

How Parent Child Mother Goose Program supports attachment and its implication in Early Human Development

There is a vast body of research on attachment and how it affects infant's emotional development and the ability to communicate.

Nancy Cohen (2005) addresses: *From infancy onward, language and psychosocial and emotional development are interrelated. Communication begins in the very first days of life.*

Trevarthen's observation of infant's behavior leads him to the conclusion that infants possess an emotional and communicational brain at birth.

Within a few weeks after birth, infants take up direct face to face exchanges.... [and] effectively coordinate vocal, oral and gestural expressions (Trevarthen, 1988, p.1)

Dr. Sarah Blaffer Hrdy in her book *Mothers and Others* (2009) reviews how child rearing practices evolved to make possible advanced cognitive and social development in the human race. Her research shows how these practices involved not just the mother in isolation, but the whole community around her. The extended family plays an important role in the development of parent and child attachment.

Many studies have found that mothers with more social support are more responsive to their infant's needs. The ability to respond appropriately to the child's need is what will lead to his emotional regulation and to communicate with others.

The process of attachment between mother and child needs a community of support for it to grow. Infant's emotional, cognitive, and physical development is better when alloparents participate in their care, and therefore, multiple attachments are formed.

The Parent Child Mother Goose Program supports attachment through oral rhymes and storytelling. The slow pace group sessions focus on the joy of playing with rhymes, songs, movement, and stories from the oral tradition.

In a very natural circular setting parents and infants learn from observing each other. Rhymes are taught through repetition, which provides lots of opportunities for mother and infant interaction: eye contact, talking, listening, touching, smiling, balancing, and playing.

Relevant emotional interactions between caregiver and infant enable the formation and manipulation of symbols, which is the prerequisite for the abstract use of language. This emotional signaling occurs through touching, holding, smelling, and rhythmic rocking . Shanker, S. (2004)

Current research in the Science of Early Human development states that the experiences for optimal brain development are positive close interactions between an infant and his-her caregiver. Through a continuum of sounds, touch, facial expressions, smiles, and vocalizations, the newborn receives the signals that are crucial for the function of the neural pathways that lead toward the development of language, literacy, and higher level of thinking and understanding. (Mustard, J.F. 2006)

These early brain experiences set the ground for the health, learning, and behavior of the individual for all his life span.

PCMGP is an adult centered program, based on adult learning principles of learning through experience, providing modeling and positive feedback. The teachers make observations of each couple and address all the positive responses and behavior that occur during the sessions.

The stories are told for the adult. The aim of the storytelling component is to build a community of listeners, as well as to allow the adult to

experience the pleasure of relax and enjoy a good story. But a good story is also a strong tool for the storyteller to connect with her audience and communicate feelings, thoughts, and values.

From our experience, babies are drawn to the stories and develop great listening skills. This is going to have a positive effect on their language comprehension later on.

There are stories about relationships or from all around the world that bring the adult memories of their own childhood or their cultural background.

We tell stories to the parents, and we ask them about their own stories. Parents are encouraged to tell the stories they were told in their childhood, or to share their favorite rhymes with the group.

There is a broad amount of research on how oral rhymes, songs and stories have a positive impact in the development of literacy skills. The oral repetition of the rhymes with movements help the infant to make the connection between the words and their meaning, and to predict and anticipate what comes next. (Holdaway, 1979)

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Other resources:

www.cli-ica.ca/en/about/multimedia/2006_video5.aspx

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