and unpleasant emotions as natural responses to situations.
 - Recognising challenging behavior as an opportunity to teach acceptable behaviour responses.
 - Building trust and respect with children.

2.3 Explain approaches available to promote attachment within early years education



- Adult can put into place when working with children. The five steps are:
- Tune in: Take note of not only the child's emotions but your own as well. It is important that you ensure that you are in a calm space before engaging with the child. If you aren't calm, take five minutes to get back to your equilibrium.
- Connect: See the situation as a chance for you to hone your coaching skills, and an opportunity for the child to learn. It is important that you objectively state what emotions you believe that the child is going through. This practice will help them to connect their emotions to their behavior;
- Accept and Listen: Take time to put yourself in the child's shoes. Try to relate the current situation to one that you may have experienced in your own life.
- Reflect: After the initial discussion, review what the child said or did, stating only what you witnessed and understand about the situation. Carefully think about what happened and why.
- Conclude with Problem Solving/Choices/Setting Limits: If at all possible, it is good to end the coaching session by helping the child to problem-solve and discuss the appropriateness of various choices.

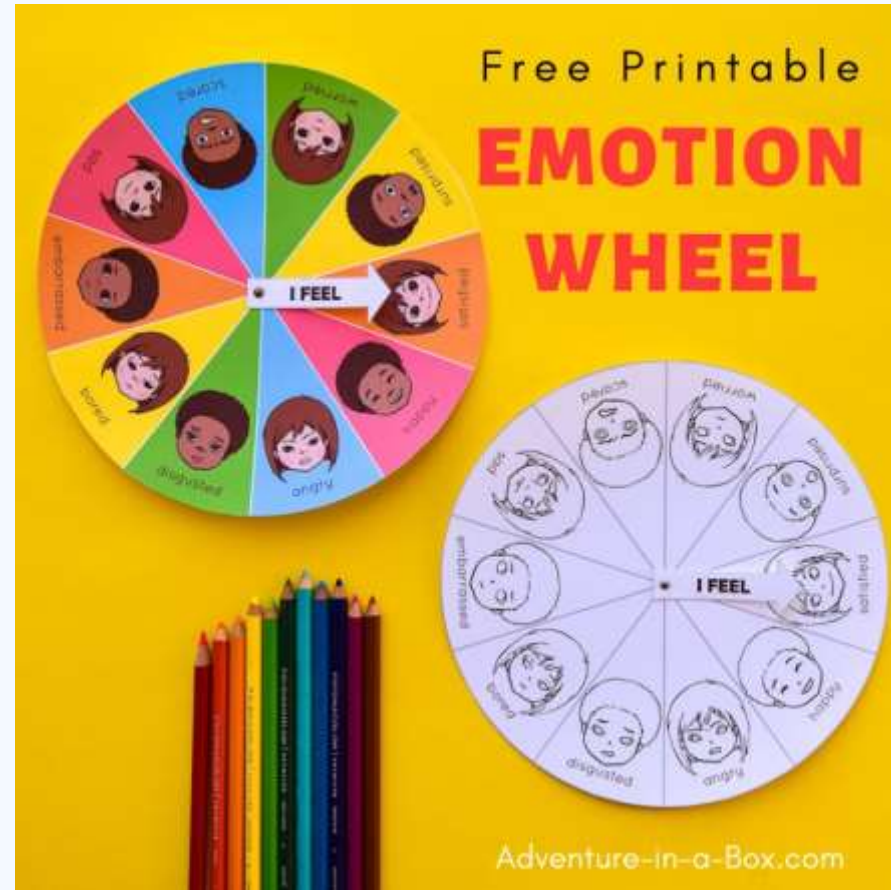
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3.1 Activity Ideas

- Me and my family – drawing on paper – who lives with me
- Show and tell
- Bring a teddy from home
- Welcome boards
- Finger family on a cut out palm
- Story time
- Feeling wheel
- Play Dough – favourite colours

This can be used to discuss emotions



Question Time

