

“baby bonding: Week 3” “What is attachment?”

Welcome (Headspace and Containment)

Invite parents/carers and babies to come and sit with you in a circle; name badges for parent and baby.

Welcome everyone and thank them for coming.

The hello song.

Group agreement (Headspace and Containment)

Still working OK? Stick it up on the wall.

Circle time (Headspace and Containment)

Three or four rhymes and songs to enjoy together.

HINT: Model the rhymes/songs very sensitively with your own baby, asking the baby's permission and responding to her wishes and preferences.

Breathing and regulation (Regulation and Relaxation)

Ask the group to stand in a circle; invite parents to take some deep breaths in and out; now place feet hip-width apart and feel really grounded. Gently rock from side to side, noticing when you cross the centre point. Share with parents that babies cannot regulate their own feelings and need our help – they need to borrow us when we are feeling very tired from caring for a little one! Practising centring, breathing and a gentle sway can help us feel calm and in turn calm our babies.

Watching and wondering (Head, Heart and Hands)

Ask parents to either hold their baby or lay her down – whatever they think their baby needs right now. Ask them to spend time just watching their baby – *really* watching them. This week we are going



RESOURCES YOU WILL NEED

Name stickers/
pens

Our group
agreement

Blu-Tack

Music on phone

Rhyme/song
words

HHH cards

Attachment
handout

Relaxation
script

to move from our heads to our hearts. See if you can imagine what your baby is feeling right now. Guessing is good.

You can also use the guided observation questioning technique: Behaviour, Meaning, Feeling (BMF), if this supports RF more effectively:

Behaviour: Let's really watch our little one and notice every tiny thing she does – breathing, twitching, blinking, flicking of fingers, a hiccup.

Meaning: What does this behaviour mean? What is behind it?

Feeling: What feeling is this behaviour trying to communicate?

HINT: Quiet, calm music; model carefully with your own baby – notice what is happening in the group and reflect gently. For example, "You saw that Ben was getting frustrated then – you picked up on it". Give the babies a voice, e.g. "Ben, Mummy was right about you not being happy about that; she's really trying to tune in to you".

Loving touch (Head, Heart and Hands)

Invite parents to place their baby in front of them and then to ask the baby for permission to try some loving baby touch.

Place both hands on your baby's chest and take some lovely deep breaths; practise baby strokes – add a few more; if appropriate, hum or sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" as a loving lullaby.

HINT: Model carefully – music still on in the background.

A "gift" or "Bag of Ideas": sharing ideas and information with parents and carers (Developmental knowledge)

Share the main message that secure attachment is linked to the best outcomes for our babies and children. Share that our babies feel safe and secure when we hold them in mind, think about things from their point of view and do and say things which make them feel that we understand them. This is why we practise HHH in baby bonding; head for thoughts, heart for feelings and hands for actions and words. Give out the HHH cards for parents and carers to keep.

Handout: attachment information for parents and carers (online).

Creative relaxation (Regulation and Relaxation)

Enjoy creative relaxation together (see suggested scripts at the back of the book).

HINT: Deliver script in a calm voice and at a gentle pace, with music on in the background.

Try this at home (Head, Heart and Hands)

Ask parents to practise HHH at home with their baby, whether born or still growing inside. Encourage parents to chat to their baby: “I can see you are not happy, are you? I’ll try and comfort you. Let me know if I get it wrong and I’ll try something else.”

Brief recap of the session and see you next time (Headspace and Containment)

Recap gently what we have covered today and thank parents for coming and taking the time out of their busy days. End with good byes/see you next time for session 4.