

Practice Guidance for the use of the Observation of Parent Child Interaction Chart

- Persistent, severe neglect indicates a breakdown or a failure in the relationship between parent and child. This may be reflected in maladaptive attachment patterns; for example, neglected children are as likely as children maltreated in other ways to develop disorganised attachment styles. However, they differ from other maltreated children in that they show more evidence of delayed cognitive development, poor language skills, and poor social skills and coping abilities.
- They may also present as dependant and unhappy, and display a range of pathological behaviours. Children who are neglected from early infancy may find that as their need for nurturing or responsive relationships goes ignored, they withdraw from relationships, feel a greater sense of failure and may even blame themselves for the neglect they experience (Manly et al, 2001).
- The Observation of Parent Child Interaction Chart is designed to assist the practitioner to capture their reflections on observations on how a child and parent or parents respond to each other.

Type of attachment and indicators are shown below:

Secure attachment	Child has strong feelings of self-confidence and self-worth.
Avoidant attachment	Child does not seek out physical contact. Child is generally wary. Child's play is inhibited. Child is indiscriminate regarding who they interact with. The parent/carer fails to recognise or are indifferent to the child's signals and needs.
Ambivalent attachment	Child seeks contact, but does not settle when he/she receives it. Child resists attempts at pacification. Child demands parental attention, but angrily resists it. Child nervous of new situations. This behaviour often reflects parents/carers behaviour that is inconsistent and insensitive, rather than hostile and rejecting.
Disorganised attachment Child	Child is confused and has difficulty in controlling, feelings of aggression. Child has no impulse control. Child experiences parents/carers as frightening and/or frightened and not as a source of safety and comfort.

When to use the Chart.

The tool is mandatory for all children who are open to Children's Services, where there are concerns about neglect. Here are some examples of when to use the Observation of Parent Child Interaction Chart:

- To inform the Child and Family Assessment.
- To inform a reassessment.
- To inform an Initial Child Protection Case Conference report or Review Conference report.
- In supervised contact.
- To inform a comprehensive parenting assessment
- In an assessment of wider family as potential alternative carers.

Review / Contacts / References	
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