

Building Strong Foundations: Resilience and the Role of Relationships and Attachments

Understanding how secure attachments build resilience and how educators play a crucial role in fostering these relationships



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Objectives

1

Identify the importance of safe secure relationships and attachments.

2

Connect how relationships and attachments impact the development of resilience.

Icebreaker

- Who is your safe person?
- Why?
- List at least three traits about that person.



What is Attachment Theory?

Definition: The effects of your earliest emotional bonds with the person(s) most responsible for your well-being.

A person's attachment style and subsequent needs are directly affected by early experiences with influential adults (caregivers) in their lives.



The Four Attachment Styles

Attachment Styles of Children

Secure



Child becomes distressed when parent leaves, but is easily comforted when the parent returns.

Avoidant

Child is not distressed when parent leaves and ignores parent when they return. This is the child's covert way of managing their anxiety.



Anxious-Resistant

Child is distressed when parent leaves, and seeks to punish the parent by displaying overt feelings such as anger.



Disorganised

Child does not have a predictable pattern of attachment. Includes child who displays signs of depression and disturbing behaviour.



How Attachment Forms



Early interactions shape brain architecture.

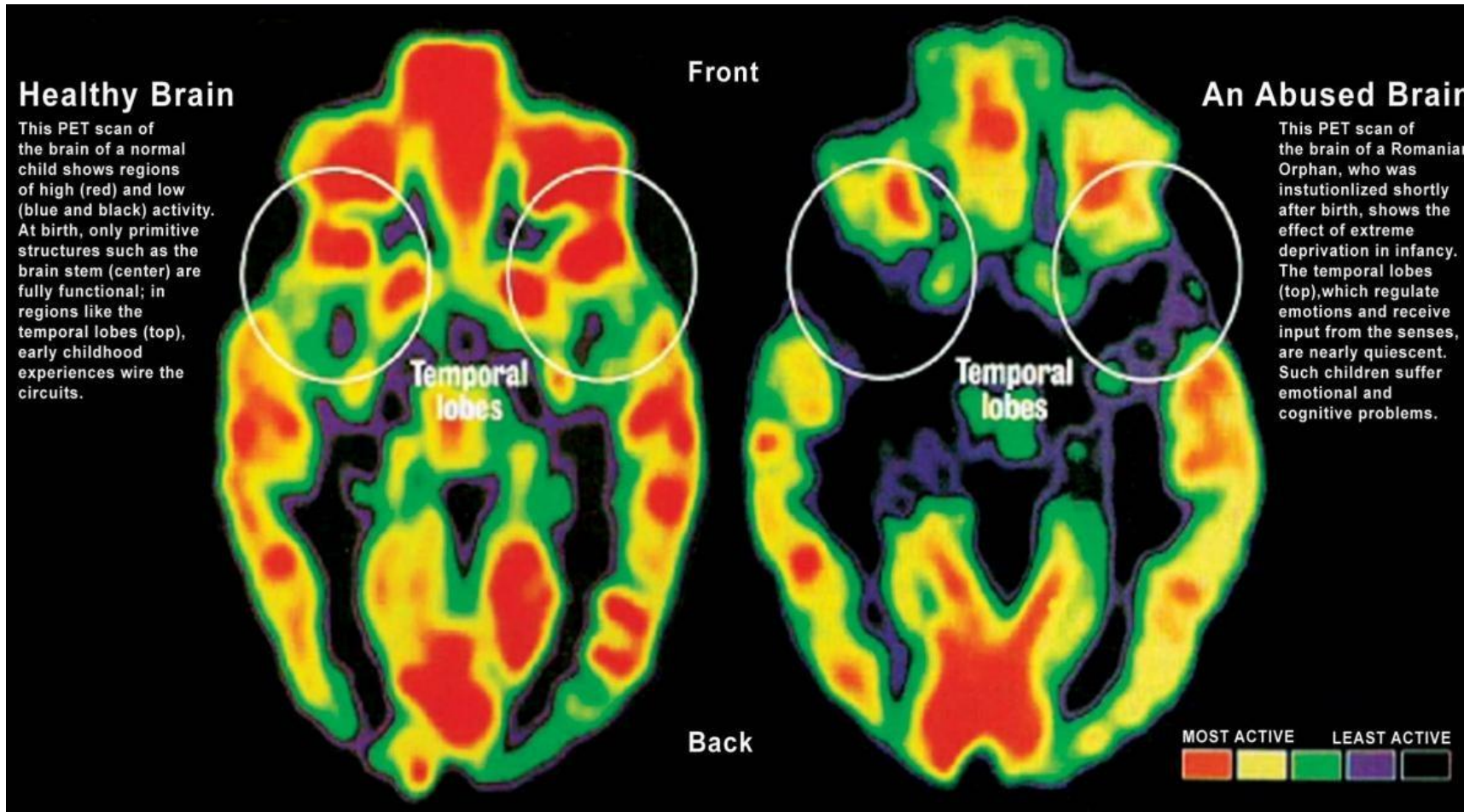


Secure attachment fosters emotional regulation.



Trauma and instability can impact brain development.

Impact of Attachment on the Brain



What do you notice here?

What stands out the most?

Strategies for Building Positive Relationships



CONSISTENCY



WARMTH &
RESPONSIVENESS



ONE-ON-ONE
CONNECTIONS



ENCOURAGING
EMOTIONAL
EXPRESSION



USING PLAY TO
CONNECT



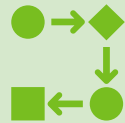
INDIVIDUALIZED
CONNECTIONS/
RELATIONSHIPS

What is Resilience?

The process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances.



Capacity



Process



Result

The Science of Resilience and Relationships

Why do some children thrive while others struggle?

Internal Protective Factors: The Child's Own Strengths

- Optimism
- Confidence & self-control
- Problem-solving
- Positive self-identity
- Sense of humor

External Protective Factors: Support from the Environment

- Bonding & relationships
- A safe & predictable environment
- Supportive community
- Opportunities to succeed

Small Group Discussion

Case Studies on Attachment Challenges



In small groups, read the case study and identify what attachment style the child may have.



Brainstorm strategies that could help foster a secure attachment in the classroom and respond to the discussion questions.



Group share out

Key Considerations

1. Cultural Sensitivity Around Attachment

- Understanding different cultural attachment styles.
- Avoiding assumptions – not all families express attachment in the same way.
- Respecting family traditions and caregiving values.
- Building bridges between home and school.

2. Supporting Children with Special Needs

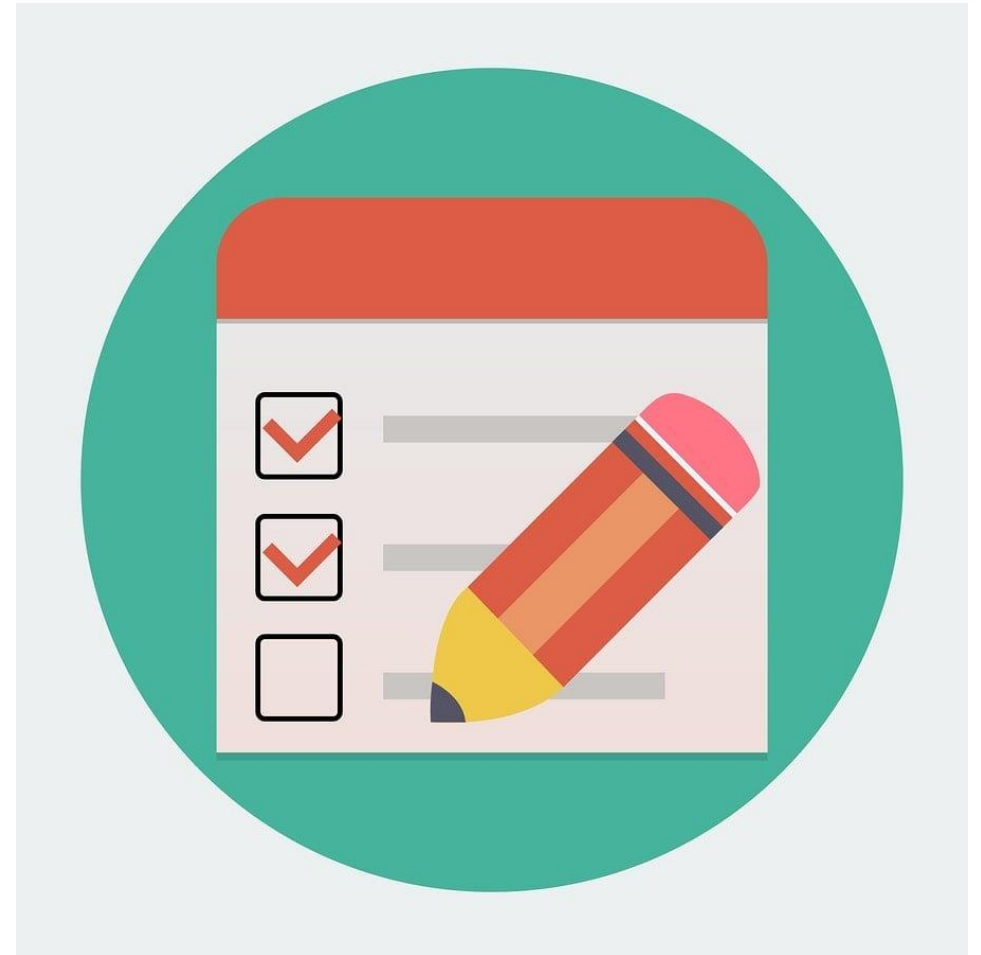
- Understanding sensory and emotional needs.
- Adjusting expectations and interactions.
- Providing alternative ways to connect.

3. Supporting Children Experience Major Life Changes

- Understand the emotional and behavioral impact of unstable housing..
- Maintain consistent routines and a predictable classroom environment.
- Provide a designated safe space where children can relax and feel secure.
- Communicate with families to connect them with community resources.

Creating a Personal Action Plan

1. Identify one area to improve in building relationships.
2. Write down 2-3 specific actions you will take.
3. Share with a partner for accountability.



Thank You!



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