



Notes to print - from Krista and Dr. Barbara

Ambivalent Attachment

1. Characteristics of the parents who are creating an ambivalent child?

Preoccupied and inconsistent

- Unable to provide the consistency of care children need to thrive
- Don't have the emotional resources to consistently meet the needs of the child
- Often misinterprets the needs of the child and imposes own needs on them
- Anxious parent
 - insecure in their parenting ability to the point that the baby's upset only triggers their own anxiety
 - They are unable to soothe the child as they absorb the baby's dysregulation
- Preoccupied parent
 - Overwhelmed by life—finances, divorce,
 - Preoccupied by technology or a job
 - May be holding their child while playing a game on their cell phone or watching TV.
- Preoccupied with their own needs
 - Role reversal--Look to the child to meet their needs
 - Child feels unprotected
 - Send very mixed messages—sometimes over protective and at others don't offer comfort
- Post-partum depression—inconsistent response—instead of looking into a face of joy and delight looks into the face with no affect

2. What are the characteristics of The ambivalent child?

- Does not soothe in the presence of the parent
- Cries more at one year of age
- Exaggerated emotion because never sure of attachment figure will respond
- Child throws temper tantrums
- Child is both demanding and clingy—when mom leaves never sure he will get her back so come unglued when she leaves
- Hard to please—nothing is ever right
- Wants to be center of attention—tattles, becomes class clown
- Predicts being the victim of a bully
- Predicts addictive behaviors
- Struggles in relationships with peers—wants things their way, on their terms

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