

Forming Close and Secure Relationships



Babies and toddlers need:

Warm and responsive caregivers

Meaningful adult and peer interactions

Opportunities to positively connect with others

Caregivers can:

- ✓ Warmly welcome babies and toddlers
- ✓ Smile, make eye contact, and use positive facial expressions
- ✓ Use a calm voice
- ✓ Hold, rock, cuddle, and sit close

- ✓ Get to know children's families
- ✓ Work to understand the meaning of a child's behavior and quickly respond to their physical and emotional needs
- ✓ Make meaningful connections with children one-on-one during routine care
- ✓ Show your joy and pleasure in a child's efforts, play, and accomplishments



Close and secure relationships support babies and toddlers to:



Feel valued and safe



Know they belong



Securely explore their environment



Understand and manage emotions



Babies and toddlers who engage in **nurturing, consistent, and responsive** interactions with caregivers are more likely to have **strong mental health**.

