

2011

Attachment Theory: In search of a relationship between attachment security and preschool children's level of empathy

Knight, R.

Knight, R. (2011) Attachment Theory: In search of a relationship between attachment security and preschool children's level of empathy, *The Plymouth Student Scientist*, 4(1), p. 240-258.

<http://hdl.handle.net/10026.1/13933>

The Plymouth Student Scientist
University of Plymouth

All content in PEARL is protected by copyright law. Author manuscripts are made available in accordance with publisher policies. Please cite only the published version using the details provided on the item record or document. In the absence of an open licence (e.g. Creative Commons), permissions for further reuse of content should be sought from the publisher or author.

**1. My child readily shares
with me or lets me hold
things if I ask them to.**

Low: Refuses.



2. When my child returns to me after playing, he/she is sometimes fussy for no clear reason.

Low: Child is happy or affectionate when he/she returns to you after play times.



3. When my child is upset or injured, he/she will accept comforting from adults other than myself.

Low: You are the only one he/she allows to comfort him/her.



4. My child is careful and gentle with toys and pets.



5. My child is more interested in people than in things.

Low: More interested in things than people.



6. When my child is near me and sees something he/she wants to play with, he/she fusses or tries to drag me over to it.

Low: Goes to what he/she wants without fussing or dragging you along.



7. My child laughs and smiles easily with a lot of different people.

Low: You can get him/her to smile or laugh more easily than others.



8. When my child cries, he/she cries hard.

Low: Weeps, sobs, doesn't cry hard, or hard crying never lasts very long.



9. My child is lighthearted and playful most of the time.

Low: Child tends to be serious, sad, or annoyed a good deal of the time.



10. My child often cries or resists when I take him/her to bed for naps or at night.

Low: Does not cry or resist going to bed.



11. My child often hugs or cuddles against me, without me asking or inviting him/her to do so.

Low: Your child doesn't hug or cuddle much, unless you hug him/her first or ask him/her to give you a hug.



12. My child quickly gets used to people or things that initially made him/her shy or frightened.

Middle: if never shy or afraid.

Low: Your child is slow to get used to people or things.



13. When my child is upset when I leave, he/she continues to cry or even gets angry after I have gone.

Middle: If not upset by you leaving.

Low: Cry stops right after you leave.



14. When my child finds something new to play with, he/she carries it to me or shows it to me from across the room.

Low: Plays with the new object quietly or goes where he/she won't be interrupted



15. My child is willing to talk to new people, show them toys, or show them what he/she can do, if I ask him/her to.

Low: Your suggestion does not increase willingness to engage new people.



16. My child prefers toys that are modelled after living things (e.g., dolls, stuffed animals).

Low: Prefers balls, blocks, pots and pans, etc.



17. My child quickly loses interest in new adults if they do anything that annoys him/her.



18. My child follows my suggestions readily, even when they are clearly suggestions rather than orders.

Low: Ignores or refuses unless ordered.



19. When I tell my child to bring or give me something, he/she obeys.

Low: You have to take the object or raise your voice to get it away from him/her.



20. My child ignores most bumps, falls, or startles.

Low: Cries after minor bumps, falls, or startles.



21. My child keeps track of my location when he/she plays around the house.

Middle: If he/she isn't allowed or doesn't have room to play away from you.

Low: Doesn't keep track.



22. My child acts like an affectionate parent toward dolls, pets, or infants.

Middle: If he/she doesn't play with or have access to dolls, pets, or infants.

Low: Plays with them in other ways.



23. When I sit with other family members, or am affectionate with them, my child tries to get my affection for him/herself.

Low: Lets you be affectionate with others. May join in but not in a jealous way.



24. When I speak firmly or raise my voice at my child, he/she becomes upset, sorry, or ashamed about displeasing me.

Low: He/she does not become upset in response to such behaviour.



25. My child is easy for me to lose track of when he/she is playing out of my sight.

Middle: If never plays out of sight.

Low: Talks and calls when out of sight.

Easy to find; easy to keep track of what they're doing.



26. My child cries when I leave him/her at home with babysitter, father, or grandparent.

Low: Doesn't cry with any of these.



27. My child laughs when I tease him/her.

Middle: If you never tease child during play or conversations.

Low: Annoyed when you teases him/her.



28. My child enjoys relaxing in my lap.

Middle: If child never sits still.

Low: Prefers to relax on the floor or on furniture.



29. At times, my child attends so deeply to something that he/she doesn't seem to hear when people speak to him/her.

Low: Even when deeply involved in play, child notices when people speak to him/her.



30. My child easily becomes angry with toys.

Low: Child does not easily become angry with toys.



31. My child wants to be the centre of my attention. If I'm busy or talking to someone, he/she interrupts.

Low: Doesn't notice or doesn't mind not being the centre of your attention.



32. When I say "No" or punish him/her, my child stops misbehaving (at least at that time). Doesn't have to be told twice.

Low: Child persists in misbehaviour.



33. My child sometimes signals to me (or gives the impression) that he/she wants to be put down, and then fusses or wants to be picked right back up.

Low: Always ready to go play by the time he/she signals to be put down.



34. When my child is upset about me leaving him/her, he/she sits right where he/she is and cries.

Doesn't come after me.

Middle: If never upset by you leaving.

Low: Actively goes after you if he/she is upset or crying.



35. My child is independent with me. Prefers to play on his/her own; leaves me easily when he/she wants to play.

Low: Prefers playing with or near mother.



36. My child clearly shows a pattern of using me as a base from which to explore. Moves out to play; Returns or plays near me; moves out to play again, etc.

Low: Always away unless retrieved, or always stays near.



**37. My child is very active.
Always moving around.
Prefers active games to
quiet ones.**

Low: Child's activity level is low. Prefers quiet activities.



38. My child is demanding and impatient with me. Fusses and persists unless I do what he/she wants right away.

Low: Child waits a reasonable time if you don't respond immediately.



39. My child is often serious and businesslike when playing away from me or alone with his/her toys.

Low: Often silly or laughing when playing away from you or alone with his toys.



40. My child examines new objects or toys in great detail. Tries to use them in different ways or to take them apart.

Low: First look at new objects or toys is usually brief. (May return to them later however).



41. When I say to follow me, my child does so. (Do not count refusals or delays that are playful or part of a game unless they clearly become disobedient).

Low: Child ignores or refuses.



**42. My child recognizes
when I'm upset.**

**Becomes quiet or upset
him/herself.**

Tries to comfort him/her.

Asks what is wrong, etc.

Low: Doesn't recognize;
continues play; behaves
toward you as if you were ok.



43. My child stays closer to me or returns to me more often than the simple task of keeping track of me requires.

Low: Doesn't keep close track of your location or behaviour.



44. My child asks for and enjoys having me hold, hug, and cuddle him/her.

Low: Not especially eager for this. Tolerates it but doesn't seek it; or wiggles to be put down.



**45. My child enjoys
dancing or singing
along with music.**

Low: Neither likes nor dislikes music.



46. My child walks and runs around without bumping, dropping, or stumbling.

Low: Bumps, drops, or stumbles happen throughout the day (even if no injuries result).



47. My child will accept and enjoy loud sounds or being bounced around in play, if I smile and show that it is supposed to be fun.

Low: Child gets upset, even if you indicate the sound or activity is safe or fun.



**48. My child readily lets
new adults hold or
share things he/she has,
if they ask to.**

Low: Child does not readily share with
new adults when asked.



49. My child runs to me with a shy smile when new people visit the home.

Middle: If child doesn't run to you at all when visitors arrive.

Low: Even if he/she eventually warms up to visitors, child initially runs to you with a fret or a cry.



50. My child's initial reaction when people visit the home is to ignore or avoid them, even if he/she eventually warms up to them.

Low: Initial reaction is to approach and interact.



51. My child enjoys climbing all over visitors when he/she plays with them.

Middle: If he/she won't play with visitors.

Low: Doesn't seek close contact with visitors when he/she plays with them.



52. My child has trouble handling small objects or putting small things together.

Low: Very skillful with small objects, pencils, etc.



53. My child puts his/her arms around me or puts his/her hand on my shoulder when I pick him/her up.

Low: Accepts being picked up but doesn't especially help or hold on.



54. My child acts like he/she expects me to interfere with his/her activities when I am simply trying to help them with something.

Low: Accepts your help readily, unless you are in fact interfering.



55. My child copies a number of behaviours or ways of doing things from watching my behaviour.

Low: Doesn't noticeably copy your behaviour.



56. My child becomes shy or loses interest when an activity looks like it might be difficult.

Low: Thinks he/she can do difficult tasks.



57. Child is fearless.

Low: Child is cautious or fearful.



58. My child largely ignores adults who visit the home. Finds his/her own activities more interesting.

Low: Finds visitors quite interesting, even if he/she is a bit shy at first.



59. When my child finishes with an activity or toy, he/she generally finds something else to do without returning to me between activities.

Low: When finished with an activity or toy, he/she returns to you for play, affection or help finding more to do.



60. If I reassure my child by saying "It's OK" or "It won't hurt you", he/she will approach or play with things that initially made him/her cautious or afraid.

Middle: If never cautious or afraid.

Low: Child does not accept your assurances.



**61. My child plays roughly with me. Bumps, scratches, or bites during active play.
(Does not necessarily mean to hurt)**

Middle: If play is never very active.

Low: Plays active games without injuring you.



62. When my child is in a happy mood, he/she is likely to stay that way all day.

Low : Happy moods are very changeable.



63. Even before trying things him/herself, my child tries to get someone to help.

Low: Confident. Tries things him/herself before seeking help.



**64. My child enjoys
climbing all over me
when we play.**

Low: Doesn't especially want a lot of close contact when you play.



65. My child is easily upset when I make him/her change from one activity to another.

(Even if the new activity is something he/she often enjoys).

Low: Readily changes activities when you suggest new ones.



66. My child easily grows fond of adults who visit his/her home and are friendly to him/her.

Low: Doesn't grow fond of new people very easily.



67. When the family has visitors, my child wants them to pay a lot of attention to him/her.

Low: Does not particularly seek attention from visitors.



68. On average, my child is a more active type of person than me.

Low: On average, your child is a less active type of person than you.



69. My child rarely asks me for help.

Middle: If child is too young to ask.

Low: Often asks me for help.



70. My child quickly greets me with a big smile when I enter a room. (Shows me a toy, gestures, or says "Hi, Mummy").

Low: Doesn't greet me unless I greet him/her first.



71. If held in my arms, my child stops crying and quickly recovers after being frightened or upset.

Low: Not easily comforted.



72. If visitors laugh at or approve of something my child does, he/she repeats it again and again.

Low: Visitors' reactions don't influence your child in this way.



73. My child has a cuddly toy or security blanket that he/she carries around, takes it to bed, or holds when upset.

Low: Can take such things or leave them, or has none at all.



74. When I don't do what my child wants right away, he/she behaves as if I were not going to do it at all. (Fusses, gets angry, walks off to other activities, etc).

Low: Waits a reasonable time, as if he/she expects you will shortly do what he/she asked.



75. At home, my child gets upset or cries when I walk out of the room. (May or may not follow me).

Low: Notices you leaving; may follow but doesn't get upset.



**76. When given a choice,
my child would rather
play with toys than with
adults.**

Low: Would rather play with adults than toys.



77. When I ask my child to do something, he/she readily understands what I want (may or may not obey).

Middle: If too young to understand.

Low: Sometimes puzzled or slow to understand what you want.



78. My child enjoys being hugged or held by people other than his/her parents and/or grandparents.

Low: No particular interest in such contact.



79. My child easily becomes angry at me.

Low: Doesn't become angry at you unless you are very intrusive or he/she is very tired.



80. My child uses my facial expressions as good source of information when something looks risky or threatening.

Low: Makes up his/her own mind without checking my expressions first.



81. My child cries as a way of getting me to what he/she wants.

Low: Mainly cries because of genuine discomfort (tired, sad, afraid, etc.).



82. My child spends most of his/her play time with just a few favourite toys or activities.

Low: Explores and plays (briefly) with a number of different toys.



83. When my child is bored, he/she comes to me looking for something to do.

Low: Wanders around or just does nothing for a while, until something comes up.



84. My child makes at least some effort to be clean and tidy around the house.

Low: Spills and smears things on him/herself and on floors all the time.



85. My child is strongly attracted to new activities and new toys.

Low: New things do not attract him/her away from familiar toys or activities.



86. My child tries to get me to imitate him/her, or quickly notices and enjoys it when I imitate him/her on my own.

Low: Doesn't show any particular interest in this such engagement.



87. If I laugh at or approve of something my child has done, he/she repeats again and again.

Low: Child is not particularly influenced this way.



88. When something upsets my child, he/she stays where he/she is and cries.

Low: Goes to you when he/she cries.
Doesn't wait for you to come to him/her.



89. My child's facial expressions are strong and clear when he/she is playing with something.

Low: Facial expressions are not particularly clear or varied.



90. If I move very far, my child follows along and continues his/her play in the area I have moved to. (Doesn't have to be called or carried along; doesn't stop play or get upset).

Middle: If child isn't allowed or doesn't have room to move very far away.

Low: Child may or may not continue play but does not adjust location when you move.

