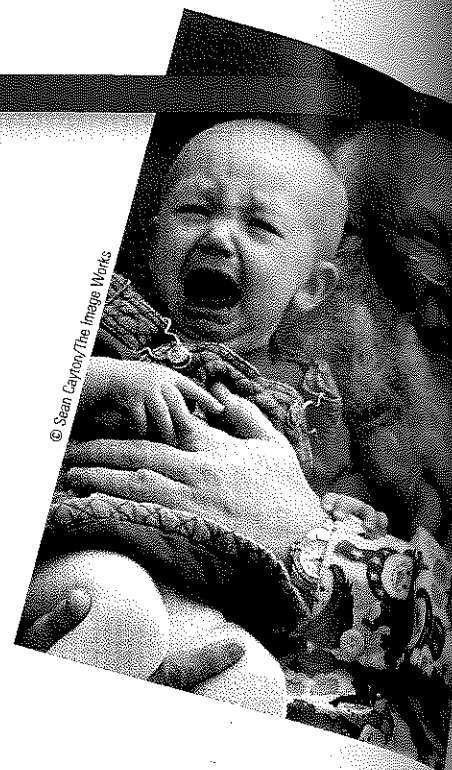


Module 48

Infancy and Childhood: Social Development

Module Learning Objectives

- 48-1** Describe how parent-infant attachment bonds form.
- 48-2** Describe how psychologists study attachment differences, and discuss their findings about the effect of temperament and parenting.
- 48-3** Discuss how childhood neglect, abuse, or family disruption affect children's attachments.
- 48-4** Discuss the effect of day care on children.
- 48-5** Trace the onset and development of children's self-concept.
- 48-6** Describe three parenting styles, and explain how children's traits relate to them.



48-1 How do parent-infant attachment bonds form?

From birth, babies in all cultures are social creatures, developing an intense bond with their caregivers. Infants come to prefer familiar faces and voices, then to coo and gurgle when given a parent's attention. At about 8 months, soon after object permanence emerges and children become mobile, a curious thing happens: They develop **stranger anxiety**. They may greet strangers by crying and self-protectively reaching for familiar caregivers. "No! Don't leave me!" their distress seems to say. Children this age have schemas for familiar faces; when they cannot assimilate the new face into these remembered schemas, they become distressed (Kagan, 1984). Once again, we see an important principle: *The brain, mind, and social-emotional behavior develop together.*

Origins of Attachment

One-year-olds typically cling tightly to a parent when they are frightened or expect separation. Reunited after being apart, they shower the parent with smiles and hugs. No social behavior is more striking than the intense and mutual infant-parent bond. This **attachment** bond is a powerful survival impulse that keeps infants close to their caregivers. Infants become attached to those—typically their parents—who are comfortable and familiar. For many years, psychologists reasoned that infants became attached to those who satisfied their need for nourishment. It made sense. But an accidental finding overturned this explanation.

stranger anxiety the fear of strangers that infants commonly display, beginning by about 8 months of age.

attachment an emotional tie with another person; shown in young children by their seeking closeness to the caregiver and showing distress on separation.

Body Contact

During the 1950s, University of Wisconsin psychologists Harry Harlow and Margaret Harlow bred monkeys for their learning studies. To equalize experiences and to isolate any disease, they separated the infant monkeys from their mothers shortly after birth and raised them in sanitary individual cages, which included a cheesecloth baby blanket (Harlow et al., 1971). Then came a surprise: When their blankets were taken to be laundered, the monkeys became distressed.

The Harlows recognized that this intense attachment to the blanket contradicted the idea that attachment derives from an association with nourishment. But how could they show this more convincingly? To pit the drawing power of a food source against the contact comfort of the blanket, they created two artificial mothers. One was a bare wire cylinder with a wooden head and an attached feeding bottle, the other cylinder wrapped with terry cloth.

When raised with both, the monkeys overwhelmingly preferred the comfy cloth mother (**FIGURE 48.1**). Like other infants clinging to their live mothers, the monkey babies would cling to their cloth mothers when anxious. When exploring their environment, they used her as a *secure base*, as if attached to her by an invisible elastic band that stretched only so far before pulling them back. Researchers soon learned that other qualities—rocking, warmth, and feeding—made the cloth mother even more appealing.

Human infants, too, become attached to parents who are soft and warm and who rock, feed, and pat. Much parent-infant emotional communication occurs via touch (Hertenstein et al., 2006), which can be either soothing (snuggles) or arousing (tickles). Human attachment also consists of one person providing another with a secure base from which to explore and a safe haven when distressed. As we mature, our secure base and safe haven shift—from parents to peers and partners (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999). But at all ages we are social creatures. We gain strength when someone offers, by words and actions, a safe haven: "I will be here. I am interested in you. Come what may, I will support you" (Crowell & Waters, 1994).

Familiarity

Contact is one key to attachment. Another is familiarity. In many animals, attachments based on familiarity form during a **critical period**—an optimal period when certain events must take place to facilitate proper development (Bornstein, 1989). For goslings, ducklings, or chicks, that period falls in the hours shortly after hatching, when the first moving object they see is normally their mother. From then on, the young fowl follow her, and her alone.

Konrad Lorenz (1937) explored this rigid attachment process, called **imprinting**. He wondered: What would ducklings do if he was the first moving creature they observed? What they did was follow him around: Everywhere that Konrad went, the ducks were sure to go. Although baby birds imprint best to their own species, they also will imprint to a variety of moving objects—an animal of another species, a box on wheels, a bouncing ball (Colombo, 1982; Johnson, 1992). Once formed, this attachment is difficult to reverse.

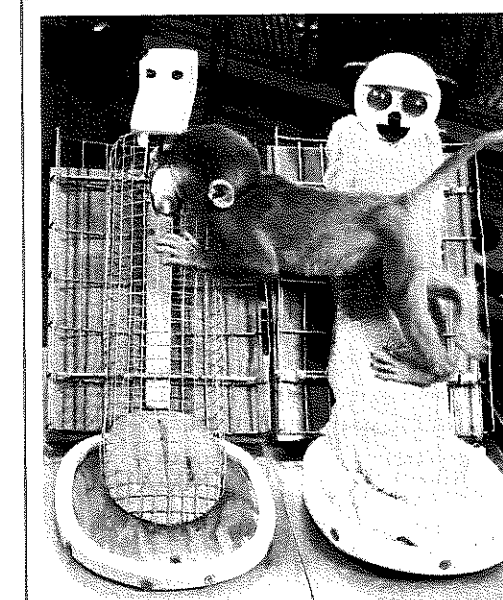


Figure 48.1

The Harlows' monkey mothers. Psychologists Harry Harlow and Margaret Harlow raised monkeys with two artificial mothers—one a bare wire cylinder with a wooden head and an attached feeding bottle, the other a cylinder with no bottle but covered with foam rubber and wrapped with terry cloth. The Harlows' discovery surprised many psychologists: The infants much preferred contact with the comfortable cloth mother, even while feeding from the nourishing mother.

FYI

For some people, a perceived relationship with God functions as do other attachments, by providing a secure base for exploration and a safe haven when threatened (Granqvist et al., 2010; Kirkpatrick, 1999).

critical period an optimal period early in the life of an organism when exposure to certain stimuli or experiences produces normal development.

imprinting the process by which certain animals form strong attachments during an early-life critical period.

Imprinting Whooping cranes normally learn to migrate by following their parents. These cranes, hand-raised from eggs, have imprinted on a crane-costumed ultralight pilot, who then guided them to winter nesting grounds (Mooallem, 2009).



Children—unlike ducklings—do not imprint. However, they do become attached, during a less precisely defined *sensitive period*, to what they've known. *Mere exposure* to people and things fosters fondness (see Module 79). Children like to reread the same books, rewatch the same movies, reenact family traditions. They prefer to eat familiar foods, live in the same familiar neighborhood; attend school with the same old friends. You may even have noticed your own preference for familiar music, familiar daily routines, and familiar class seating locations. Familiarity is a safety signal. Familiarity breeds content.

Attachment Differences: Temperament and Parenting

48.2 How have psychologists studied attachment differences, and what have they learned about the effects of temperament and parenting?

What accounts for children's attachment differences? To answer this question, Mary Ainsworth (1979) designed the *strange situation* experiment. She observed mother-infant pairs at home during their first 6 months. Later she observed the 1-year-old infants in a strange situation (usually a laboratory playroom). Such research has shown that about 60 percent of infants display *secure attachment*. In their mother's presence they play comfortably, happily exploring their new environment. When she leaves, they become distressed; when she returns, they seek contact with her.

Other infants avoid attachment or show *insecure attachment*, marked either by anxiety or avoidance of trusting relationships. They are less likely to explore their surroundings; they may even cling to their mother. When she leaves, they either cry loudly and remain upset or seem indifferent to her departure and return (Ainsworth, 1973, 1989; Kagan, 1995; van IJzendoorn & Kroonenberg, 1988).

Ainsworth and others found that sensitive, responsive mothers—those who noticed what their babies were doing and responded appropriately—had infants who exhibited secure attachment (De Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997). Insensitive, unresponsive mothers—mothers who attended to their babies when they felt like doing so but ignored them at other times—often had infants who were insecurely attached. The Harlows' monkey studies, with unresponsive artificial mothers, produced even more striking effects. When put in strange situations without their artificial mothers, the deprived infants were terrified (**FIGURE 48.2**).

But is attachment style the *result* of parenting? Or is attachment style the result of genetically influenced **temperament**—a person's characteristic emotional reactivity and intensity?

As most parents will tell you after having their second child, babies differ even before gulping their first breath. Heredity predisposes temperament differences (Rothbart, 2007).

temperament a person's characteristic emotional reactivity and intensity.

AP® Exam Tip

Note that temperament is a contribution from the nature side of the nature–nurture debate.

From their first weeks of life, some infants are reactive, intense, and fidgety. Others are easygoing, quiet, and placid. *Difficult* babies are more irritable, intense, and unpredictable. *Easy* babies are cheerful, relaxed, and predictable in feeding and sleeping. *Slow-to-warm-up* infants tend to resist or withdraw from new people and situations (Chess & Thomas, 1987; Thomas & Chess, 1977). And temperament differences typically persist. Consider:

- The most emotionally reactive newborns tend also to be the most reactive 9-month-olds (Wilson & Matheny, 1986; Worobey & Blajda, 1989).
- Exceptionally inhibited and fearful 2-year-olds often are still relatively shy as 8-year-olds; about half will become introverted adolescents (Kagan et al., 1992, 1994).
- The most emotionally intense preschoolers tend to be relatively intense young adults (Larsen & Diener, 1987). In one study of more than 900 New Zealanders, emotionally reactive and impulsive 3-year-olds developed into somewhat more impulsive, aggressive, and conflict-prone 21-year-olds (Caspi, 2000).

The genetic effect appears in physiological differences. Anxious, inhibited infants have high and variable heart rates and a reactive nervous system. When facing new or strange situations, they become more physiologically aroused (Kagan & Snidman, 2004). One form of a gene that regulates the neurotransmitter serotonin predisposes a fearful temperament and, in combination with unsupportive caregiving, an inhibited child (Fox et al., 2007). Such evidence adds to the emerging conclusion that our biologically rooted temperament helps form our enduring personality (McCrae et al., 2000, 2007; Rothbart et al., 2000).

By neglecting such inborn differences, the parenting studies, noted Judith Harris (1998), are like “comparing foxhounds reared in kennels with poodles reared in apartments.” So to separate nature and nurture, we would need to vary parenting while controlling temperament. (Pause and think: If you were the researcher, how might you have done this?)

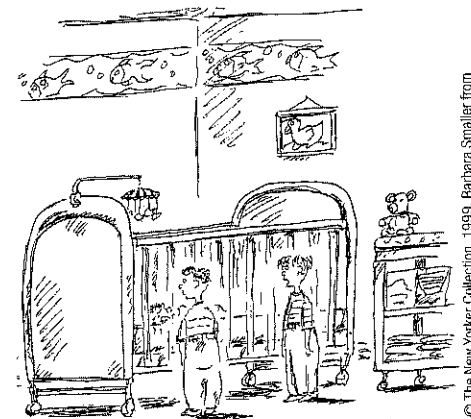
One Dutch researcher's solution was to randomly assign 100 temperamentally difficult 6- to 9-month-olds to either an experimental group, in which mothers received personal training in sensitive responding, or to a control group, in which they did not (van den Boom, 1990, 1995). At 12 months of age, 68 percent of the infants in the experimental group were rated securely attached, as were only 28 percent of the control group infants. Other studies support the idea that intervention programs can increase parental sensitivity and, to a lesser extent, infant attachment security (Bakermans-Kranenburg et al., 2003; Van Zeijl et al., 2006).

As these examples indicate, researchers have more often studied mother care than father care. Infants who lack a caring mother are said to suffer “maternal deprivation”;

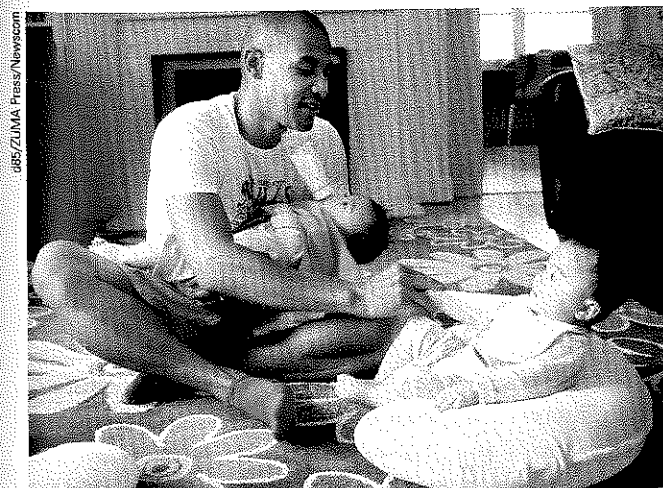


Figure 48.2

Social deprivation and fear in the Harlows' experiments, monkeys raised with artificial mothers were terror-stricken when placed in strange situations without those mothers. (Today's climate of greater respect for animal welfare prevents such primate studies.)



“Oh, he's cute, all right, but he's got the temperament of a car alarm.”



Full-time dad Financial analyst Walter Cranford, shown here with his baby twins, is one of a growing number of stay-at-home dads. Cranford says the experience has made him appreciate how difficult the work can be: “Sometimes at work you can just unplug, but with this you've got to be going all the time.”

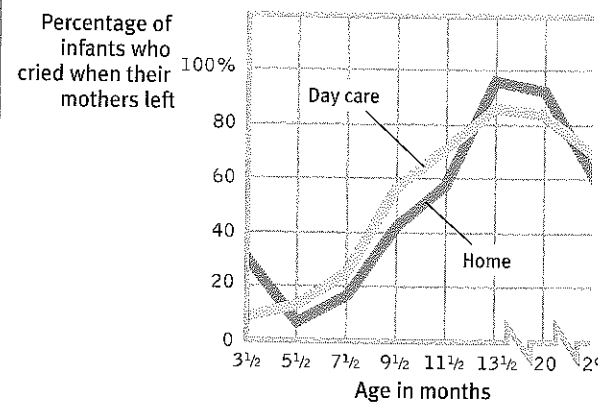


Figure 48.3
Infants' distress over separation from parents In an experiment, groups of infants were left by their mothers in an unfamiliar room. In both groups, the percentage who cried when the mother left peaked at about 13 months. Whether the infant had experienced day care made little difference. (From Kagan, 1976.)



Jouke van Keulen/Shutterstock

those lacking a father's care merely experience "father absence." This reflects a wider attitude in which "fathering a child" has meant impregnating, and "mothering" has meant nurturing. But fathers are more than just mobile sperm banks. Across nearly 100 studies worldwide, a father's love and acceptance have been comparable to a mother's love in predicting their offspring's health and well-being (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001). In one mammoth British study following 7259 children from birth to adulthood, those whose fathers were most involved in parenting (through outings, reading to them, and taking an interest in their education) tended to achieve more in school, even after controlling for other factors such as parental education and family wealth (Flouri & Buchanan, 2004). Children's anxiety over separation from parents peaks at around 13 months, then gradually declines (**FIGURE 48.3**). This happens whether they live with one parent or two, are cared for at home or in a day-care center, live in North America, Guatemala, or the Kalahari Desert. Does this mean our need for and love of others also fades away? Hardly. Our capacity for love grows, and our pleasure in touching and holding those we love never ceases. The power of early attachment does nonetheless gradually relax, allowing us to move out into a wider range of situations, communicate with strangers more freely, and stay emotionally attached to loved ones despite distance.

Attachment Styles and Later Relationships

Developmental theorist Erik Erikson (1902–1994), working with his wife, Joan Erikson, believed that securely attached children approach life with a sense of **basic trust**—a sense that the world is predictable and reliable. He attributed basic trust not to environment or inborn temperament, but to early parenting. He theorized that infants blessed with sensitive, loving caregivers form a lifelong attitude of trust rather than fear. (Later, we'll consider Erikson's other stages of development.)

Although debate continues, many researchers now believe that our early attachments form the foundation for our adult relationships and our comfort with affection and intimacy (Birnbaum et al., 2006; Fraley et al., 2013). Our adult styles of romantic love tend to exhibit either secure, trusting attachment; insecure, anxious attachment; or the avoidance of attachment (Feeney & Noller, 1990; Rholes & Simpson, 2004; Shaver & Mikulincer, 2007). These adult attachment styles in turn affect relationships with one's own children, as avoidant people find parenting more stressful and unsatisfying (Rholes et al., 2006).

Attachment style is also associated with motivation (Elliot & Reis, 2003). Securely attached people exhibit less fear of failure and a greater drive to achieve. But say this for those (nearly half of all humans) who exhibit insecure attachments: Anxious or avoidant tendencies have helped our groups detect or escape dangers (Ein-Dor et al., 2010).

Deprivation of Attachment

48-3 Does childhood neglect, abuse, or family disruption affect children's attachments?

If secure attachment nurtures social trust, what happens when circumstances prevent a child from forming attachments? In all of psychology, there is no sadder research literature. Babies locked away at home under conditions of abuse or extreme neglect are often withdrawn, frightened, even speechless. The same is true of those raised in institutions without the stimulation and attention of a regular caregiver, as was tragically illustrated during the



The deprivation of attachment In this Romanian orphanage, the 250 children between ages 1 and 5 outnumbered caregivers 15 to 1.

1970s and 1980s in Romania. Having decided that economic growth for his impoverished country required more human capital, Nicolae Ceaușescu, Romania's Communist dictator, outlawed contraception, forbade abortion, and taxed families with fewer than five children. The birthrate indeed skyrocketed. But unable to afford the children they had been coerced into having, many families abandoned them to government-run orphanages with untrained and overworked staff. Child-to-caregiver ratios often were 15 to 1 (and you thought babysitting triplets was a strain), so the children were deprived of healthy attachment with at least one adult. When tested after Ceaușescu was assassinated in 1989, these children had lower intelligence scores and double the 20 percent rate of anxiety symptoms found in children assigned to quality foster care settings (Nelson et al., 2009). Dozens of other studies across 19 countries have confirmed that orphaned children tend to fare better on later intelligence tests if raised in family homes. This is especially so for those placed at an early age (van IJzendoorn et al., 2008).

Most children growing up under adversity (as did the surviving children of the Holocaust) are *resilient*; they withstand the trauma and become normal adults (Helmreich, 1992; Masten, 2001). So do most victims of childhood sexual abuse, noted Harvard researcher Susan Clancy (2010), while emphasizing that using children for sex is revolting and never the victim's fault.

But others, especially those who experience no sharp break from their abusive past, don't bounce back so readily. The Harlows' monkeys raised in total isolation, without even an artificial mother, bore lifelong scars. As adults, when placed with other monkeys their age, they either cowered in fright or lashed out in aggression. When they reached sexual maturity, most were incapable of mating. If artificially impregnated, females often were neglectful, abusive, even murderous toward their first-born. Another primate experiment confirmed the abuse-breeds-abuse phenomenon. In one study, 9 of 16 females who had been abused by their mothers became abusive parents, as did *no* female raised by a nonabusive mother (Maestripieri, 2005).

In humans, too, the unloved may become the unloving. Most abusive parents—and many condemned murderers—have reported being neglected or battered as children (Kempe & Kempe, 1978; Lewis et al., 1988). Some 30 percent of people who have been abused later abuse their children—a rate lower than that found in the primate study, but four times the U.S. national rate of child abuse (Dumont et al., 2007; Kaufman & Zigler, 1987).

Although most abused children do *not* later become violent criminals or abusive parents, extreme early trauma may nevertheless leave footprints on the brain. Abused children exhibit hypersensitivity to angry faces (Pollak, 2008). As adults, they exhibit stronger startle responses (Jovanovic et al., 2009). If repeatedly threatened and attacked while young, normally placid golden hamsters grow up to be cowards when caged with same-sized hamsters, or bullies when caged with weaker ones (Ferris, 1996). Such animals show changes in

"Out of the conflict between trust and mistrust, the infant develops hope, which is the earliest form of what gradually becomes faith in adults." —ERIK ERIKSON (1983)

basic trust according to Erik Erikson, a sense that the world is predictable and trustworthy; said to be formed during infancy by appropriate experiences with responsive caregivers.

"What is learned in the cradle, lasts to the grave." —FRENCH PROVERB

the brain chemical serotonin, which calms aggressive impulses. A similarly sluggish serotonin response has been found in abused children who become aggressive teens and adults. "Stress can set off a ripple of hormonal changes that permanently wire a child's brain to cope with a malevolent world," concluded abuse researcher Martin Teicher (2002).

Such findings help explain why young children who have survived severe or prolonged physical abuse, childhood sexual abuse, or wartime atrocities are at increased risk for health problems, psychological disorders, substance abuse, and criminality (Freyd et al., 2005; Kendall-Tackett et al., 1993, 2004; Wegman & Stetler, 2009). Abuse victims are at considerable risk for depression if they carry a gene variation that spurs stress-hormone production (Bradley et al., 2008). As we will see again and again, behavior and emotion arise from a particular environment interacting with particular genes.

Adults also suffer when attachment bonds are severed. Whether through death or separation, a break produces a predictable sequence. Agitated preoccupation with the lost partner is followed by deep sadness and, eventually, the beginnings of emotional detachment and a return to normal living (Hazan & Shaver, 1994). Newly separated couples who have long ago ceased feeling affection are sometimes surprised at their desire to be near the former partner. Deep and longstanding attachments seldom break quickly. Detaching is a process, not an event.

Day Care

48-4 How does day care affect children?

In the mid-twentieth century, when mom-at-home was the social norm, researchers asked, "Is day care bad for children? Does it disrupt children's attachments to their parents?" For the high-quality day-care programs usually studied, the answer was *No*. In *Mother Care/Other Care*, developmental psychologist Sandra Scarr (1986) explained that children are "biologically sturdy individuals . . . who can thrive in a wide variety of life situations." Scarr spoke for many developmental psychologists, whose research has uncovered no major impact of maternal employment on children's development, attachments, and achievements (Friedman & Boyle, 2008; Goldberg et al., 2008; Lucas-Thompson et al., 2010).

Research then shifted to the effects of differing quality of day care on different types and ages of children (Vandell et al., 2010). Scarr (1997) explained: Around the world, "high-quality child care consists of warm, supportive interactions with adults in a safe, healthy, and stimulating environment. . . . Poor care is boring and unresponsive to children's needs." Even well-run orphanages can produce healthy, thriving children. In Africa and Asia, where more and more children are losing parents to AIDS and other diseases, orphanages typically are unlike those in Ceaușescu's Romania, and the children living in quality orphanages fare about as well as those living in communities (Whetten et al., 2009).

Children's ability to thrive under varied types of responsive caregiving should not surprise us, given cultural variations in attachment patterns. Westernized attachment features one or two caregivers and their offspring. In other cultures, such as the Efe of Zaire, multiple caregivers are the norm (Field, 1996; Whaley et al., 2002). Even before the mother holds her newborn, the baby is passed among several women. In the weeks to come, the infant will be constantly held (and fed) by other women. The result is strong multiple attachments.

One ongoing study in 10 American cities has followed 1100 children since the age of 1 month. The researchers found that

An example of high-quality day care Research has shown that young children thrive socially and intellectually in safe, stimulating environments with a ratio of one caregiver for every three or four children.



AP Photo/Imperial Valley Press, Claitor MacBeth

at ages 4½ to 6, children who had spent the most time in day care had slightly advanced thinking and language skills. They also had an increased rate of aggressiveness and defiance (NICHD, 2002, 2003, 2006). To developmental psychologist Eleanor Maccoby (2003), the positive correlation between the increased rate of problem behaviors and time spent in child care suggested "some risk for some children spending extended time in some day-care settings as they're now organized." But the child's temperament, the parents' sensitivity, and the family's economic and educational level influenced aggression more than time spent in day care.

There is little disagreement that the children who merely exist for 9 hours a day in understaffed centers deserve better. What all children need is a consistent, warm relationship with people whom they can learn to trust. The importance of such relationships extends beyond the preschool years, as Finnish psychologist Lea Pulkkinen (2006) observed in her career-long study of 285 individuals tracked from age 8 to 42. Her finding—that adult monitoring of children predicts favorable outcomes—led her to undertake, with support from Finland's parliament, a nationwide program of adult-supervised activities for all first and second graders (Pulkkinen, 2004; Rose, 2004).

Self-Concept

48-5 How do children's self-concepts develop?

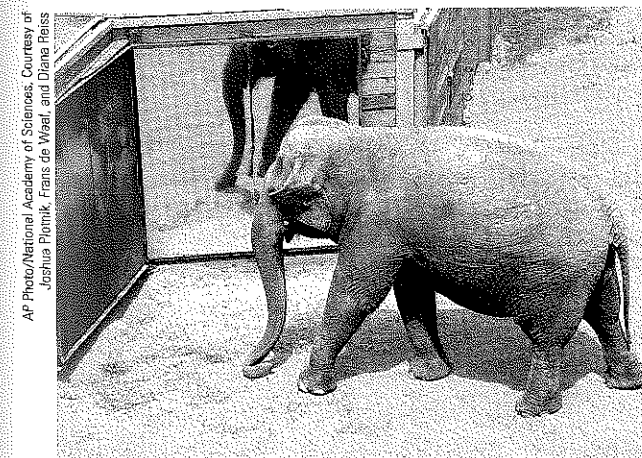
Infancy's major social achievement is attachment. *Childhood's* major social achievement is a positive sense of self. By the end of childhood, at about age 12, most children have developed a **self-concept**—an understanding and assessment of who they are. (Their *self-esteem* is how they feel about who they are.) Parents often wonder when and how this sense of self develops. "Is my baby girl aware of herself—does she know she is a person distinct from everyone else?"

Of course we cannot ask the baby directly, but we can again capitalize on what she can do—letting her *behavior* provide clues to the beginnings of her self-awareness. In 1877, biologist Charles Darwin offered one idea: Self-awareness begins when we recognize ourselves in a mirror. To see whether a child recognizes that the girl in the mirror is indeed herself, researchers sneakily dabbed color on the nose. At about 6 months, children reach out to touch their mirror image as if it were another child (Courage & Howe, 2002; Damon & Hart, 1982, 1988, 1992). By 15 to 18 months, they begin to touch their own noses when they see the colored spot in the mirror (Butterworth, 1992; Gallup & Suarez, 1986). Apparently, 18-month-olds have a schema of how their face should look, and they wonder, "What is that spot doing on *my* face?"



Kate Nurre, Worth Publishers

Self-awareness Mirror images fascinate infants from the age of about 6 months. Only at about 18 months, however, does the child recognize that the image in the mirror is "me."



AP Photo/National Academy of Sciences, Courtesy of Joshua Plotnik, Frans de Waal, and Diane Reiss

Self-aware animals After prolonged exposure to mirrors, several species—chimpanzees, orangutans, gorillas, dolphins, elephants, and magpies—have similarly demonstrated self-recognition of their mirror image (Gallup, 1970; Reis & Marino, 2001; Prior et al., 2008). In an experiment by Joshua Plotnik and colleagues (2006), Happy, an Asian elephant, when facing a mirror, repeatedly used her trunk to touch an "X" painted above her eye (but not a similar mark above the other eye that was visible only under black light). As one report said, "She's Happy and she knows it!"

self-concept all our thoughts and feelings about ourselves, in answer to the question, "Who am I?"

By school age, children's self-concept has blossomed into more detailed descriptions that include their gender, group memberships, psychological traits, and similarities and differences compared with other children (Newman & Ruble, 1988; Stipek, 1992). They come to see themselves as good and skillful in some ways but not others. They form a concept of which traits, ideally, they would like to have. By age 8 or 10, their self-image is quite stable.

Children's views of themselves affect their actions. Children who form a positive self-concept are more confident, independent, optimistic, assertive, and sociable (Maccoby, 1980). So how can parents encourage a positive yet realistic self-concept?

Parenting Styles

49-6 What are three parenting styles, and how do children's traits relate to them?

Some parents spank, some reason. Some are strict, some are lax. Some show little affection, some liberally hug and kiss. Do such differences in parenting styles affect children?

The most heavily researched aspect of parenting has been how, and to what extent, parents seek to control their children. Investigators have identified three parenting styles:

1. **Authoritarian** parents impose rules and expect obedience: "Don't interrupt." "Keep your room clean." "Don't stay out late or you'll be grounded." "Why? Because I said so."
2. **Permissive** parents submit to their children's desires. They make few demands and use little punishment.
3. **Authoritative** parents are both demanding and responsive. They exert control by setting rules and enforcing them, but they also explain the reasons for rules. And, especially with older children, they encourage open discussion when making the rules and allow exceptions.

Too hard, too soft, and just right, these styles have been called, especially by pioneering researcher Diana Baumrind and her followers. Research indicates that children with the highest self-esteem, self-reliance, and social competence usually have warm, concerned, *authoritative* parents (Baumrind, 1996; Buri et al., 1988; Coopersmith, 1967). Those with authoritarian parents tend to have less social skill and self-esteem, and those with permissive parents tend to be more aggressive and immature. The participants in most studies have been middle-class White families, and some critics suggest that effective parenting may vary by culture. Yet studies with families of other races and in more than 200 cultures worldwide have confirmed the social and academic correlates of loving and authoritative parenting (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001; Sorkhabi, 2005; Steinberg & Morris, 2001). For example, two studies of thousands of Germans found that those whose parents had maintained a curfew exhibited better adjustment and greater achievements in young adulthood than did those with permissive parents (Haase et al., 2008). And the effects are stronger when children are embedded in *authoritative communities* with connected adults who model a good life (Commission on Children at Risk, 2003).

A word of caution: The association between certain parenting styles (being firm but open) and certain childhood outcomes (social competence) is correlational. *Correlation is not causation.* Here are two possible alternative explanations for this parenting-competence link.

- Children's traits may influence parenting. Parental warmth and control vary somewhat from child to child, even in the same family (Holden & Miller, 1999). Perhaps socially mature, agreeable, easygoing children *evoke* greater trust and warmth from their parents. Twin studies have supported this possibility (Kendler, 1996).
- Some underlying third factor may be at work. Perhaps, for example, competent parents and their competent children share genes that predispose social competence. Twin studies have also supported this possibility (South et al., 2008).

AP® Exam Tip

It's understandable if you are struggling to remember the differences between authoritarian and authoritative—these words are exactly the same through the first nine letters! Maybe it will help to realize that authoritative parents will engage in a little more give and take, and that the words *give* and *authoritative* both end in the letters *ive*.

Parents who struggle with conflicting advice should remember that *all advice reflects the advice-giver's values*. For those who prize unquestioning obedience from a child, an authoritarian style may have the desired effect. For those who value children's sociability and self-reliance, authoritative firm-but-open parenting is advisable.

Culture and Child Raising

Child-raising practices reflect cultural values that vary across time and place. Do you prefer children who are independent or children who comply? If you live in a Westernized culture, the odds are you prefer independence. "You are responsible for yourself," Western families and schools tell their children. "Follow your conscience. Be true to yourself. Discover your gifts. Think through your personal needs." A half-century and more ago, Western cultural values placed greater priority on obedience, respect, and sensitivity to others (Alwin, 1990; Remley, 1988). "Be true to your traditions," parents then taught their children. "Be loyal to your heritage and country. Show respect toward your parents and other superiors." Cultures can change.

Many Asians and Africans live in cultures that value emotional closeness. Rather than being given their own bedrooms and entrusted to day care, infants and toddlers may sleep with their mothers and spend their days close to a family member (Morelli et al., 1992; Whiting & Edwards, 1988). These cultures encourage a strong sense of *family self*—a feeling that what shames the child shames the family, and what brings honor to the family brings honor to the self.

Children across place and time have thrived under various child-raising systems. Upper-class British parents traditionally handed off routine caregiving to nannies, then sent their 10-year-olds off to boarding school. These children generally grew up to be pillars of British society, as did their parents and their boarding-school peers. In the African Gusii society, babies nurse freely but spend most of the day on their mother's back—with lots of body contact but little face-to-face and language interaction. When the mother becomes pregnant again, the toddler is weaned and handed over to someone else, often an older sibling. Westerners may wonder about the negative effects of this lack of verbal interaction, but then the African Gusii may in turn wonder about Western mothers pushing their babies around in strollers and leaving them in playpens (Small, 1997). Such diversity in child raising cautions us against presuming that our culture's way is the only way to raise children successfully.



Cultures vary Parents everywhere care about their children, but raise and protect them differently depending on the surrounding culture. Parents raising children in New York City keep them close. In Scotland's Orkney Islands' town of Stromness, social trust has enabled parents to park their toddlers outside shops.



Parental involvement promotes development Parents in every culture facilitate their children's discovery of their world, but cultures differ in what they deem important. Asian cultures place more emphasis on school and hard work than do North American cultures. This may help explain why Japanese and Taiwanese children get higher scores on mathematics achievement tests.

"You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth." -KAHLIL GIBRAN, *THE PROPHET*, 1923

The investment in raising a child buys many years not only of joy and love but of worry and irritation. Yet for most people who become parents, a child is one's biological and social legacy—one's personal investment in the human future. To paraphrase psychiatrist Carl Jung, we reach backward into our parents and forward into our children, and through their children into a future we will never see, but about which we must therefore care.

Before You Move On

▶ ASK YOURSELF

How would you describe your own temperament? Is it similar to that of other family members, or quite different?

▶ TEST YOURSELF

What distinguishes imprinting from attachment?

Answers to the Test Yourself questions can be found in Appendix E at the end of the book.

Module 48 Review

48-1 How do parent-infant attachment bonds form?

- At about 8 months, soon after object permanence develops, children separated from their caregivers display *stranger anxiety*.
- Infants form *attachments* not simply because parents gratify biological needs but, more important, because they are comfortable, familiar, and responsive.
- Ducks and other animals have a more rigid attachment process, called *imprinting*, that occurs during a *critical period*.
- Yet it's become clear that *temperament*—our characteristic emotional reactivity and intensity—also plays a huge role in how our attachment patterns form.

48-3 Does childhood neglect, abuse, or family disruption affect children's attachments?

- Children are very resilient, but those who are moved repeatedly, severely neglected by their parents, or otherwise prevented from forming attachments by an early age may be at risk for attachment problems.

48-2 How have psychologists studied attachment differences, and what have they learned about the effects of temperament and parenting?

- Attachment has been studied in strange situation experiments, which show that some children are securely attached and others are insecurely attached.
- Sensitive, responsive parents tend to have securely attached children.
- Adult relationships seem to reflect the attachment styles of early childhood, lending support to Erik Erikson's idea that *basic trust* is formed in infancy by our experiences with responsive caregivers.
- Quality day care, with responsive adults interacting with children in a safe and stimulating environment, does not appear to harm children's thinking and language skills.
- Some studies have linked extensive time in day care with increased aggressiveness and defiance, but other factors—the child's temperament, the parents' sensitivity, and the family's economic and educational levels and culture—also matter.

48-4 How does day care affect children?

48-5 How do children's self-concepts develop?

- Self-concept*, an understanding and evaluation of who we are, emerges gradually.
 - At 15 to 18 months, children recognize themselves in a mirror.
 - By school age, they can describe many of their own traits, and by ages 8 to 10 their self-image is stable.

Multiple-Choice Questions

- An 18-month-old typically recognizes herself in a mirror. This self-awareness contributes to
 - self-assurance.
 - self-concept.
 - self-esteem.
 - self-actualization.
 - self-determination.
- In the attachment studies conducted with infant monkeys, what did the Harlows find?
 - Nutrition was the most important factor in attachment.
 - Contact comfort was the most important factor in attachment.
 - The surrogate mother's appearance was the most important attachment factor.
 - Monkeys were equally likely to become attached to either surrogate mother.
 - The monkeys didn't form attachments to the surrogate mothers.
- What do we call an optimal window of opportunity for proper development?
 - Attachment
 - The critical period
 - The social period
 - Imprinting
 - Mere exposure
- Which of the following identifies the parenting style most likely to ground a teen who had missed a curfew—and to explain the rationale for doing so, after considering the teen's reasons?
 - Authoritative
 - Authoritarian
 - Permissive
 - Secure attachment
 - Insecure attachment
- Which of the following would be considered a sign of secure attachment in a 1-year-old?
 - Showing no sign of stranger anxiety, whether the parent is present or not
 - Paying no attention to a parent who returns after a brief separation
 - Showing anger at the parent after a brief separation
 - Becoming distressed when the parent leaves and seeking contact on return
 - Not reacting to a parent leaving or returning after a brief separation
- Who identified secure and insecure attachment?
 - Sigmund Freud
 - Konrad Lorenz
 - Jean Piaget
 - Mary Ainsworth
 - Jerome Kagan

48-6 What are three parenting styles, and how do children's traits relate to them?

- Parenting styles—authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative—reflect varying degrees of control.
- Children with high self-esteem tend to have authoritative parents and to be self-reliant and socially competent, but the direction of cause and effect in this relationship is not clear.

Practice FRQs

- Name and describe the three types of infant temperaments.
- Name and describe Diana Baumrind's three parenting styles.

(3 points)

Answer

1 point: Easy: These babies are easygoing, cheerful, predictable, and placid.

1 point: Difficult: These babies are emotionally reactive, intense, irritable, and unpredictable.

1 point: Slow to warm up: These babies resist and withdraw from new people or situations.