

ATTACHMENT: THE PURPOSE AND HOW IT HELPS THE CHILD

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Pathways to
Permanence 2

Parenting
Children
Who Have
Experienced
Trauma
AND LOSS

Session 4

Creating
Positive
Attachments
Part 1

Parent's
Toolbox

In the animal kingdom, the primary purpose of attachment is to provide safety and protection for the vulnerable. The young animal that seeks proximity to its caregiver is more likely to survive. It helps ensure the survival of the species.

Attachment in humans has many secondary purposes:

- the stimulation of the child's intellectual potential
- the development of the child's socialization skills
- the facilitation of identity formation
- to enable the child to modulate stress and arousal levels, to increase pleasurable states/feelings and to decrease stressful/painful states/feelings
- the development of the conscience, allowing the child to learn the critical skill of having empathy for others
- the ability to attend and focus
- the ability to delay the gratification of their needs being met

Attachment helps the child:

- attain full intellectual potential
- sort out perceptions
- think logically
- develop social emotions
- trust others
- trust self; become self reliant
- cope with stress/frustration
- reduce feelings of jealousy
- overcome common fears/worries
- increase feelings of self-worth