



The Attachment Connection: Parenting a Secure and Confident Child Using the Science of Attachment Theory

Ruth P. Newton , Allan N. Schore (Foreword)

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Studies in the 1950s revealed that young children hospitalized without their parents respond first by crying for them, then by showing signs of despair, and finally by emotionally detaching from the parents and acting indifferent to their absence. This detachment is hard to repair and highly detrimental to a child's development-most children who feel they cannot rely on their parents grow up to become more emotionally insecure and less self-assured than their peers.

The Attachment Connection sorts out the facts from the fiction about parent-child attachment and shows how paying attention to the emotional needs of your child, particularly during the first five years of development, can help him or her grow up happy, secure, and confident. You'll discover how your child's brain is developing at each stage of growth and learn to use reasonable, easy-to-implement guidelines based on sound science to foster secure attachment, healthy social skills, and emotional regulation in your child.

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Dominic says

I know, I know. I said I wouldn't read another parenting book for a while, but I started this one before Jude was born and I was looking for a little something to stimulate my thinking about being a dad.

And now this one is not a *bad* book, per se. Newton uses scientific proof to back up her claims, and I honestly believe in the core ideas here (as I believe in the core ideas of Attachment Parenting, period). I did learn a few things, too.

But I'm just tired of reading parenting books and having to, because I happen to be a man, put up with the author's biases that 1) only a mother would choose to be an attachment parent, 2) only a woman would read this book, and 3) only a woman have the natural ability to "attach." Newton does explicitly say that "men can do it too" (a refrain in most of the books I read about parenting), but I'm just tired of it.

In my last parenting review, I said that the best expert on your child is "YOU"! I stand by this statement. Pick and choose advice where you may, but take nothing as gospel. Yet there was one chapter in this book that just rubbed me the wrong way, and made me stop reading. In Chapter 13, Newton implies that the *only reason* a parent would put their kid in day care is because they couldn't afford otherwise. She doesn't harbor the inkling that parents would want to utilize day care because they actually want to work (or any other reason, in fact). She tries to make parents feel like they are taking some tremendous risk in the life of their child in doing so. And again, her implication is that the mother should be the one staying home (--but the father will do, I guess, if that's all that you can make happen).

It is for this book's subtexts, assumptions, biases, and inability to see the *equal* role BOTH PARENTS can play in attachment that I say, "No more!"

Marika Alexander says

Very useful book for parents, primary caregivers and even childcare providers. The crux of the message I took away is primary caregivers need to help up-regulate positive emotions and help down-regulate difficult/negative emotions. Helping children do this is the foundation of secure children. It breaks down the different developmental stages and offers lots of practical advice on how best to support children based on the developmental stage.

Rachel says

I bought this book hoping it would discuss evidence for "attachment parenting" (babywearing, co-sleeping, etc.) but instead it discussed how attachment theory applies to parents. They're two different things so I was a little disappointed. Attachment theory is the one that found four different attachment styles--secure, insecure,

ambivalent, and avoidant. Securely attached children use their parent as a base to explore the world around them in an unfamiliar situation.

The book stressed how important it is to look at infants' "right-brain" (ugh) communication and how your facial expressions, body language, and holding them communicate a lot more than words. It seems pretty obvious, but it was refreshing to read about how a child's attachment should be developing since many books focus on physical and cognitive development. A lot of the research cited on attachment theory was pretty old though, so I would have liked to see some more recent research on the subject (or was it just a trend in the 70s).

Kendra says

An excellent look at early brain development and the effect of parental attunement on a child's emotional regulation. Grounded in solid and widely accepted research, this book does not delve into parenting controversies (sleep schedules, cosleeping, etc), but provides great information on how to help your child become secure and confident, with a solid sense of self, relationality, and empathy that will foster healthy relationships throughout life.

Toy Cooper-wright says

Don't get lost!

I do not come from a background in psychology (since this is the language of this book), but the findings on attachment and one's development is astonishing, if you don't have children great because you need to learn a bit about yourself and your partner before you embark on the adventure of parenthood. I use to joke and say that people need licences and special classes for exotic animals, yet there is no requirement for the creation and raising of a human being.

Jody says

I thought this book was really great in terms of breaking down the way that parenting contributes to brain development. I have a child who missed out on getting her needs met as a young child so it was helpful to better understand what she missed out on and what sort of effect that had on her development. I also have a toddler and I appreciated getting to better understand why what we do is helpful and what we could be doing more of. I also like that this author automatically assumes that most people want to parent their children well.

Louise Sullivan says

This is a very accessible book for parents and others who are interested in how to raise secure children using the knowledge gleaned from attachment theory research. Contains an extensive bibliography.

Erin says

As I become a parent, I wanted to learn more about attachment theory and practical ways to incorporate this theory into my parenting. This book gives a lot of great case studies, lists of developmental benchmarks by ages, and concrete actions for creating secure attachment without making it seem that there is a "right way" and a "wrong way" to parent. This book instead suggests many simple ways to bond with a child and have a strong and secure emotional connection with your child. I also appreciated the straightforward, readable, but not dumbed down discussion of the research underlying attachment theory. Overall, this book was readable and useful to me as a new parent.

Pearl Bamford says

Great easily acceptable read for parent/ individuals who want to gain an insight into Attachment theory.

K says

Perhaps a good resource for very new parents. However, as the parent of a kid who turns two next month, I find it gives only the most vague overview of development of older toddlers/preschoolers.

Sara says

Great book on how to foster a secure, healthy attachment between child and parent. Based on the science of attachment theory and written from a developmental perspective.

Unlike "attachment parenting" books, this one isn't about breastfeeding, co-sleeping, and baby wearing. It's great if those things work for your family, but even if you are formula feeding and stroller pushing mom in heels, this is an awesome resource.

You'll learn about why attachment matters, what healthy and unhealthy attachments look like, social-emotional and brain development from newborn to four years, and how to cultivate attachment at different ages and stages.

There are sections on play and attachment, developmental milestones, and a section about child care concerns and issues in the light of attachment theory at the end.

Highly recommended.

Bianca says

Good, straightforward book that focus more on the 'why's' of attachment parenting than the 'how's'. Personally I like learning about neuro connections and attachment theory, but if you are looking for something more instructive, then I recommend you read one of Dr. Sear's books. This is a clear overview of the importance of attachment parenting though, so it might be good as a book that you read and relay information from it to your non reading partner. Plenty of interested ideas and anecdotes to discuss.

Laura says

I was looking for a book about the science of attachment parenting (babywearing, cosleeping, etc.) when I found this. It turned out to be about attachment theory. Attachment theory explores how babies bond with their caregivers and what effect the quality of the bond has on their neurological development. It was an interesting read so I finished it anyway, but I wanted to warn other people who might make the same mistake.

Cris says

This book seems to be very scientific at first but in reality it does show the skimpiness of attachment research. However, I do think the author has a good instincts in reading family environments. I thought her observations of the seeming indifference of less attached children in the classical attachment experiment was very on point. While these children appeared outwardly calm in reality their heart rate increased when the mother came back into the room after a planned absence and they also avoided eye contact. Her own office 'studies' are very interesting, if statistically meaningless, from parents who share too much information (making the child insecure) to parents who overstimulate children. What I liked about the book is that it posited that even homes where both parents work CAN do attachment parenting, which I think is generally disbelieved. She suggests a secondary attachment to a child care provider is healthier if the person does not keep changing. A small part of the book is dedicated to talking about the role of the father as a secondary attachment in early childhood as the child begins to identify with another figure. Throughout the book Newton keeps relating childhood attachment issues to later emotional problems and while I can see that that COULD be a partial cause (an inability to receive love and trust) for those later problems there are really no statistics to back that up because the theory is so new. I wish she had talked more about the influence of personality on attached children.

Stacey Allen says

Interesting read.
