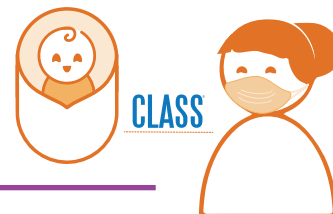


# Infant CLASS® Concepts for Socially Distanced Settings

# ATTACHMENT



## About Attachment

Young infants develop a unique relationship—known as attachment—with their caregivers. To develop secure bonds, infants need to know that at least one person really cares about them. Caregivers provide that comfort by helping infants regulate needs and emotions, such as hunger and sadness. With healthy attachments, infants develop a sense of safety and trust.



## CLASS Focus



### Relational Climate

The connections, emotions, and respect you convey to infants. Infants' responses to these interactions.



### Teacher Sensitivity

Your awareness of and responsiveness to infants' cues and the ability to provide comfort and resolve distress.



### Facilitated Exploration

Your support of infants' engagement and development through facilitation of their experiences and interactions in routine care and playtime.



### Early Language Support

The frequency and quality of your language-stimulation and language-facilitation techniques.

## Planning for Attachment in a Socially Distanced Setting

Infants need to be held, to have face-to-face interactions, to feel another human heartbeat. By meeting these needs, caregivers foster attachment. Plan how you will meet these essential needs—while keeping yourself and infants safe.



### Building Attachment

Caregivers need to build attachment with infants to help them thrive. Meanwhile, social distancing is necessary to keep settings safe. Healthy attachments are a strong starting place for infants to learn and grow.

#### Some Suggestions

- ① Respond to infants' specific needs, washing your hands before and after any touch.
- ② Wear face protection when you're holding infants close.
- ③ Follow through if infants cue that they'd like to explore, and disinfect surfaces after.

#### Your Idea(s)

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### Forming Emotional Trust

When infants can trust their caregivers, they feel not only safe but also ready for learning and developing. Some social distancing precautions mean caregivers need to make an extra effort to form that trust.

#### Some Suggestions

- ① Use your eyes and voice to match infants' affect when you're wearing a mask.
- ② Be consistent in your responses to infants' needs.
- ③ Celebrate infants' efforts with an excited voice and gesture.

#### Your Idea(s)

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### Providing Reassurance

When frightened, sad, frustrated, or even disgusted, infants seek comfort in caregivers. Different emotions call for different responses. But in socially distanced settings, staying safe is always a part of providing reassurance.

#### Some Suggestions

- ① If you can't physically meet an infant's need right away, gently call out their name.
- ② When your mask upsets an infant, use it to play peekaboo. Wash your hands afterward.
- ③ Continue providing care after providing reassurance.

#### Your Idea(s)

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### School-to-Home Connections

Family members are a child's first teachers. So caregivers should maintain a close partnership with families. Building a trusting relationship with them helps you take all necessary precautions to keep infants and yourself healthy. Whether by phone, email, or text, provide opportunities for each family to share information and ideas about the developmental goals for their child. You can also schedule opportunities to share developmentally appropriate practices at home. Finally, by sharing videos of your interactions with infants, families can hear you demonstrating those practices, responding to their needs, and building healthy attachment.

## Before starting your day with infants ...

Now that you've brainstormed some ways to form attachment in your socially distanced setting, choose an interaction goal to focus on the next time you're with infants.

Today, my interaction goal is:

- ☐ Make myself familiar: hold infants, talk with them.
- ☐ Promptly respond to infants' cries.
- ☐ Spend some one-on-one time with each infant.
- ☐ Follow an infant's interest in an activity.
- ☐ Verbally communicate my actions with each infant.
- ☐ Adjust experiences based on infants' development.

## After your day together ...

How did it go? Were you able to form attachment in the way you chose from the previous list? Check off the related observation to the right! What else did you notice?

Today, I noticed that:

- ☐ Infants seem more comfortable when we interact.
- ☐ I quickly soothed an infant in distress.
- ☐ Each individual infant trusts me a bit more.
- ☐ An infant and I enjoyed an activity together.
- ☐ Infants looked at me as I communicated my actions.
- ☐ Infants were more absorbed in experiences.

## Next time you're together with infants ...

Now that you've taken a moment to reflect on the interactions you had today, it's time to consider what you'll do next to continue reinforcing attachment. Based on your reflection, consider the statements below, and complete those that stand out to you.

- 1 Respond to infants' cries or fussing by \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Adjust my responses by \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Provide these choices: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Encourage infants to persist in their communication by \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Do this again: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Try this instead: \_\_\_\_\_



## Attachment Reminders!

Just snip and tape somewhere special in your classroom.



**Let each infant  
feel seen.  
Call them by  
name.**



**Smile! Make  
friendly eye  
contact, too!**



**Hug and hold  
infants.**



**Inform infants  
before lifting,  
moving, or  
touching them.**



**Have fun  
together!  
Laugh! Move!**



**Accept  
feelings. Show  
empathy.**



**Monitor and  
adjust infants'  
engagement.**



**Offer sensory  
experiences  
with water or  
sponges or ...**



**Talk *and* listen.  
Listen *and* talk.**