

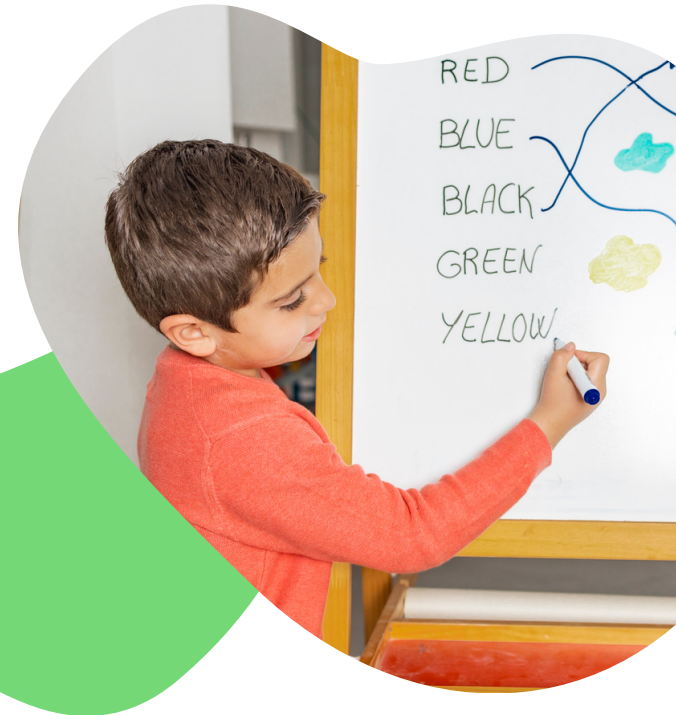


Attachment

Child Attachment can be defined as the bond a child has with its primary care givers but will also affect other relationships. It typically forms in very early childhood, however attachment styles can change and develop with the right support.

What you will learn in this brochure:

- 1 The different types of attachment styles
- 2 Signs of different attachment styles in school environments
- 3 And tips on how to support children in school environments with varying attachment styles



What are the four attachments:

Secure Attachment

Insecure- Anxious Attachment

Insecure- Avoidant Attachment

Disorganised-Disorientated Attachment



Types of attachment

Secure Attachment

This attachment style is developed when a child is given ample opportunity to develop a secure & safe relationship with it's caregivers, where they feel comforted & responded to especially in times of stress or heightened emotions. They trust easily, are resilient, self-sufficient and often have a positive view of themselves & others. These children often find it easy to ask for help and communicate their emotions.

In a school environment this child will typically be resilient, understand feedback, communicate well and be confident in themselves. They also are more likely to have high self-esteem, bounce back from setbacks, find relationships easy to manage and often do not cause disruptive behaviour in classrooms.

3 tips to support a securely attached child in school:

- 1 Offer encouragement & validation to continue a healthy growth of self esteem
- 2 Give constructive feedback to improve as this child can often be resilient to helpful feedback
- 3 Pair this child up with anxious or avoidant children in activities to role model behaviour (particularly new starters), this also provides accreditation to the secure child to feel a sense of pride & achievement.

Insecure- Anxious Attachment

This attachment style is developed when a child receives inconsistent support or disruption to their lives due to the care giver being absent or not present. This child will present as less mature, overly dependent on care givers and experience higher levels of distress when separate from care givers.

In a school environment this child will appear anxious, reserved, emotional, overly attached to someone in the school and present as shy. They may appear hypervigilant, very sensitive to feedback, difficulty controlling negative outbursts and have low self esteem.

3 tips to support a insecure-anxiously attached child in school:

- 1 Support the child in seeing their strengths through praise and validation
- 2 Offer space for the child to express their emotions and support them to understand their emotional experience, create opportunities to build a trusting relationship with shy or isolated students to come out of their shell and build confidence
- 3 Be sensitive with giving feedback, focus on positive reinforcement to support them in building resilience to negative feedback

Disorganised- Disorientated Attachment

This attachment style is developed when a child's home life is invalidating, stressful, disruptive & abusive. These children will feel unable to express & understand their emotions with care givers but also other authoritative figures in their lives. They can be highly reactive, have a very poor regard for themselves, become easily aggressive, lack trust in all relationships and often have a lack of empathy towards themselves & others.

In a school environment this child will likely present as disruptive and aggressive. They may be highly reactive, struggle focusing and be unable to maintain relationships. They can frequently swear and distrust teachers & other students. They will struggle completing any schoolwork and be highly sensitive to criticism as it may often feel like an attack. These children will also struggle making friends and have a very negative view of themselves & others.



3 tips to support a disorganised- disorientated attached child in school:

- 1 Remain resilient to negative outbursts and negative feedback from the child as they are likely trying to push you away
- 2 Be consistent in showing up for the child with reliable times to talk to the child so that you can create continuity with the child as they likely do not get this in their home life
- 3 Always remember that despite their negative outbursts deep down they crave safety, intimacy and love

Insecure- Avoidant Attachment

This attachment style is developed when a caregiver is unable to be present or understand a child's emotional experiences. These children are often dismissed, mocked or rejected when emotional. This makes the child develop hyper independence and self-regulation as a way to help themselves process and understand their emotions. This makes the child less open and vocal with their needs for fear of being dismissed.

In a school environment this child will be outwardly confident and socialable. They often have a high regard for themselves, but think negatively of others. They may be emotionally reactive when falling out with friends or speaking back to teachers out of frustration for not being understood or heard.

3 tips to support an insecure-avoidant attached child in school:

- 1 When a child is acting out offer space for them to express their feelings and validate their experience and offer healthy feedback
- 2 When you notice this type of child retreat or isolate offer space & encouragement for them to express their emotions, thoughts & feelings
- 3 Role model behaviour to support the child in feeling safe to communicate their needs and manage friendships