

## Attachment questions

**What does a baby or young child do that elicits a caregiving response from an adult**

**In a baby:** crying, clinging, sucking/feeding, smiling, babbling

**In a toddler:** calling, greeting, following, playing, exploring and returning

**What is required from the care giver or environment to enable secure attachment?**

A loving warm relationship with a caregiver who is predictable and attuned to the individual child.

Stimulating interactions and environment

Physical contact and soothing

Attentiveness (looking, touching, playing etc)

Recognising and giving meaning to the baby's communication and finding the right pitch, tone and moment to respond whether with words, sounds or movement

Verbal stimulation

**What factors might impede the development of secure attachments?**

**Within the child:** being premature, chronic illness, disability, irritability, difficult birth, incompatibility with parent

**Within the parent or family:** mental health problems, physical health problems, disability, history of poor parenting, family structure, family dynamics, loss, separations, abuse, neglect, stress, incompatibility with child

**Within the environment:** poverty and deprivation, social exclusion, persecution, disaster

Potentially problematic experiences are often successfully overcome by children and their families and secure attachments can develop. Factors such as these, however, make the development of secure attachments more difficult and increase the risk to the infant.