

Observation Checklist What to Look for in Assessing Attachment and Bonding

Birth to One Year

Does the Child...?	Does the Parent...?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make/maintain eye contact • Establish joint attention • Make and maintain efforts to get/stay in physical contact with parent • Appear alert • Respond to people • Show interest in the human face • Track with his/her eyes • Vocalize frequently (Coo, babble, jargon) • Exhibit expected motor development (Head control, rolling, sitting, crawling, etc.) • Signal discomfort • Recover from being upset • Able to regulate states – remain alert, asleep, eat, sleep, eliminate on regular schedule • Mood- happy/fussy • Appear to be easily comforted • Exhibit normal or excessive fussiness • Appear outgoing or passive and withdrawn • Have good muscle tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the infant’s vocalizations • Change voice tone when talking to or about the infant • Engage in face to face contact with the infant • Exhibit interest in and encourage age appropriate development • Respond to the infant’s cues • Demonstrate the ability to comfort the infant • Enjoy close physical contact with the infant • Initiate positive interactions with the infant • Identify positive qualities in the infant

Adapted from Fahlberg, V.I. (1991). *A child’s journey through placement*. Indianapolis, IN.: Perspective Press.

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One to Five Years

Does the Child...?	Does the Parent...?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore their surroundings • Check in regularly with the parent – visually and physically • Respond positively to the parents • Keep themselves occupied • Show signs of reciprocity • Seem relaxed and happy • Look at people when communicating • Show emotions in a recognized manner • React to pain and pleasure • Engage in age appropriate activities • Use speech appropriately • Respond to parental limit setting • Demonstrate normal fears • React positively to physical closeness • Show a response to separation • Note the parent’s return • Exhibit signs of pride and joy • Show signs of empathy • Show signs of embarrassment, shame, guilt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use disciplinary measures appropriate for the child’s age • Respond to the child’s overtures • Initiate affection • Provide effective comforting • Initiate positive interactions with the child • Accept expressions of autonomy • See the child as positively “taking after” a family member • Seem aware of child’s cues • Enjoy reciprocal interactions with the child • Respond to child’s affection • Set age appropriate limits • Respond supportively when the child shows fear

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Grade School Years

Does the Child...?	Does the Parent...?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behave as though s/he likes himself • Show pride in accomplishments • Share with others • Accept adult imposed limits • Verbalize likes and dislikes • Try new tasks • Acknowledge their mistakes • Seem relaxed and happy • Express a wide range of emotions • Establish eye contact • Exhibit confidence in their own abilities • Appear to be developing a conscience • Move in a relaxed manner • Smile easily • Look comfortable when speaking with adults • React positively to parents being physically close • Have positive interactions with siblings and or peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show interest in the child's school performance • Accept expression of negative feelings • Respond to the child's overtures • Provide opportunities for the child to be with peers • Handle problems between siblings with fairness • Initiate affectionate overtures • Use disciplinary measures appropriate for child's age • Assign the child age appropriate responsibilities • Seem to enjoy the child • Know the child's likes and dislikes • Give clear messages about behaviors that are approved or disapproved of • Comment on positive behaviors as well as negative

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