

# Understanding Attachment & Adoptive Children

## What is Attachment?

- Attachment is the affectional tie between two people.
- Attachment is often used to refer to the bond between mother & infant.

## Why is Attachment Important?

- Sometimes, kids who have been adopted have difficulties with attachment.
- Attachment is the basis for the development of trust and safety.
- The quality of the initial attachment affects a person's ability to manage their emotions because it is through the attachment process that we learn how to self-soothe.
- Children who have experienced disruptions in their attachments often experience difficulties managing their emotions and getting along with others. Instead of getting along better with people over time, these children often have more problems in longer-standing or more intimate relationships.
- Children with attachment issues often appear very likable to teachers, relatives, and people who are not their primary caretakers.
- Children with attachment issues often attempt to disrupt their relationships with their primary caregivers.
- Often, kids who have been adopted benefit from the parenting techniques that work with children who are experiencing attachment difficulties, whether or not they are having trouble with attachments.

## How Attachment Issues Appear in Relationships between Children and Parents

- They think and expect the worse from their caretakers.
- They don't know how to relax with, enjoy, or rely on their caretakers.
- They will attempt to re-create in their new home what they experienced before in their old home(s).
- They will attempt to create relationships that mirror their emotional experience.
- Basically, as human beings, we re-create what we are familiar with, so a child who comes from a neglected or abused home will try to create the same atmosphere as they experienced previously.

## Implications for Adoptive Parents

- Regular parenting methods don't always work.
- You will have to work hard to maintain a relaxed atmosphere at home.
- Others in your life may not understand your difficulties with your child because the child does not behave in the same way with them.
- With hard work, your child can develop much healthier attachments and can learn to manage their own emotions better.