

Discussion Guide

Discussion Guide for Module 8: Attachment in Practice

Module run time: 20 min

Estimated time to complete the module with discussion guide: 35-50 min

Below are recommended stopping points and suggested questions to use in your group's discussion. Please feel free to follow your group's lead and discuss topics and questions that are of greatest value to them! If you're working with a larger group, you may find it useful to discuss these questions in smaller groups and then reunite to summarize.

Key points:

- Attachment is a dyadic relationship. This means that an attachment relationship depends on both the adult and the child.
- Attachment security is on a continuum. Children's attachment behavior can be more secure or less secure. Their behavior depends on the caregiving they receive.
- A child is more likely to form a secure attachment when her caregiver provides consistent and sensitive care.

Module synopsis:

Page 1: *Attachment in Practice*

Page 2: *Acknowledgments*

Page 3: *Infant Expectations About Attachment*

🕒 Recommended stopping point

- An **internal working model** is a child's expectations, attitudes, and feelings about how people will act. Based on her early experiences, how do you think Baby Zara will respond to conflict, as she gets older? How about Baby Leo? How do you think their relationships might differ?

Page 4: *Measuring Attachment: The Strange Situation*

Page 5: *The Strange Situation: Video*

Page 6: *Attachment Behaviors*

Page 7: *Attachment Behaviors (continued)*

🕒 Recommended stopping point

- In the Strange Situation video, you watched a child who has a secure attachment to her mother. How might the child's behaviors be different if she had an insecure attachment to her mother?
- In the U.S., caregivers often encourage independence in their children from a young age. But this is not always typical in other countries. Think of cultural differences in childcare you have encountered. How might those differences affect attachment relationships? How might a preschool teacher use this knowledge when caring for a child from a different culture?

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Page 8: *Caregiver Consistency and Sensitivity*

Page 9: *Interactional Synchrony*

Page 10: *Quality of Interactions*

Page 11: *Summary*

✪ Final discussion points

- How does consistent and sensitive caregiving affect a child's attachment security?
- In the video, a mother and her 5-month-old showed **interactional synchrony**. Interactional synchrony is a form of communication in which caregivers and infants respond to one another in a rhythmic and reciprocal manner. Think of ways you can add interactional synchrony into your own interactions with infants? What might interactional synchrony look like between a caregiver and a younger infant? How about an older infant?

To learn more about attachment, take a look at these resources:

[Parenting Counts | Recognizing Baby Cues Video](#)

[Parenting Science | The Strange Situation and Cultural Differences](#)

[PBS This Emotional Life | The First Connection](#)

[ZERO TO THREE | Responsive Care: Nurturing a Strong Attachment](#)

We are constantly working to improve our materials. Do you have suggestions about topics to add to this guide? Did your group discuss something we didn't suggest? We'd love to hear from you! Please email your thoughts to us at ilabsout@uw.edu.

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