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# Attachment Parenting

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## ***What is attachment parenting?***

Your baby's ability to love, trust, feel and learn starts with the deep emotional tie that she forms with the people who take care of her. This emotional connection is called attachment.

When your baby's attachment to you is secure she feels safe. She trusts you to look after her needs.

Secure attachment takes time to develop.

## ***What can parents do for infants?***

- Comfort your baby right away when he is upset, frightened, sick or hurt.
- Go to your baby quickly when he cries. This tells him he is important. Babies cannot be spoiled. Crying is how your baby tells you he needs something.
- Touch and talk to your baby. He loves to be hugged, rocked, cuddled and carried. Singing and speaking gently will soothe him.
- Play with your baby. Laugh, sing, talk and read to him.

## ***Parenting tip for infants***

You may not always know why your baby is crying. Babies never cry to make you mad or to get their way. Even if your baby can't stop crying she still needs to be held and comforted. She needs to know she's not alone and that you will be there during the happy and sad times.

## ***As your baby grows***

Soon your baby will be crawling and walking, babbling and talking. Your baby's attachment is deepening and he is ready to explore the world around him.

## ***What can parents do for toddlers?***

- Talk, read and sing to your toddler.
- Listen to him when he responds to you. This tells him that what he says is important and will teach him to learn to speak and listen to others.
- Give your child a safe place to explore.
- Put away dangerous or valuable objects.
- Watch him closely and have safe toys for him to play with.
- Never slap or spank your child for exploring his world.

## ***Parenting tip for toddlers***

- Give him toys for playing grown-up – toy phone, tools, pots and pans, wooden spoons.
- Help him grow and learn by letting him make some of his own decisions.
- Stay close by and be patient, learning new tasks takes time.

## ***The preschool years***

Parenting your preschooler is about protecting, nurturing and guiding them. This will help them learn how to think for themselves and make their own good choices. When a child can trust his parents to meet his needs and keep him safe, he will also look to them to help him behave.

## ***What can parents do for preschoolers?***

- Let your child know you love her no matter what.
- Protect her until she can protect herself.
- Play, sing, talk, read and learn together.
- Give her responsibilities and small jobs.
- Set limits for her until she can set her own.
- Respond to her calmly and consistently.
- Be patient – it takes time and repetition for a child to learn.
- Help her learn about the world and people around her.

## ***Parenting tip for preschoolers***

- Promote family times everyday.
- Eat together.
- Turn off the television.
- Develop healthy routines such as regular bedtimes, exercise everyday.
- Encourage your child to help others – draw a picture for someone who is sick.

## ***Parents need help too***

Parenting is rewarding but strenuous. You need to look after yourself. Share your feelings with your partner, family and friends. Take a break when you need one. No one can be available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

- Look after yourself – eating well and getting enough rest and exercise will give you the energy you need to parent.
- Make time to talk and be with other adults.

- Read a parenting book.
- Join a parenting group.
- Forget perfection – aim for your best.
- Promote a safe, supportive community for all children.
- Trust yourself, you will learn and develop with your child. You have all the basics for parenting: your love for your child, your instincts and your common sense.

## ***Resources:***

### ***Kids Are Worth It: Raising Resilient, Responsible Compassionate Kids.***

Coloroso, Barbara (2010).

### ***Your Baby and Child: From Birth to Age Five.***

Leach, Penelope (2010).

### ***Attached At The Heart.***

Nicholson, Barbara and Parker, Lysa (2009)

## ***Handouts:***

Night-time Parenting  
Safe Sleeping for Your Baby

## ***Meetings:***

Saskatoon Attachment Parenting  
Meets at 10 am every 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday  
Augusta Lutheran Church-corner of 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
And Broadway Avenue.

## ***For more information, contact the nearest Public Health Office:***

<b>Saskatoon &amp; Surrounding Area Locations</b>		<b>Rural Area Locations</b>	
North East	306-655-4700	Humboldt	306-682-2626 or Toll Free: 1-855-613-8205
Our Neighbourhood	306-655-3250	Rosthern	306-232-6001 or Toll Free: 1-888-301-4636
South East	306-655-4730	Wadena	306-338-2538 or Toll Free: 1-855-338-9944
West Winds	306-655-4275	Watrous	306-946-2102 or Toll Free: 1-877-817-9336
International Travel	306-655-4780	Wynyard	306-554-3335 or Toll Free: 1-855-613-8111
HealthLine	811		

[www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/publichealth](http://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/publichealth)