

Mind

nobody's perfect

Attachment and Your Child's Feelings

- **Connect with your child.** A child's ability to love, trust, feel, and learn starts with the deep emotional tie that he forms with the people who take care of him. This emotional connection starts before birth. It is called attachment.
- **Respond to your child's needs.** Secure attachment develops when you respond to your child's needs. She needs you to be warm, loving, and dependable. Comfort your child when she is upset, frightened, sick, or hurt. Cuddle your baby and give lots of hugs. Speak and sing softly to her.
- **Teach your child about feelings.** Your baby cries to tell you when she needs you to look after her. It is best to go to your baby when she cries. When your child is older, talk to her about her feelings. Use words that name feelings such as happy, sad, angry, or nervous.
- **Your child's attachment to you makes a difference.** A baby's attachment to her parents influences how her brain develops. When she feels safe, she is open to learning.
- **Pay close attention to your baby.** Notice what he is trying to tell you. Notice what he likes and does not like. Follow his lead. Smile back when he smiles. Talk to him when he makes little sounds.



i The strong attachment you build when your child is young will last a lifetime.

For more information about *Nobody's Perfect*, or to download this document, please search "Nobody's Perfect Tipsheets" on Canada.ca.



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Fun & Easy Activities

Peek-a-Boo and Hide-and-Seek

- Babies and young children are sometimes scared when their parents go away. You can play games that teach your child that even when you go away, you always come back.
- You can start when your baby is only 4 or 5 months old. Put your baby in a baby seat and sit facing him. Sit so that your face is quite close to his face. When he is looking at you, hide your face behind a cloth. Say, "Where am I?" When he starts to move his feet and hands, take the cloth away and say gently "Peek-a-boo!" Smile at him. Wait till he smiles back then hide again. Go slowly. Stop if your child seems not interested any more.
- When your child is older, he can put the cloth in front of his own face to play the game. In the game of hide-and-seek, take turns with your older child. Sometimes he will hide where you can see him. Pretend you cannot see him and say, "Where are you?" He will get excited. Look a few places before you finally say, "I found you!" Then you hide and wait till he finds you.

Feelings in Pictures

- You can make a homemade book about feelings. Cut pictures of children out of magazines and newspapers. Look for pictures of children with different expressions that show feelings. Glue or tape the pictures onto pieces of cardboard. Make two holes on one edge of each page. Put string through the holes to tie the pieces of cardboard together into a book.
- If you have a camera, you can use photos of your child to make your book. Take pictures of her pretending to be sad, happy, frustrated, angry, bored, and so on. Your child will enjoy looking at photos of herself. Let her turn the pages and tell you how she feels.

