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| **LT 1: Attachment: Key Concepts** | | |
| **Attachment -** An enduring bond formed with a significant other | | |
| Around 6 months, babies begin to show a strong attachment bond to their primary caregivers. There are ways of investigating whether a child has developed an attachment or not. **Two main measures of attachment are: separation protest** and **stranger anxiety.**   1. **Separation Protest** – When an individual shows upset and distress on separation from an attachment figure   *This measures how much a child is upset when they are left by their primary caregiver(s)*. If a child has formed an attachment to their primary caregiver, they will show high levels of distress on separation, such as sobbing, searching for the caregiver and reaching after the caregiver. A child who has not formed an attachment will show little emotion when separated from the caregiver.   1. **Stranger anxiety –** When an individual shows anxiety and distress in the presence of an unfamiliar person   *This* *measures how much a child is afraid when they are in presence of a stranger.* If a child has formed an attachment to their primary caregiver(s), they will express fear when approached or left with a stranger. For example, they will start screaming, try to get away from the stranger or appear tense. A child who has not formed an attachment will show little emotion in the presence of a stranger. | | |
| **The Strange Situation and 3 different attachment types: Secure, Insecure-avoidant and Insecure-ambivalent** | | |
| In the 1960s, Mary Ainsworth developed a procedure to show that infants formed different types of attachment. She called this **‘The Strange Situation’**. This was a controlled observation and involved observing mothers and their children in a lab via a one-way mirror. The children were between 12 and 18 months old. It involved a series of stages:   1. Mothers and infants entered the lab 2. The infant played with some toys while the mother was still there 3. A stranger entered the lab and the mother left Measuring: Stranger anxiety and Separation Protest 4. The stranger tried to comfort the infant Measuring: Stranger anxiety and Separation Protest 5. The mother returned and the stranger left 6. The mother comforted the infant and then left for the second time Measuring: Separation Protest 7. The infant was then left alone for a short period of time Measuring: Separation Protest 8. The stranger returned and tried to interact with the infant Measuring: Stranger anxiety 9. Finally, the mother returned and comforted the infant and the stranger left.   Throughout the Strange Situation, the children were observed to see how they reacted at the different stages. From her observations, Ainsworth identified 3 attachment types: A Secure Attachment, an Insecure-avoidant Attachment, and an Insecure-ambivalent Attachment. | | |
| **Secure Attachment:** | **Insecure- avoidant:** | **Insecure- ambivalent:** |
| When a child and caregiver have a relationship based on trust and security, and the child wishes to interact with caregiver.  **Children who showed secure attachments would…**   * Explore while playing with toys in lab * Use mother as a safe base * Showed signs of distress when mother left * Easily comforted on her return * Allowed stranger to comfort them but preferred being with their mother   Secure is described as best type of attachment as it is based on trust and security. 70% were securely attached.  **Most common**: In the UK | When a child and caregiver have a relationship in which the child is quite independent of the caregiver.  **Children who showed insecure-avoidant would…**   * Play in the lab but did not pay attention to the mother whilst playing * Not distressed when mother left * Easily comforted by the stranger * Ignore mother on return to the lab   Described as a weak attachment as infant is showing high levels of independence. Found that 15% of infants were insecure-avoidant.  **Most common**: In Germany as carers encourage more independence in their children. | When a child and caregiver have a relationship where the child is clingy and demanding, yet awkward with the caregiver also  **Children who showed insecure-ambivalent would…**   * Not stray far from the mother when playing * Extremely distressed when mother left * Seek and reach out for mother on return but then resist her and push her away. * Very difficult for strangers to comfort them   Described as a poor attachment as infant is showing little trust or security. It was found that 15% of infants were insecure-ambivalent in their attachments.  **Most common**: In Japan as carers tend to develop more intense relationships with their children. |