Attachment and Wellbeing: What's the problem?
What is attachment

- John Bowlby’s (1969) attachment theory
- Attachment to a primary caregiver is instinctive
- A focus on the importance of attachment with the mother as a survival instinct
Secure attachment

* Mother is...
  - Responsive
  - Sensitive
  - Consistent

Child is...
  - Secure
  - Exploring
  - Happy

The child believes and trusts that his needs will be met by the caregiver.
Avoidant Attachment

* Mother is...
  - Distant
  - Disengaged
  - Neglectful

* Child is...
  - Withdrawn
  - Does not explore
  - Quiet

Child believes his needs will not be met
Ambivalent Attachment

∗ Mother is...
- Inconsistent
- Sometimes sensitive
- Sometimes neglectful

∗ Child is...
- Anxious
- Insecure
- Angry

Child cannot rely on his needs being met
Disorganised Attachment

* Mother is...
  - Frightened
  - Passive
  - Extreme
  - Frightening

* Child is...
  - Depressed
  - Angry
  - Passive
  - Unresponsive

Child is severely confused with no strategy to have his needs met
At Three Years of Age

- Perry & Pollard (1997)
Poor attachment and socio-economic disadvantage: the evidence links

- Scanlon & Epkins 2013
- O’Neil 2010
- Munson et al 2001
- Spieker & Booth 1988
- Lyons-Ruth et al 1990
- Carlson et al 1989
What about those who experience it?
Stakeholder views

- Is this a problem?
- Impact of children?
- What support mechanisms are in place?
Emotional and behavioural development not given enough weight in curriculum

Problem now?
Existing Solutions?

- Main & Weston 1981
- Bowlby 1951 “Difficulties which are insoluble at 13 may be handled quickly and effectively at 3.”
- Rutter 1985
- Thorburn 2014
- ‘Cinderella Law’
Why does the problem still exist?

- Focus still on attainment in literacy and numeracy
- No credit or measure given for improvements in emotional wellbeing in inspection or school data
- Teachers and staff know it is important but need to focus on the attainment of children to show their worth and children’s progress
- Little time left to focus on individual children’s emotional and behavioural needs.
References


References