

Attachment system on = Exploration off
 Attachment system off = Exploration on

Attachment Guide

	Parental Characteristic	Child Character	Peer Relations	Teacher Tendencies	Separation Reuniting
Avoidant 25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlling Emotionally unavailable Punitive Rejecting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explores independent of caregiver Appears independent Little emotional sharing No avoidance of strangers Poor eye contact Touch Playfulness Presence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bully internal working model Can also be victim at times Lacks empathy Independent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlling Angry Punitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readily separates to explore Active avoidance upon return (move, turn away, ignore)
Ambivalent 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently available Preoccupied with self Intrusive to child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty of exploration Wary of novelty Passive Clingy, needy, helpless Angry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victim internal working model Passive, helpless Dependent Can provoke others to be aggressive Inept social skills Wants friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excuses Indulgent, then can become annoyed and punitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty separating to explore Difficulty settling in reunion Mixes angry behaviors with comforting behaviors
Secure 50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotionally available Attuned to upset Secure base for exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readily comforted when distressed Friendly to strangers in mother's presence Seeks adult when distressed Returns to exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are positive and productive Mental model of relationships Consistent, warm and respectful Not vulnerable to bad situations Stands up for self-assertiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoys Firm and fair Wishes they had twenty of them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separates with distress at times, quickly recovers Seeks contact and interaction upon reunion



Relationship Dynamics

All research indicates bully-victim relationships occur between anxious attachments in one form or another.

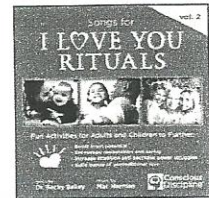
	Secure	Avoidant	Ambivalent
Secure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plays well, solves conflict well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assertive, uses BIG voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helpful and scaffolds social skills, encouraging
Avoidance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bully or victim, can take either role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bully-victim dynamic
Ambivalent			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not play well Lacking skills (aggressive) Seeks partners who control or scaffold

Song: "I Like to Be With You" from *Songs for I Love You Rituals Vol. 2*

Healing the hurt: Changing the internal working model

School culture: The power of groups is extraordinary. Groups can enlarge the human potential for learning and kindness. (AA, Weight Watchers, office morale.) Groups can also bring out the worst in people, providing cover for manipulation, violence and terror. Groups influence what people believe about others, the world at large and even themselves.

Education is group work: School climate is essential in bully-proofing schools.

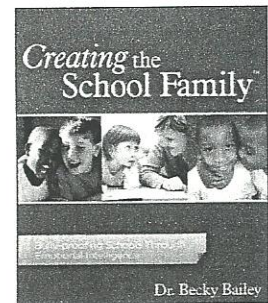
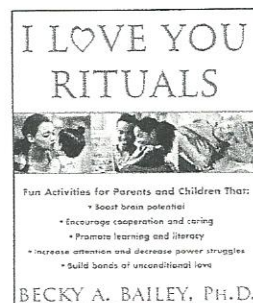


Creating the School Family™: Inclusive, cooperative, compassionate classroom with self-regulated, responsive teachers. Utilizes emotionally intelligent classroom structures that provide children the opportunity to experience and practice:

- Empathy
- Compassion
- Kindness
- Helpfulness
- *We Care Center*
- *Classroom Jobs*
- *Kindness Tree*
- Inclusion/connection
- Diversity
- Conflict resolution
- Healthy relationships
- *Safety Job Description*
- *Safe Place*
- *Friends and Family*
- Self-efficacy
- Autonomy
- Self-control/regulation
- Goal achievement
- *Visual Routines*
- *Celebration Center*
- *I Love You Rituals*

Relationship Repair Program

1. Notice: Add verbal language to nonverbal actions.
 - Your face is tight and your arms are going like this. Your body is telling me you might be feeling angry.
 - You are patting Jose's back to help him calm down. That lets him know you care.
 - You couldn't find a marker, so you looked around the room and found one in the art area.
 - You were walking through the room and bumped Natalie on the arm. It was an accident.
2. "I See" Song
 - I see Maria.
 - Hello Maria.
 - Her hands are going like this.
3. I Love You Rituals: One-on-one interaction.
 - Purpose: Build or repair bond
 - Time: Three times a day
 - Name: Our time together
 - Place: Same place daily
 - Length: Until child anticipates delight
 - Progress: 4-6 weeks



me. I ultimately came to understand that a personal and an industry-wide upgrade were needed. *Baby Doll Circle Time* is this upgrade. It increases the quality and quantity of one-on-one interactions between caregivers and children, regardless of ratio, group size or other challenges.



Attachment

Attachment figures are the secure base we return to when life seems to be unraveling in front of us. Pause now and reflect: Who is the person you seek out during times of distress? Who is the secure base offering a sense of safety? Think about the relief and the comfort that person provides for you.

Adult Attachment

Whether you know it or not, the attachment created when you were a baby continues to impact your adult relationships. Research supports this statement, and once you understand the science of attachment in young children, you will gain insights into your current and past relationships. The same information that helps you with children at school also helps you create better adult relationships at home.

Research shows there are four attachment styles: secure, anxious, avoidant and disorganized. Disorganized attachment reflects a history of abuse, neglect or severe loss. Disorganized adults show many antisocial behaviors such as lack of empathy and remorse. They are selfish, controlling, lack responsibility and disregard rules. They are at high risk for substance abuse, abusing their own children and other forms of criminality. Because of the extreme nature of disorganized attachment, we will focus on secure, anxious and avoidant styles in *Baby Doll Circle Time*.

What is your attachment style? Which of the following statements best represents your adult style of relating to your intimate partner?

Anxious

- I find others reluctant to get as close as I would like.
- I often worry that my partner will stop loving me.
- When my partner is away, I feel afraid he or she will become interested in someone else.
- Abandonment is a big issue for me.
- I tend to lose my identity in relationships and become the person I think my partner wants me to be.

Avoidant

- I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others.
- I find it difficult to trust and depend on my significant others.
- My partner often wants me to be more open and close than I feel comfortable with.
- Becoming enmeshed is a big issue for me.
- It is extremely important that I maintain my own identity in a relationship and I will do that at all cost, even if it means the relationship ends.

Secure

- I find it relatively easy to get close to others, and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me.
- I don't often worry about being abandoned or someone getting too close to me.
- In relationships, our closeness supports me in becoming the best "me" possible.

The goal in healthy adult relationships is to balance the need to be an independent self (the sense of "I") with the need to be connected (a sense of "we"). Secure people feel comfortable with both being an independent self and being close to a significant other. Anxious people crave intimacy, are often preoccupied with their relationship and tend to worry about their partner's ability to love them back. This anxiety overwhelms their ability to be an independent self. They sacrifice their "I" for the "we" they crave. Avoidant people equate intimacy with loss of independence and constantly try to minimize closeness. They sacrifice their "we" to maintain their "I." Research indicates that about 50% of adults have a secure style, around 20% are anxious and 25% are avoidant. The remaining 5% are a combination of anxious/avoidant or disorganized.

Our attachment history will unconsciously impact our current relationships unless we consciously choose to upgrade our skill set. Conscious Discipline seeks to make our unconscious beliefs and behaviors conscious. As we become more mindful of our automatic tendencies, we have the awareness necessary for change. *Baby Doll Circle Time* is both a program for repairing existing adult attachments and a program for building secure new caregiver-child attachments. This reciprocal process fosters resiliency in all parties. *Baby Doll Circle Time* thus serves as both a curriculum for young children and as a staff development tool. It is a win-win approach to supporting healthy relationships. Now let's see how we can help the children in our care.

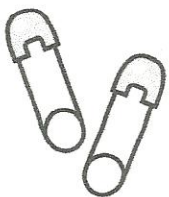
The Science of Attachment

The attachment system is an innate evolutionary system present in all mammals. It serves a protective function, designed to keep the dependent infant close to its mother until it's mature enough to survive on its own. In humans, the attachment figure's internal state also regulates the child's internal state during most of the first three years of life. If the primary attachment figure is calm, the baby will be calm. If the attachment figure is depressed, the baby's physiology will become depressed.

You've probably seen attachment in action on one of the many nature programs on television. Two lion cubs are playing until they perceive a threat. They immediately stop playing and run to Mom for protection. You've also probably experienced this in your own life when an infant cries and you instinctively hand it back to its mother for soothing. This action seems natural and automatic because attachment is part of our evolutionary survival system.

This same system explains why we see some infants and toddlers screaming in childcare with no one and nothing able to soothe them. Without an attachment figure at school, they cry inconsolably and may ultimately develop unhealthy stress management, intimate relationships, motivation, attention and mental models of themselves. Creating a healthy bond with caregivers is the only solution for these children: The health of that bond depends on the caregivers' attunement, emotional availability, continuity of care and responsiveness.

A child forms his primary attachment during times of distress, generally with the mother figure. A child may also form secondary attachment bonds with other caregivers that will support and complement this primary bond. Here's how the system works: The baby experiences some distress. This distress turns on the attachment system, signaling a physiological red alert. This alert tells the child, "Find your attachment figure and seek comfort!" Ideally, an attachment figure will be available and attuned to the child's distress. He or she will respond by soothing the child, turning the alert system off like a light switch. The quality of comfort the attachment figure provides dictates whether the child's attachment style is secure, anxious, avoidant or disorganized.



A child forms his primary attachment during times of distress, generally with the mother figure. A child may also form secondary attachment bonds with other caregivers that will support and complement this primary bond. What children in your care are you the secondary attachment figure for?

Anxious Attachment Style

When the adult responds to the child's distress in an inconsistent way (sometimes attuned, sometimes not), the child may form an anxious attachment style. The child becomes preoccupied with the caregiver and with negative emotions, particularly anger. This preoccupation inhibits exploration and thriving in the play environment. The child learns to cling, whine and demand attention, ultimately hoping to recapture the attuned moments that seem to appear and disappear with no predictable pattern. Imagine dating the most amazing person in the world, and then

discovering that on some dates the closeness between you is wonderful beyond words and on other dates it's as if you are on completely different pages. In the face of this inconsistency, we might start doubting ourselves and become determined to find ways to keep the person's attention, even if it means behaving like someone we are not.

A toddler is stepped on by two other toddlers and cries.



The threat provokes fear and anxiety, turning the attachment system on.



The toddler seeks out his attachment figure.



The caregiver responds inconsistently; sometimes attuned, sometimes not.

"You're okay. You're okay. Let's find something else to play with."



Over time this becomes a mental model of anxious relationships where the "I" is sacrificed to maintain a "we."



The toddler's exploration is dampened by his obsession with the attachment relationship.

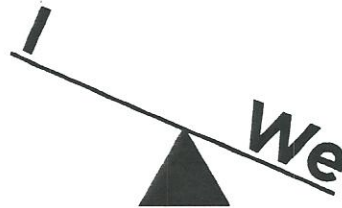


To manage the anxiety, the toddler demands more attention from his attachment figure.



This increases the child's insecurity and anxiety.

Anxious Attachment



Avoidant Attachment Style

When the adult responds to the child's distress in a way that is cold, distant or negative, the child learns quickly to avoid depending on their attachment figure for comfort. The child learns to avoid feelings and dismiss the parent's mental state. From the outside, avoidant attachment looks like independence, especially in times of distress. (Western culture often calls this "being a big boy" or "big girl" and even encourages it in young children.) On the inside, the child is really just coping the best she can in a world without trust. Imagine marrying a person who has wonderful qualities, but withdraws or becomes ugly when you are distressed. Ultimately, you would distance yourself from the relationship as a way of managing the disappointment, rejection and additional pain that is heaped on top of your original upset. Trust is out of the question and control replaces closeness.

A toddler is stepped on by two other toddlers and cries.



The threat creates fear and anxiety, turning the attachment system on.



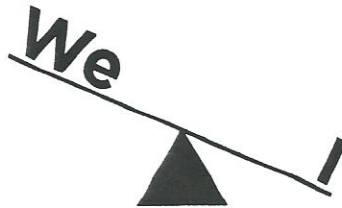
The toddler seeks out her attachment figure.



The caregiver responds negatively.

"You're fine! Stop crying!" and then ignores the child.

Avoidant Attachment



Over time this becomes a mental model for relationships where the "we" is sacrificed to maintain "I."



To manage her fear and anxiety, the toddler focuses on object play and distances herself from relationships.



Over time the toddler gives up on getting a positive, attuned response.



This increases the child's insecurity and anxiety.



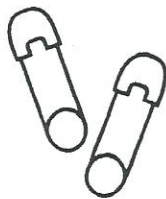
Disorganized Attachment Style

When the parent is both the source of fear and the protective attachment figure, the child may develop disorganized attachment. In this case, neither proximity-seeking nor avoiding is a sufficient coping strategy. This can leave the child vulnerable to personality disorders. Situations such as abuse, trauma, neglect and severe parent-child misattunement compromise the attachment system in the child's brain.

Secure Attachment Style

When the adult responds to the child's distress in an attuned way, the child forms a secure attachment style. The caregiver's response brings the child's physiology back into balance. This is the foundation of emotional regulation. Baby Doll Circle Time fosters a secure attachment with a caregiver by providing a R.O.A.D. map. The acronym R.O.A.D. will lead you to success:

- R = Respond consistently** to the infant or toddler's distress. In group care, this means each child has one consistent person designated as a secure base. Each adult will be the attachment figure for multiple children, but each child only has one attachment adult. This person attends to the child during times of distress. During upset, other caregivers hand the child to the attachment person (much like an aunt would hand the child back to Mom for soothing at home). All adults may assist in diapering and playing with all children, but each child has only one attachment figure for moments of distress.
- O = Organize yourself** first and the child second. The adult acting as the secure base must calm and organize herself before attending to the child's distress. She knows her internal state is essential in helping the baby become organized and calm.
- A = Attune to the child's** internal state by offering empathy and understanding.
- D = Describe by "mind reading" intentions and desires** for the child. This helps the child make sense of the experience and her world of relationships. "You wanted your milk."



Managing Emotional Mayhem: The Five Steps for Self-Regulation by Dr. Becky Bailey helps adults learn to attune with themselves and with their children during times of upset.

A toddler is stepped on by two other toddlers and cries.



The threat provokes fear and anxiety, turning attachment system on.



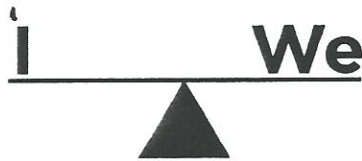
The toddler seeks out attachment figure.



The caregiver responds with attunement.

"That was scary. Two friends stepped on you. I'll hold you and keep you safe. Breathe with me. You're safe now."

Secure Attachment



Over time this becomes a mental model of secure relationships where the "I" and "we" are balanced.



The toddler goes back to exploring and playing.



The exploration system turns on.



This increases security and regulates toddler physiology, turning the attachment system off.

