

Attachment Parenting and Secure Attachment: Exploring the Mother's Experiences and Relationship with the Child

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to explore Attachment Parenting and secure attachment taking a phenomenological approach, with the use of in-depth analysis to discover the meaning given to the lived parenting experiences of mothers with young toddlers. Four one to one semi-structured interviews were conducted, throughout which the participants were asked seven main questions, of which six were based on lived experiences, and one being an interpretative question. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was used to explore the lived parenting experiences of the participants. The audio files were transcribed verbatim, from which tables of themes were created across several stages. A Final table was created, followed by the creation of a narrative extract. Findings of the analysis suggest that the meaning of parenting is different for each person. Mothers feel the weight of responsibility, and experience stressful periods. However, the most important thing to the mother is the child's happiness. Participants expressed that providing and caring for a child, allowing the child to explore the surrounding environment, as well as being physically present and having a strong Mother-Infant relationship when the child is young, allows the child develop a secure attachment.

Introduction

Though our civilisation has made several impressive advances over time (technological, scientific, etc.), an awareness has emerged that the children in the world are not happy, not secure, and are growing up in a problematic society where issues such as substance abuse, poverty, mental illness etc. are rampant. To correct and prevent the progression of such issues, it is imperative that the true cause of such problems is discovered. A phenomenon that may be looked at with regard to making the children in the world feel happy and secure, is parenting. As primary caregivers, parents have many duties to fulfil, some of which are to protect, care for, and teach children. The bond between a mother and child is powerful, and has the ability to shape an individual for better or worse. In order for children to grow into happy, secure and protected individuals, it is necessary for the mother and child to have a relationship good enough to encourage that to happen.

‘One senses intuitively that for the tiny child, mother-love, whether it comes from the biological mother or someone who has taken her place, promotes well-being. In the sunshine of her love, we grow and develop, take an interest in things and people, learn, acquire skills, become a proud member of the family.’ (Karen, 1994).

This research was inspired in part by a fascinating article on attachment interventions (Bakermans-kranenburg, Van IJzendoorn & Juffer, 2003), and also by an interest in Attachment Parenting. Attachment theory is often studied, but current qualitative research is lacking in the area of Attachment Parenting. This research offers an interesting new avenue to explore. Attachment Parenting is an interesting research topic, because it is validated by the meaning that people lend to it – it will be a useful approach to the individual who decides to believe in it.

This study explores Attachment Parenting taking a phenomenological approach, by means of an in-depth analysis of the lived parenting experiences of mothers with young children.

Research was conducted around the topic of Attachment Parenting for several reasons:

Attachment Parenting is a hot topic at present with just as many people promoting as demoting its value; the existing research on Attachment Parenting is quite lacking, particularly that of a qualitative nature; and there is a gap in the research at present regarding the ability of Attachment Parenting as a contributor to the development of secure attachment in children.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis is an extremely detailed procedure which acknowledges that the role of the researcher is complicated by the researcher's own thoughts and interpretations when trying to make sense of the participant's experiences. It is an inductive method and consists of several stages. In the initial stage, exploratory comments about the transcript are noted. The second stage involves returning to the transcript, and shaping the exploratory notes into emerging themes. At the stage, it is important to create phrases which hold enough to remain grounded in the transcript but also offer enough abstraction to be able to gain a conceptual understanding. At this point, though still on the immediate text, the researcher will have been influenced by reading the transcript. The emerging themes are put into a table for the second stage. The second stage requires the researcher to study the emerging themes and grouping or clustering these together in line with conceptual similarities. At this point, the researcher must look for patterns in the emerging themes and create a structure which will help when elucidating converging ideas. These groups are given a label of a descriptive nature which will reflect the nature of the themes in each group. In the final stage, the researcher must create a table of themes which will illustrate the structure of major themes and subthemes. A quote, or extract, will be beside each subtheme.

This process must be carried out the same number of times as there are cases, for this research, this will be completed four times. Once all the transcripts have been analysed, and the researcher has created a table of major and subthemes for each, one more table of themes is created for the research as a whole. It is at this point when the themes will be reviewed for each participant, and amended and checked again with the transcript should it be necessary. This final table of themes will provide the researcher with the foundation for creating a narrative account of the study.

Literature Review

American Sociologist Sharon Hays refers to Attachment Parenting as ‘intensive parenting’, and characterises the approach as ‘expert- guided, emotionally absorbing, labour intensive and financially expensive’ (Hays, 1996, p.8), and feels that any type of “intensive parenting” which favours the needs of the child over the needs of the mother, will be responsible for economic and maternal disadvantage. Attachment Parenting (AP) is a philosophy which offers guidelines to parents, designed to enhance and enrich their parenting experience, and suggests this approach promotes a meaningful attachment between parent and child. This is mediated through parental empathy and extended physical closeness (Sears & Sears, 2001). The term, coined by paediatrician William Sears, above all;

[...] means opening your mind and heart to the individual needs of your baby and letting your knowledge of your child be your guide to making on-the-spot decisions about what

works best for both of you. In a nutshell, AP is learning to read the cues of your baby and responding appropriately to those cues.’ (Sears & Sears, 2001, p.2)

The ideas of Attachment Parenting were present several decades ago in older teachings, such as *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* (Spock, 1946) in which it is explained that mothers ought to raise their children using common sense, and be in physical contact with their children often. Spock noticed that parenting up to this point, was quite rigid and did not tend to the emotional needs of children, and so with this handbook, helped contribute to the shift from rigidity to flexible and affectionate parenting.

Sears (1982) at first, referred to the Attachment Parenting approach as the ‘the new continuum concept’. In 1975, Liedloff proposed that infants had not evolved to suit modern methods of parenting such as using cribs for sleeping, and bottle feeding babies, etc. Liedloff introduced the world to ‘The Continuum Concept’, teaching that for humans (especially babies) to have favourable emotional, physical and mental development, it is necessary to have the experiences to which people had adapted throughout evolution. From his reading of Liedloff’s work, William Sears introduced the Attachment Parenting approach and, along with wife Martha Sears, the Paediatrician associated the concept with attachment theory (Bowlby, 1958) and coined the term ‘Attachment Parenting’ (Sears, 1985);

[...] I realized we needed to change the term to something more positive, so we came up with AP, since the Attachment Theory literature was so well researched and documented, by John Bowlby and others.’

The AP approach was structured around ‘The Baby Bs’, or attachment tools (Sears & Sears, 2001), of which there are seven:

- (i) Birth bonding (or imprinting); there is a brief period of time after a baby is born during which the child is alert and can be bonded easily with. Sears proposes that the use of analgesics during birth will affect birth bonding (Sears 1983; 1982).
- (ii) Breastfeeding; also known as 'baby reading', is claimed to accommodate mother-infant attachment due to release of oxytocin (promotes social bonding and allows the mother to be calm around her baby) during the process.
- (iii) Baby wearing; this allows the child to be with the mother during everything she does, and is recommended to be actioned for as many hours possible during the day, and between 4-5 hours in the evening (Sears & Sears, 2001).
- (iv) Bedding close to baby; this practice is convenient for breastfeeding and the mother-infant attachment, and preventative of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) and separation anxiety (Sears, 1982; Sears & Sears, 2001). However, other research suggests that this is not necessary and may negatively affect optimal formation of sleeping patterns (Benhamou, 2000).
- (v) Belief in the language value of your baby's cry; the cry is the child's predominant method of self-expression. The parent must not only respond to the child's cry, but attend to the child's signals early to prevent the cry
- (vi) Beware of baby trainers; Sears believed that training an infant to sleep will cause the child to become apathetic, and will not help the child to sleep but rather will encourage the child to simply resign. It is common for many to advise new parents to allow a newborn to "cry it out". This advice according to Sears & Sears (2001),

is based on the incorrect assumption that children cry in order to manipulate rather than communicate.

- (vii) Balance; This Baby B encourages parents to remember their own needs, and care for themselves as well as care for their child. This is achieved by appropriately responding to your child, knowing when to say yes or no, and being able to say yes to yourself.

The theory at the heart of this parenting approach is that which was introduced by Bowlby, and later built on by Ainsworth. Attachment theory can be defined as ‘a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space’ (Ainsworth, 1973; Bowlby, 1969). The theory is largely concerned with the bond between the child and its mother, and how this can be disturbed and threatened by bereavement, separation, etc. In Bowlby’s paper *The Nature of the Child’s Tie to His Mother* (1958), some physical characteristics of attachment behaviour are introduced. They include basic instinctive responses such as smiling, sucking, clinging, following and crying. In 1950, Mary Ainsworth worked under the supervision of Bowlby, and introduced the idea of the attachment figure being the ‘secure base’ from which a child will explore the environment. Ainsworth was also responsible for the notion of maternal sensitivity to the cues of children. She is renowned for building on Bowlby’s theory with the creation of the ‘Strange Situation’ (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Hall, 1978). The ‘Strange Situation’ was an experiment created with the intention of exposing children to a strange -but not too frightening- situation. The procedure involves a mother and child at play in an observation room. A strange woman enters the room soon after, and tries to play with the child, and at this point the mother leaves the room. Soon after, the mother returns to the room, this followed shortly after by the

departure of both adults. The child is left alone, until moments later, when the stranger returns to the room, soon followed by the mother. After conducting this experiment, Ainsworth found the results showed as expected; the child would explore the toys and the room in a more active manner while the mother was in the room, rather than whilst left alone with the stranger, or even while the stranger was present in the room (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970).

A recent study examined the role of attachment theory-based and social learning theory-based parenting in the contribution to the security of children's attachment narratives and social acceptance amongst peers. The study was conducted in four primary schools in London, the participants being the mothers (referred to as primary caregivers) of 151 children from the schools. Observational methods were used by means of video-recording the mother and child together in the home. Three tasks were used: free-play with a set of toys that had been designated; structured-play throughout which the mother and child worked together to create a lego structure; followed by a tidy-up task. The study found that the quality of parent-child interaction during interaction tasks provided a meaningful insight into the quality of the children's attachment narratives.

There are many relationships which will form throughout the life span of a person. The most important relationship that will form, is that between a mother and child.

'Our personal identity - the very center of our humanness - is achieved through the early bonds of child and parent. Conscience itself, the most civilizing of all achievements in human evolution, is not part of constitutional endowment, but the endowment of parental love and education' (Frailberg, 1959).'

The parent-child relationship provides a template on which all future relationships of a child will be based. Therefore, the quality of this initial relationship with the parent is exceptionally important, as this will contribute to the quality of relationships that will later follow. Gearity (2005) says that the mother and child together, have two basic goals, which will provide the base for healthy relationships later on in life: (i) to development a baseline sense of trust in the world, so that the child knows when it needs something, the mother will be there, and (ii) to permit the regulation of emotions – the child should be allowed to express feelings, along with the physiological patterning that is underlying (Gearity, 2005). Once these goals are met, the child is likely to experience a favourable attachment relationship with the caregiver. As well as this, the child will feel confident enough to wander the surrounding environment, and have trust that the caregiver will be present, as a secure base from which the child can explore:

‘Familial security in the early stages is of a dependent type and forms a basis from which the individual can work out gradually, forming new skills and interests in other fields. Where familial security is lacking, the individual is handicapped by the lack of what might be called a secure base from which to work.’ (Salter, 1940).

The more secure a child’s attachment is to the caregiver, the simpler the child will find it to be independent of the caregiver, and begin to develop healthy relationships with other people. Though toddlers with secure attachment can behave similarly to toddlers with alternative attachment styles with regard to disobeying requests of the caregiver/parent, they are likely to cooperate more with the mother, and behave more affectionately towards her also (Londerville and Main, 1981; Matas et al., 1978).

Rationale

There is currently a limited amount of research that has been carried out on Attachment Parenting as an approach. Attachment Parenting however, also referred to as instinctive or intuitive parenting, is simply recycling the parenting practices which appear to have an evolutionary origin in the past. The amount of qualitative research carried out on Attachment Parenting is even less so, which elucidated a gap in the research that ought to be occupied.

Research Aims

A typical criticism of the Attachment Parenting approach is that it makes children clingy. Another, is that it calls on too much attention and effort, making it an exhausting and unrealistic approach to adopt. Due to Attachment theory being a key component of Attachment Parenting, the researcher wished to focus on the lived parenting experience of mothers, and attempt to understand how parenting practices may contribute to the attachment style of an individual, with the help of an in-depth analysis.

Methodology

Participants

The type of participants required for this research were mothers over the age of eighteen with at least one child who is over the age of six months. The sample was recruited in the general population. Upon recruiting for participants, the researcher relayed that the study would consist of one to one interviews with mothers of toddlers and infants over the age of six months. The reason for choosing mothers only, was that the Attachment Parenting approach, while it can of course be adopted by the father, is typically associated with mothers. This is presumably because of the practices which contribute to Attachment Parenting, such as breastfeeding and co-sleeping. Mothers and their children appear to have a very interesting relationship, and are very physically communicative with one another. Being physically close to the child is an Attachment Parenting tool offered to strengthen the bond between mother and baby.

The reason for choosing this age for the participants' children is that it is unethical for a study to involve a child less than six months of age, and the years of being a toddler are very important years for cognitive development, emotional development and social development. In order to get an understanding of the parenting experiences of mothers, and the relationship between mother and child, the researcher believed that it would be ideal to focus on experiences occurring in the most important environment for mother and child – the home.

The number of participants required for this study was four. This is the minimum number of participants that would be required. Due to the participants recruited for being all female, there was no need present for a sample any larger than what was recruited for. The method used to recruit participants was snowball sampling. This method of sampling is used

to access knowledge and information from extended contacts of individuals with whom the researcher had previously been acquainted. Two participants were approached in the University setting with the information of the study and opportunity to take part, and after agreeing to do so, were asked to refer potential contacts if comfortable doing so. Acquaintances of the researcher were also informed of the study and asked to be referred to with potential candidates.

Research Design

The study used a qualitative research design, taking a phenomenological approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants, which were first audio-recorded, transcribed, and then analysed.

The reason a phenomenological approach was taken, is that parenting is a very meaningful phenomenon, and can be thought of as best portrayed through the lived experience of the individuals involved.

The type of analysis used was IPA (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) to uncover the information received from the sample. IPA was selected as the form of analysis for this research as it was consistent with the aims of the research in the way that it seeks to understand how individuals interpret, and giving meaning to lived experiences.

It was important for this research not only to hear about the experiences of the participants, but also to study what meaning those experiences hold. This approach consists of a 'double hermeneutic', meaning that the researcher is attempting to make sense of how

the participants make sense of the experiences explored (Smith & Osborn, 2003; Smith et al. 2009).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis also has an idiographic nature, which means it is concerned with discovering something about the lived experiences of each of the participants involved.

Materials

The materials that were used in this research are as follows: Computer for preparing forms, information sheet, consent form, interview schedule, recording device, pen, and paper.

Measures

In qualitative research the variables are concerned with description. The independent variable in this study is Attachment Parenting. The researcher is seeking a description of parenting experiences and practices, in an attempt to understand the meaning participants give to lived experiences. This is the variable which is being studied in order to understand its influence on the dependent variable. The dependent variable is secure attachment. Participants will give opinions and interpretations of how a child can develop a secure attachment.

The type of interview selected for the study was the one to one semi-structured interview, which would consist of approximately seven or eight main questions on the interview schedule. The semi-structured interview was chosen, as this type of interview is consistent with qualitative research, and allows for the participant to make the interview as detailed and informative as desired. The types of questions that were required in order to remain consistent with the style of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, were questions which would enable the researcher to explore the lived experiences of the participants. It was

also desirable to include an interpretative question. Upon review, the researcher chose to include seven questions in the interview schedule. Six of the seven questions would be concerned with the lived parenting experiences of the participants, and a final question would be concerning attachment style of the child/children. The interview questions put forward to the participants involved, would allow the researcher to gain an understanding of the meaning that participants give to parenting experiences, and to make sense of how the participants make sense of the experiences.

Procedure

The procedure with all four candidates involved arranging a meeting area in which the semi-structured interviews could be conducted. All participants were interviewed on separate occasions. Upon meeting in the agreed location, the researcher and participant made light conversation in order to make the environment feel more comfortable, and allow for the participant to become at ease. On each occasion, the researcher provided the participant with the information sheet containing the details of the study, allowing the participant the opportunity to become more familiar with the research and ask the researcher any questions before the interview started. Once the participant had read the information sheet and signed the consent form, the researcher started the recording device and proceeded to conduct the interview as per the interview schedule (Appendix 4). Once all questions had been asked and answered, the researcher thanked the participant for taking part.

The audio recording of each interview was played several times upon beginning the analysis procedure. Replaying the audio recordings of each interview allowed for any notes to be taken and observations to be made. Each interview was transcribed verbatim. The initial

staged of IPA required the researcher to explore the transcript of each case and make exploratory notes (Appendices 5,7 9 &11). Once this had been completed, the researcher explored the transcript again, and this time made note of emerging themes from the participant responses (Appendices 5, 7, 9 & 11). When this had been completed, the researcher proceeded to study the emerging themes in the transcript, and began to group or cluster the themes together based on similarities of concepts. This required studying the emerging themes and looking for patterns which would enable the researcher to put a structure to the information, which would be helpful in elucidating ideas which were beginning to come together. The clusters of themes were given a label which would describe the conceptual nature of the themes in each of the clusters (Appendices 6, 8, 10 & 12).

After this stage, the researcher created a table of themes (Appendix 13). This table conveys the structure of major themes, as well as subthemes, with a quote provided next to each of the themes, which is followed by a line number which can be referred to in the transcript.

This procedure was carried out with the responses of each of the participants. After this, a narrative extract was created for the complete study (Appendix). During this process, the themes of each participant were reviewed, to make sure that the meanings were checked, and that the quotes selected were capable of highlighting the themes present.

Results

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of the four semi-structure interviews saw the emergence of three major themes. These are as follows:

- (i) Happiness
- (ii) Responsibility
- (iii) Attachment

The exploration of the above three major themes and their constituent subthemes, form the baseline for this chapter in which each theme will be illustrated by extracts of the text, which was transcribed verbatim.

The researcher recognises that these themes represent one of many possible accounts of the participants' experiences. The themes do not capture every aspect of the participants' experiences, and were selected because of the relevancy shared with the research questions. The themes uncovered are a subjective interpretation of the responses provided by the interview participants, and may not be the themes upon which other researchers would have decided to focus. These themes are common to the accounts of experience of all four of the participants.

In the creation of the final table of themes representing the accounts of all four cases, minor alterations in punctuation were made, simply to improve the readability of the verbatim extract. As much of the original hesitations etc. were left in where possible. Dotted lines present at the beginning and/or end of text from the extract are there to show that the participant was talking before or after the extract. All names and information which could potentially identify a participant have been removed.

Table of themes discovered across all cases

Major theme 1 – Happiness

Mother's happiness

Participant 1: I suppose first and foremost, you kind of appreciate how lucky you are to be a parent 10/11

Participant 4: I forget about how hard it is when I see her smiling and playing and see that she's okay and happy 1547/1548

Happiness of child important

Participant 2: you just see this little person and thankfully she's so happy all the time
589/590

Participant 3: Parenting to me means making sure my children grow up in a happy home
1075/1076

Major theme 2 - Responsibility

Mother carries the responsibility

Participant 2: I had like, maybe one day in the initial few weeks where I absolutely hated my husband because he was able to get up and walk out the door and go for a run, or go to the shop, and I couldn't, you know? 577-581

Participant 3: I think, it's very easy for a man and a dad to live their own lives and get up and go, but there's something about a mother and a child. The mother gives up their world for the child. 1236-1239

Providing for and responding to the child's needs

Participant 1: ...Just kind of being there when they need you, and trying to teach them things as well like 145/146

Participant 2: ...Responding to her and providing and making sure that she's comfortable and she's happy... 664-666

Participant 3: ...they have everything they need provided for them... 1076/1077

Child's responsivity towards the mother

Participant 1: They're responsive to me, em... Ruby while she's only nearly seven months now, she recognises when I come into the room... She would light up 90-92, 94

Participant 4: I always go to Lucy when she's crying or looking for me, I don't leave her cry on her own. I always pick her up when she wants to be picked up. And I think that's important. Just being responsive to your child and being present is good for the relationship

... When she sees me in the morning she's all smiles, and when she goes to her nan's when I'm working she's grand and is always happy to see me when I come back from work.

1563-1567, 1556-1558

Major theme 3 – Attachment

Physical closeness/special bond

Participant 1: ... I suppose being there, the mother being there for the child when they're actually looking for something, or when they need something. So, again, getting to know the different cries and what cry means what. And... The mother responding promptly to that

251-155

Participant 2: You know, from my own experience say, to date now, when I'd go to the crèche to pick her up in the evenings, like she recognises me... she puts her arms out to be lifted

745-748

Participant 3: So, when I had my oldest kid, when he was born everything was great, happy, grand. Obviously because he was my first child I was happy... So, he'll always know that I'm here. Like, even when he's twenty, he'll always know he can come home to Mom, if he needs anything. And I think it all stems from the Attachment Parenting *1046-1048, 1188-1191*

Participant 4: I think it's the physical closeness that's important. It's a comfort to Lucy and to me as well being close to her. She knows that I'm there for her when she needs me and that I'll respond to her if she's crying... 1535-1538

Development of secure attachment

Participant 1: I suppose being there, the mother being there for the child when they're actually looking for something, or when they need something 251-253

Participant 3: ... when we finished co-sleeping as well, all of a sudden, the bottle was gone, he stopped wetting his nappies at night. He was fully trained at night time then...

They need the attachment style of parenting anyway... In my opinion 1130-1132, 1169 -1170

Participant 2: We're clapping our hands and telling her that she's a good girl... 758/759

Participant 4: Well I think being physically there for them and going to your baby as soon as they cry is important. They cry for a reason. But giving them independence is important too, like leaving them run around, playing, and sleeping by themselves teaches them to be secure

1551-1555

- (1) Happiness: This major theme encompasses all kinds of happiness from different sources in parenting, and is illustrative of happiness felt by the mother, the child, and simply the prospect of parenting.

Parenting can mean something different from one individual to another:

‘parenting to me means making sure my children grow up in a happy home’

(participant 3). Initially, many new parents may not have the time to stop and think for a moment, and realise how fortunate the experience is, particularly when one considers that many people are incapable of bearing children: ‘I suppose first and foremost, you kind of appreciate how lucky you are to be a parent’ (participant 1).

- (1.1) Mother’s happiness: it is important to remember that if a person is physically capable of having children, that person is extremely fortunate. Mothers feel lucky to have children, and become happy when they see the child happy.

Some of the participants who were involved in the study recalled the happiness felt when the first child came along: ‘So, when I had my oldest kid, when he was born everything was great, happy, grand. Obviously, because he was my first child I was happy’ (participant 3)

- (1.2) Happiness of the child is important: the participant responses illustrated that once of the most important duties to fulfil while parenting, is to make sure that the child is happy.

Mothers experience great feelings of joy when they see the child happy. When a woman becomes a mother, the child's happiness holds so much worth: 'you just see this little person and thankfully she's so happy all the time' (participant 2). The parenting experience can be intimidating and stressful, but the sight of a happy child can melt away the aftertaste of the more difficult times: 'I forget about how hard it is when I see her smiling and playing, and see that she's okay and happy' (participant 4).

- (2) Responsibility: this is a very important aspect of parenting, and is an experience that each of the participants have every single day. What is interesting about this, is that while each mother mentioned the magnitude of responsibility involved, each also relayed to the researcher, through a combination of verbal and expressive communication, that being capable of being responsible for a child delivers feelings of pride and joy. Of course, when an individual becomes a parent, there is a responsibility that comes with the experience. Becoming a mother means becoming a primary caregiver for another person, which involves responding promptly to the needs of the child, as well as being responsible for the nurture, comfort and happiness of the child.
- (2.1) Mother carries the responsibility: the participants involved the study explained that the responsibility falls largely on the mother, which can happen particularly in the initial few weeks of becoming a parent. It appears to mothers that fathers have more freedom, and don't make as many sacrifices for the child. Mothers often feel the weight of the responsibility, and can experience emotions that may be difficult to rest easy with: 'I had like, maybe one day in the initial few weeks where I absolutely hated my husband because he was able to get up and walk out the door and go for a

run, or go to the shop, and I couldn't, you know?' (participant 2). However, each participant experiences happiness when the child is responsive, and allows the richness of the experience to overrule undesirable emotions.

- (2.2) Providing for and responding to the child's needs: the mother knows that necessity in parenting is being able to provide for the child in every sense. This includes making sure they child is nurtured, fed, cared for, and comfortable. Furthermore, there is a responsibility to respond promptly to the cries of the child.
- (2.3) Child's responsivity towards the mother: the participants illustrated it is exciting and comforting to see that the child is being responsive, and looks to the mother for physical closeness. Parenting is not only about having responsibilities. It is also about creating meaningful relationships and sharing special bonds. For the participants involved, the connection between mother and child is a precious gift. Each day, the mother sees the child developing, and is aware that the child begins to recognise, and delight in the mother's presence: 'I think it's the physical closeness that's important. It's a comfort to Lucy and to me as well being close to her.'
- (3) Attachment: the physical contact between a mother and child is extremely important for both. Being physically close to the child relays to them that all needs will be met, and that the child will have the mother available when needed. The mother gets the well-deserved reward of knowing that the relationship with the child will not be experienced the same way by another person, particularly regarding Attachment Parenting practices, such as breastfeeding: 'If I could have done it longer I would have loved to. But I think that's really meaningful, because that's something literally only a mother can have with their child' (participant 3).
- (3.1) Physical closeness/special bond: The Mother-Infant relationship is the foundation on which relationships later in life are built. Each of the participants expressed

confidence in the child's ability to explore the surrounding environment, while being aware that the mother is present for when the child returns. The mothers contribute this to the physical closeness shared with the child. The relationship is exceptionally important, as it contributes to the type of attachment style which will develop in a child.

- (3.2) Development of secure attachment: Attachment Parenting practices were adopted by some of the participants from the study, at one or more times during the experience of parenting. Co-sleeping for one of the participants in particular was an important contribution to helping the child become more independent. Praising a child upon completing a task and encouraging a child to explore the surrounding environment is important for establishing a secure attachment, which will allow the child to be confident, curious, and the needs of the child to be satisfied. For some mothers, the Attachment Parenting approach is extremely important, particularly as the practices involved are meaningful ways by which the mother can encourage the child to become more independent: '... when we finished co-sleeping as well, all of a sudden, the bottle was gone, he stopped wetting his nappies at night. He was fully trained at night time then... They need the attachment style of parenting anyway... In my opinion' (participant 3). If the quality of this relationship is favourable from a young age, and the needs of a child are met appropriately, the child can develop a secure attachment style, and be both close to the mother, and comfortable alone: 'Well I think being physically there for them and going to your baby as soon as they cry is important. They cry for a reason. But giving them independence is important too, like leaving them run around, playing, and sleeping by themselves teaches to be secure.'

Discussion

Overview

The aim of the present study was to gain an understanding of on the lived parenting experience of mothers, and attempt to understand how parenting practices may contribute to the secure attachment of an individual, with the help of an in-depth analysis. This was carried out by analysing one to one semi-structured interviews using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). There have been few studies carried out on Attachment Parenting and secure attachment, particularly of a qualitative nature, which left a gap in the research. Taking a phenomenological approach to the study has provided a meaningful insight into how mothers conceptualise parenting. Several of the same themes emerged across all four of the interview transcripts.

The following areas were explored in a one to one semi-structured interview with each participant:

- What parenting means
- The experience as a mother
- A description the relationship the mother has with child
- Parenting practices which the mother felt were and are meaningful to the relationship
- What exactly about these practices makes them so meaningful
- Experience is with Attachment Parenting
- What the mother thinks is necessary for a child to develop a secure attachment

Throughout the study, it was discovered that some of the participants mentioned important components of parenting such as: providing for the child; meeting basic needs; answering the cries of the child (not leaving the child cry alone), and expressed a lack of interest and belief in the Attachment Parenting approach. For some mothers, Attachment Parenting is an extreme approach, which is costly with time and effort. One participant felt that the approach is unrealistic, and means the mother has to carry the child everywhere with her, and is unable to get anything accomplished: 'Like it's not realistic like, you get nothing done' (participant 1). Another participant of the study expressed great appreciation for the approach, explaining that one of the Attachment Parenting practices, co-sleeping, contributed to the independence of her child: '... when we finished co-sleeping as well, all of a sudden, the bottle was gone, he stopped wetting his nappies at night. He was fully trained at night time then...?'

Attachment Parenting was not practiced by all participants, however, each mother expressed similar feelings toward parenting: the bond between the mother and child is unique, being physically close and responsive to the child is important for the development of a secure attachment, and being a good mother means providing for your child and giving the child space to explore the environment independently. The participant responses echo the ideas available in existing research: the goals of the mother and child together are to create a baseline of trust, so that the child can explore the world from a secure base (mother), and to allow emotional regulation for the child. Once these goals are reached, and mother and child have regular physical contact as well as the child's needs being met, the relationship will establish a secure attachment, and will set the foundation for many more healthy relationships later in life: '...I think if a child has that I think it will strengthen their relationships that they form when they're older as well' (participant 3).

Weaknesses

- (i) There was nothing in place for circumstances wherein participants may provide shorter answers than expected, or may say very little. Upon reflection, a method should have been put in place for such circumstances, in order to try to keep the participant speaking.

Strengths

- (i) The use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis provided an extremely detailed understanding of participant accounts. It allowed the researcher to make sense of how the participants make sense of lived experiences, and allowed for an extremely authentic and enriched study.
- (ii) The finalised questions prepared for the study are quite investigative, and encouraged more in-depth and a more meaningful response than expected from the participants.

Implications for future research

A major implication for future research is Attachment Fathering. Due to breastfeeding being such an important contributory practice to the Mother-Infant bond, it is a general presumption of sorts that Attachment Parenting is a solely maternal approach to parenting. Therefore, the opportunity for fathers to be actively participating in Attachment Parenting seems to be somewhat hidden from view. However, fathers can breastfeed too, as the practice of 'nursing means comforting, not only breastfeeding' (Sears & Sears, 2001, p.147). Researchers may

also explore the Father's feelings about the Mother-Infant Attachment, which as a topic, represents a large gap in the research.

Conclusion

The primary aim of this research was to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived parenting experience of mothers, and attempt to understand how parenting practices may contribute to the attachment style of an individual. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis allowed for a detailed investigation into participant experiences. The areas explored in the research were: what parenting means, the experience of being a mother, description of the mother-infant relationship, parenting practices, why they were meaningful, experience with Attachment Parenting, and what is necessary for a child to develop a secure attachment.

The analysis resulted in the emergence of three major themes: Happiness, which encompassed happiness of both the mother and child; Responsibility, which included meeting the needs of the child, as well responsivity of both the mother and child; and Attachment, which illustrated the importance of physical closeness of mother and child, the special bond present, and how to encourage the development of secure attachment.

The results illustrate that for a child to be more likely development a secure attachment, the basic needs of the child should be met. In essence, this means a child needs to be fed and cared for. Being responsive to the child is extremely important to the mothers involved in the study – a child should not be left cry alone or for too long without the mother answering the call. When mothering, a woman becomes familiar with the different cries of her child. She knows whether the child is simply babbling, moaning, or crying for a need to be satisfied. This allows mothers to become synchronised with the child and its needs, and means that the mother can respond promptly to the call of her baby. By the experiences and accounts of the participants that took part in this research, being responsive to your child,

meeting the basic needs of the baby, understanding and answering the cries, and being physically close with a child, encourages the child to explore the environment confidently, and allows for a secure attachment to develop.

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Appendix 1.

Attachment Parenting and Secure Attachment: An Exploration of the Mother's Experiences and Relationship with the Child.

My name is Terri McCarthy and I am a Psychology student at Dublin Business School conducting research in the Department of Psychology that explores Attachment Parenting. This research is being conducted as part of my studies and will be submitted for examination.

I am interested in speaking with mothers who have toddlers over the age of six months. You are invited to take part in this study and participation involves attending an interview with me to discuss your experiences of Attachment Parenting. This phenomenon is concerned with parents being physically close to their child as much as possible (baby-wearing, co-sleeping, etc.) as well as being responsive to the cry of their child. It is sometimes referred to as "Instinctive Parenting".

The interview will be semi-structured and will allow for you to say as much as you feel comfortable doing so. If any of the questions do raise difficult feelings for you, contact information for support services are included on the final page.

Participation is completely voluntary and so you are not obliged to take part.

Participation is anonymous and confidential. Therefore responses cannot be attributed to any one participant. For this reason, it will not be possible to withdraw from participation after the data has been collected.

The data will be securely stored and data from the interview will be transferred from the paper record to electronic format and stored on a password protected computer.

It is important that you understand that by completing and submitting the interview you are consenting to participate in the study.

Contact Details

Should you require any further information about the research, please contact Terri McCarthy, xxxxxx@mydbs.ie. My supervisor can be contacted at xxxxxx@dbs.ie .

Appendix 2.**Consent Form****Attachment Parenting and Secure Attachment: An Exploration of the
Mother's Experiences and Relationship with the Child.**

I have read and understood the attached Information Leaflet regarding this study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study with the researcher and I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without this affecting my training

I agree to take part in the study

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant's Name in print: _____

Appendix 3.

Debriefing Sheet

Thank you very much for making this study possible. The aim of this research was to focus on the lived parenting experience of mothers, and attempt to understand how parenting practices may contribute to the attachment style of an individual, with the help of an in-depth analysis.

I was interested in:

- What parenting means to you
- Your experience as a mother
- How you describe the relationship you have with your child
- Parenting practices which you feel were and are meaningful to the relationship you have with your child
- What exactly about these practices you think makes them so meaningful
- What your experience is with Attachment Parenting
- What you think is necessary for a child to develop a secure attachment style

Existing research suggests that the quality of interaction between parent and child can contribute to the attachment style and attachment narratives of children. When the quality of the Mother-Infant relationship is good and the child is permitted to trust his environment, and be emotionally expressive, a secure attachment can develop, and set a foundation for relationships that will follow this, later in life.

Support Services

If you have been affected by any of the questions or issues raised in this study, please contact one or more of the support services listed below who may be able to provide help and support. Thank you.

www.onefamily.ie – Parenting helpline.

Phone: 1890 662 212

Email: support@onefamily.ie

www.ispcc.ie

Phone: (01) 676 7960

Email: ispcc@ispcc.ie

www.samaritans.org

Phone: (01) 872 7700

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Appendix 4.

Interview Schedule

I would first like to thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. I am interested to hear about your experience with parenting and parenting practices. I am going to begin, and ask you a few questions now, is that okay? (Not necessary to be read for word for word).

1. What does “Parenting” mean to you?
2. Can you tell me about your experience of being a mother?
3. Describe the relationship you have with your child.
4. From your experience, what parenting practices do you think were and are meaningful to this relationship?
5. What exactly about these practices do you think makes them meaningful?
6. What is your experience with Attachment Parenting?
7. What do you think is necessary for a child to develop a secure attachment style?

Appendix 5 07 March 2017-Participant 1

(I: Interviewer, P: Participant)

EXPLORATORY NOTES

1 I: I'd first like to thank you for agreeing to take part in this
2 research. Em, I'm interested to hear about your experience
3 with parenting and parenting practices. So, I'm going to just
4 ask you a few questions, and you can say as little or as much
5 as you like-

6 P: Mm.

7 I: Is that okay?

8 P: Yeah.

9 I: The first question is what does parenting mean to you?

10 P: Em... I suppose first and foremost, you kind of appreciate
11 how lucky you are to be a parent. I suppose, I have friends
12 that haven't been able to have children-

13 I: Mm.

14 P: - and that went through a lot to try and have children, so I
15 suppose it's just important that people realise how lucky they
16 are to actually have kids.

17 I: Mm-hm.

18 P: Em... It can be stressful at times. It's tough going-

19 I: Yeah.

20 P: It's not easy, but it's definitely worth every minute of it.

21 I: Yeah.

22 P: It's nice, it's great (laughs).

23 I: Brilliant, thank you. Em, second question is, can you tell
24 me about your experience if being a mother?

25 P: Yeah, it's - it's hard because, em... Juggling full-time
26 work, part-time college, and a mother of two very young
27 babies... It's difficult, difficult to juggle everything-

28 I: Mm-hm.

29 P: -but I love it, I wouldn't change it for the world. At the
30 end of the day, you kind of have to prioritise things, and
31 your kids come before everything else. So, whatever you can

Appreciation and
acknowledgment – lucky
to be parents.

Happiness at the
physical ability to have
children.

Parenting as a stressful
experience.

Difficult to balance
parenting with
working/studying.

The good times have
more of an impact than
the difficult times.

Prioritisation – children
come before everything
else.

- 32 fit in in the evening times, you just kind of fit in. Em... I
 33 kind of try to make the most of my days off-
- 34 I: Yeah.
- 35 P: -I'll do as much with them as I can...
- 36 I: Yeah.
- 37 P: ...When I can. Em, and I suppose it's about empowering
 38 the children as well... To kind of, enjoy your time with them,
 39 but, em, at the same time try and make them a little bit
 40 independent-
- 41 I: Mm
- 42 P: - as well.
- 43 I: Mm-hm.
- 44 P: And get them okay with the days when you're not there,
 45 'cause when you're in work like, my kids are in crèche to
 46 three days a week. So, I kind of, going to have to get them
 47 used to being -me not being there the whole time as well...
 48 And them to know that it's okay when I'm not there as well-
- 49 I: Mm.
- 50 P: -I will come home.
- 51 I: Yeah.
- 52 P: Mm
- 53 I: And how do, how do you find it coping with the balance,
 54 you know? Like you said, working and studying part-time,
 55 and then coming home and parenting as well, is that tough?
 56 Or have you, do you have a routine or ways to cope with
 57 that?
- 58 P: It's-
- 59 I: Or do you find that you, kind of – you've found a balance?
- 60 P: Yeah, I found it really tough, especially the last couple of
 61 weeks. So, what I do is, like, I work nine to five, I pick my
 62 kids up, and I kind of forget about everything else when I
 63 have my kids. So, I spend the -as much time as I can with
 64 them, especially in the evening times. And I have Monday
 65 off work, so I don't do anything else only with my kids, I do
 66 very little housework as well the place is upside down-
- 67 I: (Laughs)

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Empowering children – helps them with independence.

Making sure the child learns how to cope, or how to be familiar with being separated from the mother at times – the child must be comfortable while the mother is away.

Mother juggles different aspect of her busy lifestyle – to cope with pressure, mother is wholly present for children when with them.

- 68 P: -but em, I just a lot of the time I go off with them, I bring
69 them swimming, I'll bring them to the park, do things like
70 that-
- 71 I: Yeah.
- 72 P: -em, as soon as they go to bed in the evening time that's
73 when my other work starts.
- 74 I: Yeah.
- 75 P: So, like it could be two, three o'clock in the morning by
76 the time I go to bed some mornings.
- 77 I: Yeah.
- 78 P: And then they're up at six, so... You just have to prioritise
79 and do as much as you can when they're in bed – but as well
80 everything else can go out the window like.
- 81 I: Yeah.
- 82 P: My kids come first and that's what you kind of have to
83 remind yourself of.
- 84 I: Yeah.
- 85 P: Mm.
- 86 I: Yeah. Em, describe the relationship you have with your
87 children.
- 88 P: I think I have a really good relationship with my children.
89 Em... Yeah. (Laughs) A really good one I suppose. Em...
90 They're responsive to me, em... Ruby while she's only
91 nearly seven months now, she recognises when I come into
92 the room-
- 93 I: Mm.
- 94 P: -em, she definitely, she would light up... Eh, she's lying in
95 the bed some mornings and she'd be kicking and scrawling
96 when she sees you-
- 97 I: (Laughs)
- 98 P: -Bailey as well, he's three now, and he's all about
99 mammy and if I'm not there he's asking when is mammy
100 coming home-
- 101 I: Yeah.
- 102 P: -and we play loads, we have really fun together.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Mother does her own work in the evening time when the children are sleeping – possibly has very little time to herself/with her partner.

Parents need to remind themselves that children come first.

'Really good' relationship with children – children are responsive to mom – this appears to give the relationship quality to mother – youngest child (7 months) recognises mother.

Excitement – physically expressed by baby.

Older child (3 years of age) asks for mother when she's not present.

Fun experience.

- 103 I: And how do they respond let's say, if-let's say when you
 104 go to work, or if you go out even to the shops or something,
 105 how do they respond when you come back? You know, if
 106 you've gone away and they're missing you, or if they're
 107 kicking up a fuss when you're not there because they're
 108 wondering where you are or missing you-
- 109 P: Yeah.
- 110 I: What are they like when you come back?
- 111
- 112 P: So, my older chap he's three now, so whenever I'm away,
 113 whenever I'd see him I'd say "HI!" And he'll come in and
 114 he'll give me a big hug and a kiss. And say, this morning for
 115 example when I was leaving him in crèche, he was really
 116 upset and he was crying and he didn't want me to go, so
 117 when I see him now tomorrow I'll say "Oh I was really sad
 118 yesterday because you were sad when you went into school"
 119 and he'll say "I'm not sad now mammy" and I'll say "Why
 120 were you sad?" and he'll say "I miss you, I want you". And
 121 then I'd kind of explain to him when you're really sad like
 122 that, that makes me sad, and he's like "Oh I'm not sad now".
 123 So em...
- 124 I: That's nice.
- 125 P: ... Yeah, he's at an age now where we can talk about it,
 126 and we will rationalise it and he'll understand it a bit more-
- 127 I: Yeah.
- 128 P: -em, and Ruby she's only seven months, so she's not
 129 really too... She's like em, doesn't really realise when she's
 130 going to crèche so she's grand...
- 131 I: Yeah.
- 132 P: But when I come home she will... You know, be happy to
 133 see me as well yeah...
- 134 I: Yeah. That's good... Em, from your experience, what
 135 parenting practices do you think were and are meaningful for
 136 this relationship?
- 137 P: Hmm... I suppose, being there when they want you so, so
 138 when they're crying obviously don't leave them crying for
 139 long periods of time... Recognising the difference between
 140 different cries... So, what's urgent and what's just a little bit
 141 of a moan... Em, the same thing when they're sick. Or when

EXPLORATORY NOTES

3-year-old is affectionate when mother returns after period of separation. Verbalises that he misses mother while she's not here

Mother tells child that she felt sad because he was sad when she went away – child comforts mother 'I'm not sad now mammy'.

Mother knows that her child can understand.

Confident in child's abilities.

Mother feels the baby doesn't realise when she's being separated from mother.

Being present, recognition of the different types of cries children have and what they mean, responding appropriately and at the right time.

Respond to children's needs. Teach them, and explain things to them.

- 142 they're like, sleeping is a huge thing. So recognising, like,
143 what each cry means.
- 144 I: Yeah, yeah.
- 145 P: Em, and just kind of being there when they need you, and
146 trying to teach them things as well like, if they're trying to
147 play with toys and they can't put a train track together or do
148 a jigsaw-
- 149 I: Yeah.
- 150 P: -help them and explain to them how to do it, rather than
151 just doing it as well, so just being there for them.
- 152 I: Yeah. So, you feel it's important to listen to the type of cry
153 that they have and to respond to them at certain times when
154 you know it's for a particular need -so you know that if
155 they're crying, you can anticipate what their need is and
156 respond as quickly as you need to, let's say?
- 157 P: Yeah, yeah. So, there's some cries say, bedtime when
158 they're going to sleep, or like during the day if they're
159 having a nap like, just It's a little moan but you know that if
160 they moan for like, two minutes that they'll just doze off to
161 sleep then but's its grand.
- 162 I: Yeah.
- 163 P: But you know the difference between that moan and a cry
164 of... they're hungry or they're not going to go to sleep now,
165 their pain, you know, you get to know they difference.
- 166 I: Yeah. Perfect. Em, what exactly about these practices do
167 you think makes them meaningful?
- 168 P: I think because you're answering what they want, like.
169 Especially with the older fella like he's able to tell you
170 what's wrong with him now. So, like if he says "I want to go
171 to the toilet" or whatever, you go and you do exactly what
172 he's asking you.
- 173 I: Yeah.
- 174 P: Whereas the younger girl like, she can't obviously talk
175 now, and she hasn't – she's not- she hasn't got much
176 communication. But I think respond to her needs, and what
177 you think she wants. It's obviously going to teach her like,
178 that mammy's there and mammy will be there when I want-
- 179 I: Yeah.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Mother 'knows' the
difference between cries.

Answering/responding to
child's needs is
meaningful.

Easier as child grows –
needs are verbalised.

Baby has no means of
verbal communication –
but mother is still able to
know what baby needs.
Being responsive to
needs of the child makes
the child aware that
mother is there.

Aware of AP – does not
agree with the approach.

- 180 P: -whatever.
- 181 I: Yeah. Em, what is your experience with Attachment
182 Parenting?
- 183 P: Yeah, so I've done a bit of research on it, I've... Em, I've
184 heard about it. Em... I disagree with it to be honest with you.
185 Em... yeah. Em, I disagree with some of the techniques of
186 Attachment Parenting. Em, the sleeping in the bed for
187 example-
- 188 I: Mm-hm.
- 189 P: -I disagree with. We would have... Our older chap would
190 have been in the bed with us a lot more when he was
191 younger than my girl now...
- 192 I: Yeah.
- 193 P: But em... Like there's so many studies out there that
194 prove that em... Like it's – Like cot death and stuff... is to do
195 with like sleeping in the room...
- 196 I: Yeah... SIDS?
- 197 P: ...Em... Yeah. And I just think parents need to be able to
198 get a good night's sleep.
- 199 I: Mm-hm.
- 200 P: And you cannot get a good night's sleep when there's a
201 child in the bed with you because they take up the whole
202 bed-
- 203 I: (Laughs)
- 204 P: -no matter how small they are. Em... What else... Yeah, I
205 think you do need to respond to your child, I think you do
206 need to be there for your child, but at the same time... Like
207 they need to self-soothe as well at times...
- 208 I: Yeah.
- 209 P: And... I... Yeah. Some of the things of Attachment
210 Parenting are em... I would kind of agree with some of them,
211 but most of them I wouldn't.
- 212 I: Yeah. So, do you feel, you know, do you feel that some of
213 it is just your instinct anyway and some other aspects of it
214 are a bit, too out there or too unrealistic? You know if you
215 have, let's say, if you're working or, for example the co-
216 sleeping, is that a bit unrealistic as your child gets older,

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Does not like the co-sleeping practice. Some co-sleeping practiced with first child.

Feels that co-sleeping contributes to SIDS/cot death.

Parents need good quality sleep – cannot have this with the child in the bed.

Feels children need a balance between self-soothing and being responded to – independence should be encouraged.

Agrees with some aspects of AP.

Easier to teach independence to a child from a younger age.

- 217 would you think that kind of impacts your relationship with
218 your partner as well?
- 219 P: Yeah, I think it could, but as well like, the child, like. It's
220 going to take the child longer, like down the line it's going to
221 be harder for a child, whereas if the child starts off with a
222 good relationship with the parents, but it has that bit of
223 independence...
- 224 I: Yeah.
- 225 P: Like it's easier for the child down the line?
- 226 I: Yeah.
- 227 P: So like, my youngest child for example, like I think she's
228 been in the bed with me once or twice when she's sick. But I
229 never would have had her in the bed in the start...
- 230 I: Yeah.
- 231 P: Em, but she's been obviously beside us in the room and
232 whatever like, and we're there we jump to her needs. I think
233 as well she sleeps better when she's on her own as well.
234 Personally, that's my own personal... Em, yeah, and like so
235 you need to have the child with you absolutely everywhere
236 you go for Attachment Parenting, and you don't use a buggy,
237 you're carrying the child everywhere-
- 238 I: Yeah.
- 239 P: -Like it's not realistic like, you get nothing done, and as
240 well like sometimes the child just likes the motion of being
241 in a buggy as well and going for a walk. Whereas I think
242 with Attachment Parenting, and it's not good for the mother
243 to like, I think that the mother needs a bit of space as well,
244 and to be able to have an hour away to herself to be able to
245 hand the baby over for half an hour even. I think that's
246 important for the mother's mental health as well.
- 247 I: Of course, yeah.
- 248 P: Yeah.
- 249 I: Em, what do you think is necessary for a child to have a
250 secure attachment style or just to feel secure?
- 251 P: Em, I suppose being there, the mother being there for the
252 child when they're actually looking for something, or when
253 they need something. So, again, getting to know the different
254 cries and what cry means what. And... The mother
255 responding promptly to that.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Does not co-sleep with younger child. Learned from experience with the first child that this was neither ideal for mother nor child.

Sees that younger child sleeps better alone.

Feels that AP means mother takes the children everywhere with her.

Unrealistic approach. Unable to do anything. Children enjoy the movement in a buggy.

Not good for – cannot have space.

Present and responsive parents, and knowing the meaning of different cries of the child contributes to the development of a secure attachment style.

256 I: Yeah. Brilliant.

257 P: Yeah.

258 I: Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

259 P: Em, no I don't think so.

260 I: No problem, that's brilliant-

261 P: Sorry (laughs).

262 I: Thanks a million for taking part in the research.

263 P: No worries, you're welcome.

264 I: Thank you.

EMERGING THEMES

Appendix 6. 07 March 2017-Participant 1

(I: Interviewer, P: Participant)

- 265 I: I'd first like to thank you for agreeing to take part in this
 266 research. Em, I'm interested to hear about your experience
 267 with parenting and parenting practices. So, I'm going to just
 268 ask you a few questions, and you can say as little or as much
 269 as you like-
- 270 P: Mm.
- 271 I: Is that okay?
- 272 P: Yeah.
- 273 I: The first question is what does parenting mean to you?
- 274 P: Em... I suppose first and foremost, you kind of appreciate
 275 how lucky you are to be a parent. I suppose, I have friends
 276 that haven't been able to have children-
- 277 I: Mm.
- 278 P: - and that went through a lot to try and have children, so I
 279 suppose it's just important that people realise how lucky they
 280 are to actually have kids.
- 281 I: Mm-hm.
- 282 P: Em... It can be stressful at times. It's tough going-
- 283 I: Yeah.
- 284 P: It's not easy, but it's definitely worth every minute of it.
- 285 I: Yeah.
- 286 P: It's nice, it's great (laughs).
- 287 I: Brilliant, thank you. Em, second question is, can you tell
 288 me about your experience if being a mother?
- 289 P: Yeah, it's - it's hard because, em... Juggling full-time
 290 work, part-time college, and a mother of two very young
 291 babies... It's difficult, difficult to juggle everything-

Appreciation – lucky to
be parents.

Happiness.

Parenting as a stressful
experience.

Difficult to balance
lifestyle.

Good outweighs the bad.

Prioritisation - children
come first.

- 292 I: Mm-hm.
- 293 P: -but I love it, I wouldn't change it for the world. At the
294 end of the day, you kind of have to prioritise things, and
295 your kids come before everything else. So, whatever you can
296 fit in in the evening times, you just kind of fit in. Em... I
297 kind of try to make the most of my days off-
- 298 I: Yeah.
- 299 P: -I'll do as much with them as I can...
- 300 I: Yeah.
- 301 P: ... When I can. Em, and I suppose it's about empowering
302 the children as well... To kind of, enjoy your time with them,
303 but, em, at the same time try and make them a little bit
304 independent-
- 305 I: Mm
- 306 P: - as well.
- 307 I: Mm-hm.
- 308 P: And get them okay with the days when you're not there,
309 'cause when you're in work like, my kids are in crèche to
310 three days a week. So, I kind of, going to have to get them
311 used to being -me not being there the whole time as well...
312 And them to know that it's okay when I'm not there as well-
- 313 I: Mm.
- 314 P: -I will come home.
- 315 I: Yeah.
- 316 P: Mm
- 317 I: And how do, how do you find it coping with the balance,
318 you know? Like you said, working and studying part-time,
319 and then coming home and parenting as well, is that tough?
320 Or have you, do you have a routine or ways to cope with
321 that?
- 322 P: It's-
- 323 I: Or do you find that you, kind of – you've found a balance?
- 324 P: Yeah, I found it really tough, especially the last couple of
325 weeks. So, what I do is, like, I work nine to five, I pick my
326 kids up, and I kind of forget about everything else when I
327 have my kids. So, I spend the -as much time as I can with
328 them, especially in the evening times. And I have Monday

EMERGING THEMES

Helping children to
become independent.

Teaching child to cope
with separation.

329 off work, so I don't do anything else only with my kids, I do
330 very little housework as well the place is upside down-

331 I: (Laughs)

332 P: -but em, I just a lot of the time I go off with them, I bring
333 them swimming, I'll bring them to the park, do things like
334 that-

335 I: Yeah.

336 P: -em, as soon as they go to bed in the evening time that's
337 when my other work starts.

338 I: Yeah.

339 P: So, like it could be two, three o'clock in the morning by
340 the time I go to bed some mornings.

341 I: Yeah.

342 P: And then they're up at six, so... You just have to prioritise
343 and do as much as you can when they're in bed – but as well
344 everything else can go out the window like.

345 I: Yeah.

346 P: My kids come first and that's what you kind of have to
347 remind yourself of.

348 I: Yeah.

349 P: Mm.

350 I: Yeah. Em, describe the relationship you have with your
351 children.

352 P: I think I have a really good relationship with my children.
353 Em... Yeah. (Laughs) A really good one I suppose. Em...
354 They're responsive to me, em... Ruby while she's only
355 nearly seven months now, she recognises when I come into
356 the room-

357 I: Mm.

358 P: -em, she definitely, she would light up... Eh, she's lying in
359 the bed some mornings and she'd be kicking and scrawling
360 when she sees you-

361 I: (Laughs)

362 P: -Bailey as well, he's three now, and he's all about
363 mammy and if I'm not there he's asking when is mammy
364 coming home-

EMERGING THEMES

Mother has little time for herself/partner.

Child responding to mother contributes to quality of relationship.

Excitement – physically expressed by baby.

Child verbalises as they grow older.

Fun experience.

- 365 I: Yeah.
- 366 P: -and we play loads, we have really fun together.
- 367 I: And how do they respond let's say, if-let's say when you
368 go to work, or if you go out even to the shops or something,
369 how do they respond when you come back? You know, if
370 you've gone away and they're missing you, or if they're
371 kicking up a fuss when you're not there because they're
372 wondering where you are or missing you-
- 373 P: Yeah.
- 374 I: What are they like when you come back?
- 375 P: So, my older chap he's three now, so whenever I'm away,
376 whenever I'd see him I'd say "HI!" And he'll come in and
377 he'll give me a big hug and a kiss. And say, this morning for
378 example when I was leaving him in crèche, he was really
379 upset and he was crying and he didn't want me to go, so
380 when I see him now tomorrow I'll say "Oh I was really sad
381 yesterday because you were sad when you went into school"
382 and he'll say "I'm not sad now mammy" and I'll say "Why
383 were you sad?" and he'll say "I miss you, I want you". And
384 then I'd kind of explain to him when you're really sad like
385 that, that makes me sad, and he's like "Oh I'm not sad now".
386 So em...
- 387 I: That's nice.
- 388 P: ... Yeah, he's at an age now where we can talk about it,
389 and we will rationalise it and he'll understand it a bit more-
- 390 I: Yeah.
- 391 P: -em, and Ruby she's only seven months, so she's not
392 really too... She's like em, doesn't really realise when she's
393 going to crèche so she's grand...
- 394 I: Yeah.
- 395 P: But when I come home she will... You know, be happy to
396 see me as well yeah...
- 397 I: Yeah. That's good... Em, from your experience, what
398 parenting practices do you think were and are meaningful for
399 this relationship?
- 400 P: Hmm... I suppose, being there when they want you so, so
401 when they're crying obviously don't leave them crying for
402 long periods of time... Recognising the difference between
403 different cries... So, what's urgent and what's just a little bit
404 of a moan... Em, the same thing when they're sick. Or when

EMERGING THEMES

Child happy to see
mother after separation.

Child learns to
comfort/understands.

Mother confident in
child's abilities.

Young baby unaware of
separation from mother.

Presence, response, and
recognition of cries are
important.

Respond to children's
needs.

Teach and explains
things to child.

- 405 they're like, sleeping is a huge thing. So recognising, like,
406 what each cry means.
- 407 I: Yeah, yeah.
- 408 P: Em, and just kind of being there when they need you, and
409 trying to teach them things as well like, if they're trying to
410 play with toys and they can't put a train track together or do
411 a jigsaw-
- 412 I: Yeah.
- 413 P: -help them and explain to them how to do it, rather than
414 just doing it as well, so just being there for them.
- 415 I: Yeah. So, you feel it's important to listen to the type of cry
416 that they have and to respond to them at certain times when
417 you know it's for a particular need -so you know that if
418 they're crying, you can anticipate what their need is and
419 respond as quickly as you need to, let's say?
- 420 P: Yeah, yeah. So, there's some cries say, bedtime when
421 they're going to sleep, or like during the day if they're
422 having a nap like, just It's a little moan but you know that if
423 they moan for like, two minutes that they'll just doze off to
424 sleep then but's its grand.
- 425 I: Yeah.
- 426 P: But you know the difference between that moan and a cry
427 of... they're hungry or they're not going to go to sleep now,
428 their pain, you know, you get to know they difference.
- 429 I: Yeah. Perfect. Em, what exactly about these practices do
430 you think makes them meaningful?
- 431 P: I think because you're answering what they want, like.
432 Especially with the older fella like he's able to tell you
433 what's wrong with him now. So, like if he says "I want to go
434 to the toilet" or whatever, you go and you do exactly what
435 he's asking you.
- 436 I: Yeah.
- 437 P: Whereas the younger girl like, she can't obviously talk
438 now, and she hasn't – she's not- she hasn't got much
439 communication. But I think respond to her needs, and what
440 you think she wants. It's obviously going to teach her like,
441 that mammy's there and mammy will be there when I want-
- 442 I: Yeah.

EMERGING THEMES

Mother 'knows' the difference between cries.

Answering/responding to child's needs is meaningful.

Easier as child grows – needs are verbalised.

Being responsive to needs of the child makes the child aware that mother is there.

Disagrees with the AP approach.

- 443 P: -whatever.
- 444 I: Yeah. Em, what is your experience with Attachment
445 Parenting?
- 446 P: Yeah, so I've done a bit of research on it, I've... Em, I've
447 heard about it. Em... I disagree with it to be honest with you.
448 Em... yeah. Em, I disagree with some of the techniques of
449 Attachment Parenting. Em, the sleeping in the bed for
450 example-
- 451 I: Mm-hm.
- 452 P: -I disagree with. We would have... Our older chap would
453 have been in the bed with us a lot more when he was
454 younger than my girl now...
- 455 I: Yeah.
- 456 P: But em... Like there's so many studies out there that
457 prove that em... Like it's – Like cot death and stuff... is to do
458 with like sleeping in the room...
- 459 I: Yeah... SIDS?
- 460 P: ...Em... Yeah. And I just think parents need to be able to
461 get a good night's sleep.
- 462 I: Mm-hm.
- 463 P: And you cannot get a good night's sleep when there's a
464 child in the bed with you because they take up the whole
465 bed-
- 466 I: (Laughs)
- 467 P: -no matter how small they are. Em... What else... Yeah, I
468 think you do need to respond to your child, I think you do
469 need to be there for your child, but at the same time... Like
470 they need to self-soothe as well at times...
- 471 I: Yeah.
- 472 P: And... I... Yeah. Some of the things of Attachment
473 Parenting are em... I would kind of agree with some of them,
474 but most of them I wouldn't.
- 475 I: Yeah. So, do you feel, you know, do you feel that some of
476 it is just your instinct anyway and some other aspects of it
477 are a bit, too out there or too unrealistic? You know if you
478 have, let's say, if you're working or, for example the co-
479 sleeping, is that a bit unrealistic as your child gets older,

EMERGING THEMES

Co-slept with first child
not second.

Co-sleeping contributes
to SIDS/cot death.

Parents need good
quality sleep.

Element of self-soothing.

Encourage
independence.

Agrees with some
aspects of AP.

Easier to teach
independence to a child
from a younger age.

480 would you think that kind of impacts your relationship with
 481 your partner as well?

482 P: Yeah, I think it could, but as well like, the child, like. It's
 483 going to take the child longer, like down the line it's going to
 484 be harder for a child, whereas if the child starts off with a
 485 good relationship with the parents, but it has that bit of
 486 independence...

487 I: Yeah.

488 P: Like it's easier for the child down the line?

489 I: Yeah.

490 P: So like, my youngest child for example, like I think she's
 491 been in the bed with me once or twice when she's sick. But I
 492 never would have had her in the bed in the start...

493 I: Yeah.

494 P: Em, but she's been obviously beside us in the room and
 495 whatever like, and we're there we jump to her needs. I think
 496 as well she sleeps better when she's on her own as well.
 497 Personally, that's my own personal... Em, yeah, and like so
 498 you need to have the child with you absolutely everywhere
 499 you go for Attachment Parenting, and you don't use a buggy,
 500 you're carrying the child everywhere-

501 I: Yeah.

502 P: -Like it's not realistic like, you get nothing done, and as
 503 well like sometimes the child just likes the motion of being
 504 in a buggy as well and going for a walk. Whereas I think
 505 with Attachment Parenting, and it's not good for the mother
 506 to like, I think that the mother needs a bit of space as well,
 507 and to be able to have an hour away to herself to be able to
 508 hand the baby over for half an hour even. I think that's
 509 important for the mother's mental health as well.

510 I: Of course, yeah.

511 P: Yeah.

512 I: Em, what do you think is necessary for a child to have a
 513 secure attachment style or just to feel secure?

514 P: Em, I suppose being there, the mother being there for the
 515 child when they're actually looking for something, or when
 516 they need something. So, again, getting to know the different
 517 cries and what cry means what. And... The mother
 518 responding promptly to that.

EMERGING THEMES

Co-sleeping not ideal for
mother or child.

Child sleeps better alone.

AP means mother takes
the children everywhere
with her.

AP is an unrealistic
approach.

Mother needs space.

Present and responsive
parents, and knowing the
meaning of different
cries of the child
contributes to the
development of a secure
attachment style.

519 I: Yeah. Brilliant.

520 P: Yeah.

521 I: Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

522 P: Em, no I don't think so.

523 I: No problem, that's brilliant-

524 P: Sorry (laughs).

525 I: Thanks a million for taking part in the research.

526 P: No worries, you're welcome.

527 I: Thank you.

Appendix 7.

Participant number 1.

Initial clustering of emerging themes.

Balance	Happiness	Responsibility	Responsivity	Attachment	Unfavourable emotions
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<p>Difficult to balance lifestyle</p> <p>Mother has little time for herself/partner</p> <p>Mother needs space</p>	<p>Appreciation – lucky to be parents</p> <p>Excitement – physically expressed by baby</p> <p>Fun experience</p>	<p>Prioritisation – children come first</p> <p>Helping children to become independent</p> <p>Teaching child to cope with separation</p> <p>Presence, response and recognition of cries are important</p> <p>Respond to children’s needs</p> <p>Teach and explain things to child</p> <p>Encourage independence</p>	<p>Child responding to bother contributes to quality of relationship</p> <p>Child verbalises as they grow older</p> <p>Child happy to see mother after separation</p> <p>Young baby unaware of separation from mother</p> <p>Mother ‘knows’ the difference between cries</p> <p>Answering/responding to child’s needs is meaningful</p> <p>Easier as child grows – needs are verbalised</p> <p>Being responsive to the needs of the child makes the child aware that mother is there</p>	<p>Disagrees with AP approach</p> <p>Co-slept with first child – not second</p> <p>Co-sleeping contributes to SIDS/cot death</p> <p>Element of self-soothing</p> <p>Agrees with some aspects of AP</p> <p>Co-sleeping not ideal for mother or child</p> <p>AP – mother takes child everywhere</p> <p>Present and responsive parents, and knowing the meaning of different cries of child contributes to the development of a secure attachment style</p>	<p>Parenting as stressful experience</p>
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Appendix 8. 07 March 2017 - Participant number 2

(I: Interviewer, P: Participant)

- 528 I: I would first like to thank you for agreeing to take part in
529 my research-
- 530 P: No problem.
- 531 I: - I am interested to hear about your experience with
532 parenting and parenting practices. So, I'm just going to ask
533 you a few questions. The first question is what does
534 parenting mean to you?
- 535 P: Em... you... to me parenting means that I am responsible
536 –
- 537 I: Mhmm.
- 538 P: -for the care, the nurturing, em... the care in all senses for,
539 em, my child.
- 540 I: Mhmm. So, responsibility is key?
- 541 P: Yeah.
- 542 I: Perfect. So, the next question is, can you tell me about
543 your experience of being a mother?
- 544 P: Em... Yes, well that could take a long time (participant
545 laughs). Em... I have been a mother for one year now. And
546 my daughter just turned one on Sunday.
- 547 I: Congratulations!
- 548 P: Em... I – I could go on forever to be honest. Em... It ...Is..
549 brilliant. It's also quite demanding. It's exhausting-
- 550 I: Mm.
- 551 P: ... Em... It... It really is a mixed bag of all the emotions
552 that you could possibly think of... (interviewer laughs)
553 Em... To try and go through it maybe month by month very
554 simply. Initially, yes, em, you know, when you're expecting
555 – I know you're not exactly a parent at that stage but – when
556 you're expecting there is obviously the excitement and all of
557 that, you know, when you're preparing for the baby to arrive.
558 Eh, then, in the final few days or weeks of that it's just like
559 Oh come on will this ever be over (interviewer laughs) then,
560 it's em... Am I answering the right question, yeah? -
- 561 I: Yeah.
- 562 P: -then it's, you know, the baby arrives and yeah, you're
563 glad it arrives. Em... Personally I had a section, I was just...
564 Delighted that I had a section, which I know many other
565 people would not think that way, you know?

**EXPLORATORY
NOTES**

Joy upon being allowed to deliver the child by caesarean section.

First few days of parenting as intimidating.

Mother feels the responsibility falls on her most often.

Resentment towards spouse in the initial few weeks after the child was born.

Appreciation for the child's happiness – this makes the mother happy.

Seeing the child happy allows the mother to forget the difficult times.

Busy.

566 I: Yeah.

567 P: Em... I was delighted when they said I could have a section. Em... And then, you know,
568 the initial stages are quite, eh... The initial few days I've found, were quite difficult because
569 it's quite daunting like, you know? You're responsible for this other person and while I'm
570 lucky that my husband is there, and he's very hands-on, I do think that it does largely fall on
571 the mother like...

572 I: Yeah.

573 P: You know, at the end of the day, and... So, there's that exhaustion there, and then there's
574 you know, the excitement and whatever and I do remember there was, I had like maybe one
575 day in the initial few weeks where I absolutely hated my husband because he was able to get
576 up and walk out the door and go for a run, or go to the shop, and I couldn't, you know? It's
577 not that I physically couldn't but, you know, you just feel that, you know, you don't have that
578 freedom to do that. Em... What was the question? How do I find parenting is it?

579 I: Your experience of being a mother.

580 P: Oh, yeah, my experience of eh, of being a mother. Em... Ah lookit, it's, it is lovely I have
581 to say it is lovely and I suppose what I take most... Eh... Enjoyment out of is, you know, you
582 just see this little person and thankfully she's so happy all the time... Most of the time-
583 (interviewer laughs) – and that's infectious, you know –

584 I: Yeah.

585 P: -and it's fun, and yes, you know, you have the sleepless nights, and it's true like, the
586 giving birth, you actually forget about it, it is true. It sounds ridiculous but you do -
587 (interviewer laughs) -and then, you know, the sleepless nights and whatever, you kind of
588 forget about those too like, you just get on with it like.

589 I: Yeah, yeah.

590 P: But it's, over all, I would say as a parent I would say, the experience is that it's super busy.

591 I: Mm.

592 P: Like, em, I think you just, you don't – whether you're
593 breastfeeding or not breastfeeding or whatever- it's just
594 busy. It's actually non-stop. From six o'clock... from
595 whatever, seven o'clock in the morning right through 'til ten
596 o'clock at night, and that's when you're working or not
597 working. That would be my overall thought on it. It's – it's
598 just really busy. Yeah.

599 I: Eh, the next question is describe the relationship you have
600 with your daughter?

601 P: Em... I would say... my relationship... Em... I think
602 probably... At the minute I would say it's quite fun really at
603 this stage. She is getting a little bit clingy which I think for
604 me... Which I think is kind of common at this stage.

605 I: Yeah.

606 P: Now she's... I suppose she knows that maybe I'm her...
607 One of her primary caretakers... If that's the... Or
608 caregivers... So, she can be a little bit clingy at times. Em, I
609 suppose I don't know if I'm doing the right thing but, I kind
610 of just go react to... Maybe give her a wee hug but then you
611 have to walk out the door, you know, if you have to go
612 somewhere or you have to do something.

613 I: Yeah.

614 P: Em... I can't say she's overly demanding in fairness...
615 Em... But she's def-, it's definitely a fun relationship. I
616 would say... If that's-if that describes what you're looking
617 for...

618 I: Yeah, Yeah.

619 P: Em... And it's... I suppose especially- maybe all parents
620 are the same – but I suppose probably because the fact that I
621 have the interest in Psychology and in development and
622 whatever, like, every day at this stage now... Every week,
623 there's something new –

624 I: Yeah.

625 P: -you can just see it and so, yeah, it's, it's really
626 interesting. It's really interesting to see her learning all those
627 little things. I can't say I would use the word rewarding in
628 anyway – not that it's not rewarding but – I don't feel that
629 it's like oh there tick that box she started to walk or... I don't
630 find it rewarding in that sense. But it's just – I suppose it's
631 just exciting. Yeah.

632 I: Yeah. And you mentioned a moment ago, when for
633 example, when you have to do something or you have to
634 leave the room for a second –

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Mother enjoys the relationship.

The child is clingy at the moment.

Feels the child understands the Mother is her primary caregiver. Awareness.

Does not carry the child with her always – mother comforts her, then leaves when she needs to do something.

Mother can see her child developing and learning from week to week.

Not getting a sense of reward from this in the typical way.

- 635 P: Yeah.
- 636 I: -how does she respond when you come back?
- 637 P: Em, I suppose... When I come back into the room – I
638 know where you're going with that – em... I think she'd
639 probably put her arms out for me to come to her, yeah.
- 640 I: Yeah.
- 641 P: Yeah.
- 642 I: Okay. From your experience, what parenting practices do
643 you think were and are meaningful towards this relationship?
- 644 P: Em...Well I suppose... The most basic one I suppose
645 would be that she knows that I am there for her, you know,
646 as in answering her calls.
- 647 I: Responding to...
- 648 P: Yeah, responding to her I suppose that's the main... I
649 would say that's the most basic technique that's involved
650 or... Practiced.
- 651 I: Yeah.
- 652 P: Em... And aside from that then... Providing for her, you
653 know? And you know, she's... If that... Like responding to
654 her and providing and making sure that she's comfortable
655 and she's happy and.
- 656 I: Yeah.
- 657 P: All of those things really.
- 658 I: "Perfect. The next question is, what exactly about those
659 practices that you mentioned, do you think makes them so
660 meaningful?"
- 661 P: Em...well I suppose they give her the sense of security
662 and the sense of being cared for and... Being... I don't know
663 if she can comprehend being loved but... You know, that
664 she... She knows that...
- 665 I: Yeah.
- 666 P: ...That there's someone there to answer her every need.
- 667 I: Yeah.
- 668 P: "Em... Am... And... just tell me the question again?"
- 669 I: What exactly about those practices do you think makes
670 them so meaningful?
- 671 P: Em. I would say they're – That's the – They're the basic...
672 You're responding to her basic human needs like.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Child responds pleasantly when mother returns to her after a period of separation.

Being responsive to the child, providing for the child, and making sure they are happy is meaningful for the relationship.

These practices give the child a sense of security and being cared for., as well as meet the child's needs.

- 673 I: Yeah.
- 674 P: Em... The nurturing... The care... Feeding. Like her basic
675 requirements at this stage –
- 676 I: Yeah.
- 677 P: - and I suppose then on top of that I might add sort of the
678 stimulation as well, you know, that's... I'd say that's
679 probably pretty important for her too... You know?"
- 680 I: Yeah.
- 681 P: That she's not just left sitting in a room like with a teddy
682 or... You know –
- 683 I: Yeah.
- 684 P: -what I mean?
- 685 I: So, by stimulation do you mean the interaction?
- 686 P: Yeah, yeah.
- 687 I: Yeah.
- 688 P: Like we're... you know, I always be talking to her.. Am...
689 And so, would everyone who's around her like in fairness.
690 Eh... Constantly talking to her... You know...
- 691 I: Yeah.
- 692 P: ...Naming things... Telling her what I'm doing now at this
693 stage...
- 694 I: Yeah.
- 695 P: Em... And... Eh... Just playing with her as well... You
696 know, asking her to help me in the morning whether it's like
697 to open the blinds or whatever and... Yeah, I don't know. I
698 think it – hopefully it all helps.
- 699 I: Yeah... Yeah.
- 700 P: I don't really know (while laughing) ... Much... it's a bit
701 of a blind eh, adventure.
- 702 I: Yeah, yeah. So, the next question is – (stranger enters the
703 room, sees it's being used and leaves) -eh, what is your
704 experience with Attachment Parenting?
- 705 P: Eh... As in what's my knowledge of it or?
- 706 I: Ah, so, experience if you have experienced it, or your
707 feelings or thoughts about it.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Interacting (talking to)
with the child is
important.

Teaching and involving
the child is important.

Parenting as a adventure.

Considers the child as
having a healthy
attachment.

- 708 P: Em... I suppose I would like to think that... Sh-that my
709 daughter would have a healthy attachment. That's what I
710 would hope for...
- 711 I: Mhmm.
- 712 P: ...Em, I think personally I probably had a healthy
713 attachment to my parents... Am... As far as I know...
714 (laughs).
- 715 I: Yeah.
- 716 P: "And... Do you want me to go into what I understand of it
717 or? No, just my –
- 718 I: No, if you're comfortable with that then that's perfect.
719 That's fine, whatever –
- 720 P: Are you sure?
- 721 I: "-you feel comfortable saying if, if you don't want to go
722 on that's absolutely fine.
- 723 P: Yeah.
- 724 I: We can move onto the next question-
- 725 P: Well, em... I mean I understand... Em... My understanding
726 would be just, you know, that you can have a healthy
727 attachment or an unhealthy attachment, and...
- 728 I: Yeah.
- 729 P: ...That's based on the child's responses of – you know, or
730 reactions to you leaving the room or coming back to them...
- 731 I: Yeah.
- 732 P: Or... You know...
- 733 I: Yeah.
- 734 P: ...But I think... You know, from my own experience say,
735 to date now, when I'd go to the crèche to pick her up in the
736 evenings, like she recognises me and she does come for, you
737 know, she puts her arms out to be lifted. Now sometimes it
738 can take a wee second for the, you know, or a few seconds
739 for the penny to drop – she might look at you, and then, but
740 there's def-you know – it takes, I don't know maybe that's...
741 Lookit, she's distracted at something else or what... I don't
742 know. Yeah.
- 743 I: (laughs) Now so the final question that I have is, what do
744 you think is necessary for a child to have a secure attachment
745 style, or to feel secure?

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Mother speaks of attachment with her parents – healthy – appears to think the child's attachment style is a reflection of the mother's own attachment style.

Feels a child's reaction to separation impacts the attachment style which will develop.

Child reaches out to mother when she returns, after being separated from her.

For a child to develop a secure attachment style, the child's cries should be answered. The child should be loved, have a routine, and have interaction with people.

- 746 P: Em... Well I think to have their – you know – the most
747 basic things, is have their... All their cries for help or all their
748 basic needs, em... Provided for.
- 749 I: Mm.
- 750 P: Em... And that's... Say from, food, nurturing, em..
751 Stimulation, love, em... That they have their routine... That
752 they have their, em... you know, em... That they have some
753 sense of ... Belonging in the- in the family... I don't know if
754 they can have a sense of belonging but... That they have, I
755 suppose, em... A good environment.
- 756 I: Mhmm.
- 757 P: Em... And I'm sure they know – I'm sure they can sense if
758 they're safe or not safe-
- 759 I: Yeah.
- 760 P: -or... Em... You know... I don't really know what else,
761 there's probably loads of things but...
- 762 I: That's fine.
- 763 P: I suppose just that they're – at the moment I would say
764 that, you know, that their basic needs are – are – are covered
765 off...
- 766 I: Okay.
- 767 P: ...And that, em... That you respond to their... Their
768 communications, whether that's a cry, a smile, a babbling,
769 whatever...
- 770 I: Yeah.
- 771 P: ... You know, that you let them know then that, we-we'd
772 say at the minute as well, em... We're clapping our hands
773 and telling her that she's a good girl... You know, or well
774 done for this that and the other-
- 775 I: Yeah.
- 776 P: Em... I think that's as much as, as I-I know at the minute
777 like.
- 778 I: Yeah... Brilliant. Eh- do you have anything else that you'd
779 like to add or is that – is that everything?
- 780 P: Em... I think that's everything-
- 781 I: Yeah-
- 782 P: -if that's okay?
- 783 I: "Yeah, brilliant-

EXPLORATORY NOTES

A 'good environment' contributes to the development of secure attachment.

Basic needs should be met and responded to for a secure attachment to develop.

Encouraging the child is important for secure attachment to develop.

- 784 P: Yeah.
- 785 I: -so I just want to thank you again for, taking part in my
786 research.
- 787 P: (Laughs) No problem.

Appendix 9. 07 March 2017 - Participant number 2

(I: Interviewer, P: Participant)

- 788 I: I would first like to thank you for agreeing to take part in
789 my research-
- 790 P: No problem.
- 791 I: - I am interested to hear about your experience with
792 parenting and parenting practices. So, I'm just going to ask
793 you a few questions. The first question is what does
794 parenting mean to you?
- 795 P: Em... you... to me parenting means that I am responsible
796 -
- 797 I: Mhmm.
- 798 P: -for the care, the nurturing, em... the care in all senses for,
799 em, my child.
- 800 I: Mhmm. So, responsibility is key?
- 801 P: Yeah.
- 802 I: Perfect. So, the next question is, can you tell me about
803 your experience of being a mother?
- 804 P: Em... Yes, well that could take a long time (participant
805 laughs). Em... I have been a mother for one year now. And
806 my daughter just turned one on Sunday.
- 807 I: Congratulations!
- 808 P: Em... I - I could go on forever to be honest. Em... It ...Is..
809 brilliant. It's also quite demanding. It's exhausting-
- 810 I: Mm.
- 811 P: ... Em... It... It really is a mixed bag of all the emotions
812 that you could possibly think of... (interviewer laughs)
813 Em... To try and go through it maybe month by month very
814 simply. Initially, yes, em, you know, when you're expecting
815 - I know you're not exactly a parent at that stage but - when
816 you're expecting there is obviously the excitement and all of
817 that, you know, when you're preparing for the baby to arrive.

EMERGING THEMES

Responsibility.

Motherhood as a brilliant
but tiring experience.

Parenting begins at birth.

818 Eh, then, in the final few days or weeks of that it's just like
819 Oh come on will this ever be over (interviewer laughs) then,
820 it's em... Am I answering the right question, yeah? -

821 I: Yeah.

822 P: -then it's, you know, the baby arrives and yeah, you're
823 glad it arrives. Em... Personally I had a section, I was just...
824 Delighted that I had a section, which I know many other
825 people would not think that way, you know?

826 I: Yeah.

827 P: Em... I was delighted when they said I could have a
828 section. Em... And then, you know, the initial stages are
829 quite, eh... The initial few days I've found, were quite
830 difficult because it's quite daunting like, you know? You're
831 responsible for this other person and while I'm lucky that my
832 husband is there, and he's very hands-on, I do think that it
833 does largely fall on the mother like...

834 I: Yeah.

835 P: You know, at the end of the day, and... So, there's that
836 exhaustion there, and then there's you know, the excitement
837 and whatever and I do remember there was, I had like maybe
838 one day in the initial few weeks where I absolutely hated my
839 husband because he was able to get up and walk out the door
840 and go for a run, or go to the shop, and I couldn't, you
841 know? It's not that I physically couldn't but, you know, you
842 just feel that, you know, you don't have that freedom to do
843 that. Em... What was the question? How do I find parenting
844 is it?

845 I: Your experience of being a mother.

846 P: Oh, yeah, my experience of eh, of being a mother. Em...
847 Ah lookit, it's, it is lovely I have to say it is lovely and I
848 suppose what I take most... Eh... Enjoyment out of is, you
849 know, you just see this little person and thankfully she's so
850 happy all the time... Most of the time- (interviewer laughs) -
851 and that's infectious, you know -

852 I: Yeah.

853 P: -and it's fun, and yes, you know, you have the sleepless
854 nights, and it's true like, the giving birth, you actually forget
855 about it, it is true. It sounds ridiculous but you do -
856 (interviewer laughs) -and then, you know, the sleepless
857 nights and whatever, you kind of forget about those too like,
858 you just get on with it like.

859 I: Yeah, yeah.

EMERGING THEMES

Joy upon delivery.

First few days of
parenting intimidating.

Responsibility is mainly
on the mother.

Resentment towards
spouse.

Appreciation for the
child's happiness - this
makes the mother happy.

Good outweighs the bad.

Busy.

860 P: But it's, over all, I would say as a parent I would say, the
861 experience is that it's super busy.

862 I: Mm.

863 P: Like, em, I think you just, you don't – whether you're
864 breastfeeding or not breastfeeding or whatever- it's just
865 busy. It's actually non-stop. From six o'clock... from
866 whatever, seven o'clock in the morning right through 'til ten
867 o'clock at night, and that's when you're working or not
868 working. That would be my overall thought on it. It's – it's
869 just really busy. Yeah.

870 I: Eh, the next question is describe the relationship you have
871 with your daughter?

872 P: Em... I would say... my relationship... Em... I think
873 probably... At the minute I would say it's quite fun really at
874 this stage. She is getting a little bit clingy which I think for
875 me... Which I think is kind of common at this stage.

876 I: Yeah.

877 P: Now she's... I suppose she knows that maybe I'm her...
878 One of her primary caretakers... If that's the... Or
879 caregivers... So, she can be a little bit clingy at times. Em, I
880 suppose I don't know if I'm doing the right thing but, I kind
881 of just go react to... Maybe give her a wee hug but then you
882 have to walk out the door, you know, if you have to go
883 somewhere or you have to do something.

884 I: Yeah.

885 P: Em... I can't say she's overly demanding in fairness...
886 Em... But she's def-, it's definitely a fun relationship. I
887 would say... If that's-if that describes what you're looking
888 for...

889 I: Yeah, Yeah.

890 P: Em... And it's... I suppose especially- maybe all parents
891 are the same – but I suppose probably because the fact that I
892 have the interest in Psychology and in development and
893 whatever, like, every day at this stage now... Every week,
894 there's something new –

895 I: Yeah.

896 P: -you can just see it and so, yeah, it's, it's really
897 interesting. It's really interesting to see her learning all those
898 little things. I can't say I would use the word rewarding in
899 anyway – not that it's not rewarding but – I don't' feel that
900 it's like oh there tick that box she started to walk or... I don't
901 find it rewarding in that sense. But it's just – I suppose it's
902 just exciting. Yeah.

EMERGING THEMES

Mother enjoys the
relationship.

Child is clingy.

Mother feels child
understands the Mother
is her primary caregiver.

Child aware even when
young.

No baby-wearing.

Getting child used to
separation.

Mother can see her child
developing.

No typical sense of
reward from milestones.

- 903 I: Yeah. And you mentioned a moment ago, when for
 904 example, when you have to do something or you have to
 905 leave the room for a second –
- 906 P: Yeah.
- 907 I: -how does she respond when you come back?
- 908 P: Em, I suppose... When I come back into the room – I
 909 know where you're going with that – em... I think she'd
 910 probably put her arms out for me to come to her, yeah.
- 911 I: Yeah.
- 912 P: Yeah.
- 913 I: Okay. From your experience, what parenting practices do
 914 you think were and are meaningful towards this relationship?
- 915 P: Em... Well I suppose... The most basic one I suppose
 916 would be that she knows that I am there for her, you know,
 917 as in answering her calls.
- 918 I: Responding to...
- 919 P: Yeah, responding to her I suppose that's the main... I
 920 would say that's the most basic technique that's involved
 921 or... Practiced.
- 922 I: Yeah.
- 923 P: Em... And aside from that then... Providing for her, you
 924 know? And you know, she's... If that... Like responding to
 925 her and providing and making sure that she's comfortable
 926 and she's happy and.
- 927 I: Yeah.
- 928 P: All of those things really.
- 929 I: "Perfect. The next question is, what exactly about those
 930 practices that you mentioned, do you think makes them so
 931 meaningful?"
- 932 P: Em... well I suppose they give her the sense of security
 933 and the sense of being cared for and... Being... I don't know
 934 if she can comprehend being loved but... You know, that
 935 she... She knows that...
- 936 I: Yeah.
- 937 P: ...That there's someone there to answer her every need.
- 938 I: Yeah.
- 939 P: "Em... Am... And... just tell me the question again?"

EMERGING THEMES

Child responds pleasantly when mother returns after separation.

Responding to and providing for child is meaningful for the relationship.

Providing a sense of security to child.

- 940 I: What exactly about those practices do you think makes
941 them so meaningful?
- 942 P: Em. I would say they're – That's the – They're the basic...
943 You're responding to her basic human needs like.
- 944 I: Yeah.
- 945 P: Em... The nurturing... The care... Feeding. Like her basic
946 requirements at this stage –
- 947 I: Yeah.
- 948 P: - and I suppose then on top of that I might add sort of the
949 stimulation as well, you know, that's... I'd say that's
950 probably pretty important for her too... You know?"
- 951 I: Yeah.
- 952 P: That she's not just left sitting in a room like with a teddy
953 or... You know –
- 954 I: Yeah.
- 955 P: -what I mean?
- 956 I: So, by stimulation do you mean the interaction?
- 957 P: Yeah, yeah.
- 958 I: Yeah.
- 959 P: Like we're... you know, I always be talking to her.. Am...
960 And so, would everyone who's around her like in fairness.
961 Eh... Constantly talking to her... You know...
- 962 I: Yeah.
- 963 P: ...Naming things... Telling her what I'm doing now at this
964 stage...
- 965 I: Yeah.
- 966 P: Em... And... Eh... Just playing with her as well... You
967 know, asking her to help me in the morning whether it's like
968 to open the blinds or whatever and... Yeah, I don't know. I
969 think it – hopefully it all helps.
- 970 I: Yeah... Yeah.
- 971 P: I don't really know (while laughing) ... Much... it's a bit
972 of a blind eh, adventure.
- 973 I: Yeah, yeah. So, the next question is – (stranger enters the
974 room, sees it's being used and leaves) -eh, what is your
975 experience with Attachment Parenting?
- 976 P: Eh... As in what's my knowledge of it or?

EMERGING THEMES

Interacting with the child
is important.

Teaching and involving
the child is important.

Parenting as an
adventure.

Considers the child as
having a healthy
attachment.

- 977 I: Ah, so, experience if you have experienced it, or your
978 feelings or thoughts about it.
- 979 P: Em... I suppose I would like to think that... Sh-that my
980 daughter would have a healthy attachment. That's what I
981 would hope for...
- 982 I: Mhmm.
- 983 P: ...Em, I think personally I probably had a healthy
984 attachment to my parents... Am... As far as I know...
985 (laughs).
- 986 I: Yeah.
- 987 P: "And... Do you want me to go into what I understand of it
988 or? No, just my –
- 989 I: No, if you're comfortable with that then that's perfect.
990 That's fine, whatever –
- 991 P: Are you sure?
- 992 I: "-you feel comfortable saying if, if you don't want to go
993 on that's absolutely fine.
- 994 P: Yeah.
- 995 I: We can move onto the next question-
- 996 P: Well, em... I mean I understand... Em... My understanding
997 would be just, you know, that you can have a healthy
998 attachment or an unhealthy attachment, and...
- 999 I: Yeah.
- 1000 P: ...That's based on the child's responses of – you know, or
1001 reactions to you leaving the room or coming back to them...
- 1002 I: Yeah.
- 1003 P: Or... You know...
- 1004 I: Yeah.
- 1005 P: ...But I think... You know, from my own experience say,
1006 to date now, when I'd go to the crèche to pick her up in the
1007 evenings, like she recognises me and she does come for, you
1008 know, she puts her arms out to be lifted. Now sometimes it
1009 can take a wee second for the, you know, or a few seconds
1010 for the penny to drop – she might look at you, and then, but
1011 there's def-you know – it takes, I don't know maybe that's...
1012 Lookit, she's distracted at something else or what... I don't
1013 know. Yeah.

EMERGING THEMES

Child's attachment style is a reflection of the mother's own attachment style.

Child's reaction to separation impacts the attachment style which will develop.

Child reacts pleasantly to mother when she returns after separation.

Interaction, response to child's needs, love and routine contribute to development of secure attachment style.

1014 I: (laughs) Now so the final question that I have is, what do
 1015 you think is necessary for a child to have a secure attachment
 1016 style, or to feel secure?

1017 P: Em... Well I think to have their – you know – the most
 1018 basic things, is have their... All their cries for help or all their
 1019 basic needs, em... Provided for.

1020 I: Mm.

1021 P: Em... And that's... Say from, food, nurturing, em..
 1022 Stimulation, love, em... That they have their routine... That
 1023 they have their, em... you know, em... That they have some
 1024 sense of ... Belonging in the- in the family... I don't know if
 1025 they can have a sense of belonging but... That they have, I
 1026 suppose, em... A good environment.

1027 I: Mhmm.

1028 P: Em... And I'm sure they know – I'm sure they can sense if
 1029 they're safe or not safe-

1030 I: Yeah.

1031 P: -or... Em... You know... I don't really know what else,
 1032 there's probably loads of things but...

1033 I: That's fine.

1034 P: I suppose just that they're – at the moment I would say
 1035 that, you know, that their basic needs are – are – are covered
 1036 off...

1037 I: Okay.

1038 P: ...And that, em... That you respond to their... Their
 1039 communications, whether that's a cry, a smile, a babbling,
 1040 whatever...

1041 I: Yeah.

1042 P: ... You know, that you let them know then that, we-we'd
 1043 say at the minute as well, em... We're clapping our hands
 1044 and telling her that she's a good girl... You know, or well
 1045 done for this that and the other-

1046 I: Yeah.

1047 P: Em... I think that's as much as, as I-I know at the minute
 1048 like.

1049 I: Yeah... Brilliant. Eh- do you have anything else that you'd
 1050 like to add or is that – is that everything?

1051 P: Em... I think that's everything-

1052 I: Yeah-

EMERGING THEMES

A 'good environment' contributes to the development of secure attachment.

Basic needs should be met and responded to for a secure attachment to develop.

Encouraging the child is important for secure attachment to develop.

- 1053 P: -if that's okay?
- 1054 I: "Yeah, brilliant-
- 1055 P: Yeah.
- 1056 I: -so I just want to thank you again for, taking part in my research.
- 1057 P: (Laughs) No problem.

Appendix 10.

Participant number 2.

Initial clustering of emerging themes.

Responsibility	Happiness	Meaningful Experience	Responsivity	Undesirable emotions	Attachment
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<p>Responsibility</p> <p>Parenting begins at birth</p> <p>Responsibility is mainly on the mother</p> <p>Busy</p> <p>Child is clingy</p> <p>Getting child used to separation</p> <p>Providing a sense of security to child</p> <p>Basic needs should be met and responded to for secure attachment to development</p>	<p>Motherhood as a brilliant but tiring experience</p> <p>Joy upon delivery</p> <p>Appreciation for the child's happiness</p> <p>Good outweighs the bad</p> <p>Mother enjoys the relationship</p> <p>Mother can see her child developing</p>	<p>Parenting as an adventure</p> <p>Responding to and providing for the child is meaningful for the relationship</p> <p>Interacting with the child is important</p> <p>Teaching and involving the child is important</p>	<p>Mother feels child understands the Mother is her primary caregiver</p> <p>Child responds pleasantly when mother returns after separation</p>	<p>First few days of parenting intimidating</p> <p>Resentment towards spouse</p> <p>No typical sense of reward from milestones</p>	<p>Considers the child as having a healthy attachment</p> <p>Child's attachment style is reflection of mother's own attachment style</p> <p>Child's reaction to separation impacts the attachment style which will develop</p> <p>Interaction, response to child's needs, love, routine, and good environment contribute to development of secure attachment style</p> <p>Basic needs should be met, and child encouraged for secure attachment</p>
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Appendix 11. 10 March 2017 – Participant number 3

(I: Interviewer P: Participant)

- 1058 I: I would first like to thank you for agreeing to take part in
1059 this research. I am interested to hear about your experience
1060 with parenting and parenting practices. The first question
1061 I'm going to ask you is what does parenting mean to you?
1062
- 1063 P: Eh, parenting to me means making sure my children grow
1064 up in a happy home, and they have everything they need
1065 provided for them, and that they never look for anything.
- 1066 I: Okay. Can you tell me about your experience of being a
1067 mother?
- 1068 P: Em, I have two kids. My oldest is going to be four this
1069 year and my youngest just turned once. So, when I had my
1070 oldest kid, when he was born everything was great, happy,
1071 grand. Obviously because he was my first child I was happy.
- 1072 I: Mm-hm.
- 1073 P: It did put a strain on my relationship a little bit. But that
1074 was just the stress of becoming a parent and adapting to a
1075 new lifestyle.
- 1076 I: Yeah.
- 1077 P: Then when I had my second baby, I got post-natal
1078 depression.
- 1079 I: Okay.
- 1080 P: So obviously, it was way harder.
- 1081 I: Yeah.
- 1082 P: But since then, I got over that like, I feel like I'm closer to
1083 my kids as a whole now since then.
- 1084 I: Okay. Thank you. The next question is can you describe
1085 the relationship you have with your child or children.
- 1086 P: Very very close. Extremely close, we do everything
1087 together.
- 1088 I: Okay.
- 1089 P: Well, to a certain degree obviously. The oldest one goes
1090 off to school in the mornings, the both of them don't go to
1091 school. But, really really close with them.
- 1092 I: Okay. From your experience, what parenting practices do
1093 you think were and are meaningful to this relationship?

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Parents' responsibility to make child happy and give them what they need. Children should not have to ask for something?

May be slight pressure to feel happiness upon birth of child.

Presence of first child saw a strain on romantic relationship.

Post-natal depression after the birth of second child.

Emphasis on how close mother and children are.

1094 P: I breastfed both my kids for six weeks. Em, I had to stop
1095 them both because... Different reasons. But I felt that created
1096 a really strong bond with both of the kids for me.

1097 I: Okay.

1098 P: Em, I co-slept with my first child as well. So, that's
1099 probably why we're joint at the hip as well. Em, but yeah,
1100 the breastfeeding definitely created that bond.

1101 I: Yeah. Okay, thank you. So, what exactly about these
1102 practices do you think makes them so meaningful?

1103 P: It's the closeness, especially with the breastfeeding. Like,
1104 nobody else will ever have that connection.

1105 I: Okay.

1106 P: Like, not even their dad can have that connection with
1107 them. It's a really special thing that you're able to do.

1108 I: Yeah.

1109 P: Provide food for the baby like. If I could have done it
1110 longer I would have loved to. But I think that's really
1111 meaningful, because that's something literally only a mother
1112 can have with their child.

1113 I: Okay, yeah.

1114 P: So, really strong bond. And then I really like the co-
1115 sleeping too. Even though I didn't do it with the second. But
1116 that was more because we couldn't get our bed back (laughs)
1117 after the first one.

1118 I: (laughs)

1119 P: But, like, with the second one, I still do bring her in in the
1120 morning, and I think in the morning when I have the two
1121 kids in the bed, there's something really special about that
1122 like.

1123 I: Yeah.

1124 P: That twenty minutes where it's just you and them, and
1125 your little chat about the day, and your cuddles. You know?

1126 I: Yeah.

1127 P: There's something really nice about that.

1128 I: And how did you find it was once you stopped co-sleeping
1129 with your first child? Was it difficult when that happened?

1130 P: Yeah. So, they reason I stopped co-sleeping, and this
1131 might sound a bit cruel, is because I got pregnant-

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Breastfeeding important to mother – breastfed both children.

Co-slept with first child – “joint at the hip”.

Feels breastfeeding created the strong bond.

Physical closeness creates strong bonds.

Stopped breastfeeding but not for lack of wanting to. Emphasis on importance of the mother.

Didn't co-sleep with second child.

Enjoys when both kids are in the bed in the morning.

Conversation with children about their day – physical closeness.

- 1132 I: Okay
- 1133 P: -again. So, knew there was going to be another baby in
1134 the room as well.
- 1135 I: Yeah.
- 1136 P: So, we tried the whole time I was pregnant. It didn't really
1137 work until it got to the point where, I couldn't even have
1138 anyone in the bed with me, I was so big and uncomfortable.
- 1139 I: Okay.
- 1140 P: But like, we finally managed to get him in but it was
1141 really hard, he hated that. And like, we could go off during
1142 the day, and he'd be fine with other people. But at night time
1143 it was me he wanted, it wasn't even his dad.
- 1144 I: Yeah.
- 1145 P: So, I found it really hard, and he found it really hard. But I
1146 knew in my own heart as well, it was time to cut that cord,
1147 you know?
- 1148 I: Yeah.
- 1149 P: He needed more independence at that stage.
- 1150 I: Yeah.
- 1151 P: And I knew that would be one way to help it.
- 1152 I: Yeah.
- 1153 P: Because like, when we finished co-sleeping as well, all of
1154 a sudden, the bottle was gone, he stopped wetting his
1155 nappies at night. He was fully trained at night time then-
- 1156 I: Okay.
- 1157 P: -so it was like that bit of an independence then.
- 1158 I: Yeah, Yeah.
- 1159 P: Brought him on a bit more.
- 1160 I: Okay. What is your experience with Attachment
1161 Parenting?
- 1162 P: I love it.
- 1163 I: Okay.
- 1164 P: I don't... I don't... I mightn't be like, extreme with my
1165 Attachment Parenting style. But I definitely do some of the
1166 things.
- 1167 I: Okay.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Stopped co-sleeping as mother became pregnant with second child, and felt uncomfortable in bed with others.

Child looking for mother, not Father.

Separation and break of co-sleeping routine.

Mother-infant bond as a "cord".

Unfavourable behaviours stopped when co-sleeping stopped. Child became independent. Possibly due to the security the child felt from the mother.

- 1168 P: I don't understand how anyone couldn't.
- 1169 I: Yeah.
- 1170 P: I know that there's other styles like, crying it out at night-
1171 time...
- 1172 I: Yeah.
- 1173 P: ...to get the baby to sleep. I don't believe in that, I believe
1174 that when a baby wants to sleep they'll sleep, and if they
1175 don't – tough- you had a baby.
- 1176 I: Okay.
- 1177 P: Deal with it. Like, so, that's where I'd be the cuddly,
1178 lying in the bed with them, mom.
- 1179 I: Yeah.
- 1180 P: I think I just don't understand how someone couldn't be
1181 an Attachment Parent. I don't judge anyone either.
- 1182 I: Yeah.
- 1183 P: But for me, it was really important.
- 1184 I: Okay. So, you feel that it's important for the relationship
1185 between you and your child?
- 1186 P: Yeah, definitely. It creates a closeness and a bond, and I
1187 think the kids see that.
- 1188 I: Okay.
- 1189 P: Definitely. They need that stability and that closeness.
- 1190 I: Yeah. The final question is, what do you think is
1191 necessary for a child to have a secure attachment style?
- 1192 P: They need the attachment style of parenting anyway... In
1193 my opinion.
- 1194 I: Okay.
- 1195 P: Because they need to know that they're close to their
1196 parents like. Okay, I know I'm the mother now so I'm
1197 probably like, not bashing dads, but I think it's very
1198 important with their mother.
- 1199 I: Mm-hm.
- 1200 P: That they need that, need that connection.
- 1201 I: Yeah.
- 1202 P: So, I think the Attachment Parenting, when they're young,
1203 it creates the stronger bond. So now like, I see it with my

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Belief in the cry of the child – the child's cry serves a purpose.

Mother may have felt it was important to say she doesn't judge anyone.

Emphasis on how important Attachment Parenting is. Important to the mother for the creation of bonds with children.

AP provides stability and closeness.

'In my opinion'. Possibly self-conscious about what she is saying. Possible fear of judgment.

Bond with mother more important, or more meaningful than bond with father.

Confidence in son's ability to explore

1204 three-year-old, who's nearly four. He's off and he's
 1205 becoming more independent. But he knows I'm still here.

1206 I: Mm-hm.

1207 P: so even though I'm letting him become independent, I let
 1208 him do it in his own time, and because of the Attachment
 1209 Parenting that I did, we have a very strong connection.

1210 I: Yeah.

1211 P: So, he'll always know that I'm here. Like, even when he's
 1212 twenty, he'll always know he can come home to Mom, if he
 1213 needs anything. And I think it all stems from the Attachment
 1214 Parenting.

1215 I: Yeah.

1216 P: They get that comfort, and that closeness from that then,
 1217 that never goes away.

1218 I: Okay. And why exactly do you think it's so important,
 1219 specifically the bond between the child and the mother in
 1220 particular?

1221 P: Because, I don't know, I suppose, like obviously the other
 1222 carries the child. But, like, I think, and this might sound
 1223 awful now. Like, my partner is a great dad to our kids, so
 1224 I'm not knocking him. But I think, it's very easy for a man
 1225 and a dad to live their own lives and get up and go, but
 1226 there's something about a mother and a child. The mother
 1227 gives up their world for the child.

1228 I: Yeah.

1229 P: And the different connection there, I don't know what it
 1230 is, I don't know why it's there.

1231 I: Yeah.

1232 P: But there's the different bond between a mother and a
 1233 child, and I think if you secure that when they're a baby, it
 1234 doesn't break as easily when they grow up.

1235 I: Okay. Yeah.

1236 P: But I think, I don't know what it is about, I can't even put
 1237 it into words. But there's definitely... It's like, did you ever
 1238 hear that metaphor; the string that connects everyone?
 1239

1240 I: Yeah.

1241 P: So, it's like, the string that connects everyone, and then
 1242 when a mother has a baby. That string is like, reinforced ten
 1243 times over.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

'Let' the child become more independent. Mother misses when the child needed her, so takes ownership of the change. Closeness is still there between mother and child – mother feels this is because of experience with AP.

Confidence in the child's ability to rely on the mother in the future – and in the longevity of the closeness.

Feelings that father does not makes as many sacrifices for children.

Mother-infant bond has a uniqueness.

Bond should be secured and supported when the child is young to make sure it's still there as the child grows.

Metaphor to describe the strength of the bond – 'the string that connects everyone'.

- 1244 I: Yeah.
- 1245 P: In my head, anyway.
- 1246 I: Okay. Em, so you think, em, you think that the bond when
1247 the child is young is important because-
- 1248 P: So important.
- 1249 I: Okay.
- 1250 P: Yeah.
- 1251 I: And you think it's important for their future, for their
1252 relationships in their future?
- 1253 P: In their future, I think if the child gets the sense of
1254 security when they're a baby...
- 1255 I: Mm-hm.
- 1256 P ... That they'll know that security is there for life.
- 1257 I: Yeah.
- 1258 P: And, I think if a child has that I think it will strengthen
1259 their relationships that they form when they're older as well.
- 1260 I: Okay.
- 1261 P: If their relationship with their parents is a good healthy
1262 one like.
- 1263 I: Okay.
- 1264 P: But it definitely all stems from the minute that child is
1265 born.
- 1266 I: Okay.
- 1267 P: They know things. This is going to make me sound crazy
1268 now, but when a baby's in your stomach they know things.
- 1269 I: Yeah.
- 1270 P: They do.
- 1271 I: Yeah.
- 1272 P: They do. And my mam used to always say it.
- 1273 I: (giggles)
- 1274 P: Are you laughing at me now? (laughs). No, my mam used
1275 to always say it. When I was pregnant with my second baby.
1276 And I used to be like, "Ugh, what if I don't love this baby as
1277 much as my first one?" and my mam would be like "That
1278 baby can hear everything, you tell that baby you love it."
- 1279 I: Aw, that's lovely.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Security created for child is long-lasting if it is created when the child is young.

Belief that security given to a child when young contributes to the quality of future relationships, if the relationship with the parents is a 'good healthy one'.

Important from the moment a child is born.

A baby is aware of their environment from the womb – bond is present at this time. Mother is conscious of how she is portraying herself.

Participant's own mother is important to her.

Participant values her Mother's words.

Fear of disliking second child.

1280 P: I know. It makes us sound nuts but.

1281 I: (laughs)

1282 P: It's true (laughs).

1283 I: So, is there anything else that you'd like to add, or anything else that you feel you'd like to
1284 say?

1285 P: No. I think I've covered everything. If you don't need any more information I'm happy
1286 with what I've given.

1287 I: Okay. Thank you very much for taking part in this research.

1288 P: No problem. Thanks a million.

Appendix 12. 10 March 2017 – Participant number 3

(I: Interviewer P: Participant)

- 1289 I: I would first like to thank you for agreeing to take part in
1290 this research. I am interested to hear about your experience
1291 with parenting and parenting practices. The first question
1292 I'm going to ask you is what does parenting mean to you?
1293
- 1294 P: Eh, parenting to me means making sure my children grow
1295 up in a happy home, and they have everything they need
1296 provided for them, and that they never look for anything.
- 1297 I: Okay. Can you tell me about your experience of being a
1298 mother?
- 1299 P: Em, I have two kids. My oldest is going to be four this
1300 year and my youngest just turned once. So, when I had my
1301 oldest kid, when he was born everything was great, happy,
1302 grand. Obviously because he was my first child I was happy.
- 1303 I: Mm-hm.
- 1304 P: It did put a strain on my relationship a little bit. But that
1305 was just the stress of becoming a parent and adapting to a
1306 new lifestyle.
- 1307 I: Yeah.
- 1308 P: Then when I had my second baby, I got post-natal
1309 depression.
- 1310 I: Okay.
- 1311 P: So obviously, it was way harder.
- 1312 I: Yeah.
- 1313 P: But since then, I got over that like, I feel like I'm closer to
1314 my kids as a whole now since then.
- 1315 I: Okay. Thank you. The next question is can you describe
1316 the relationship you have with your child or children.
- 1317 P: Very very close. Extremely close, we do everything
1318 together.
- 1319 I: Okay.
- 1320 P: Well, to a certain degree obviously. The oldest one goes
1321 off to school in the mornings, the both of them don't go to
1322 school. But, really really close with them.

EMERGING THEMES

Responsibility.

Happiness.

First child – strain on
romantic relationship.

Post-natal depression.

Close relationship.

- 1323 I: Okay. From your experience, what parenting practices do
1324 you think were and are meaningful to this relationship?
- 1325 P: I breastfed both my kids for six weeks. Em, I had to stop
1326 them both because... Different reasons. But I felt that created
1327 a really strong bond with both of the kids for me.
- 1328 I: Okay.
- 1329 P: Em, I co-slept with my first child as well. So, that's
1330 probably why we're joint at the hip as well. Em, but yeah,
1331 the breastfeeding definitely created that bond.
- 1332 I: Yeah. Okay, thank you. So, what exactly about these
1333 practices do you think makes them so meaningful?
- 1334 P: It's the closeness, especially with the breastfeeding. Like,
1335 nobody else will ever have that connection.
- 1336 I: Okay.
- 1337 P: Like, not even their dad can have that connection with
1338 them. It's a really special thing that you're able to do.
- 1339 I: Yeah.
- 1340 P: Provide food for the baby like. If I could have done it
1341 longer I would have loved to. But I think that's really
1342 meaningful, because that's something literally only a mother
1343 can have with their child.
- 1344 I: Okay, yeah.
- 1345 P: So, really strong bond. And then I really like the co-
1346 sleeping too. Even though I didn't do it with the second. But
1347 that was more because we couldn't get our bed back (laughs)
1348 after the first one.
- 1349 I: (laughs)
- 1350 P: But, like, with the second one, I still do bring her in in the
1351 morning, and I think in the morning when I have the two
1352 kids in the bed, there's something really special about that
1353 like.
- 1354 I: Yeah.
- 1355 P: That twenty minutes where it's just you and them, and
1356 your little chat about the day, and your cuddles. You know?
- 1357 I: Yeah.
- 1358 P: There's something really nice about that.
- 1359 I: And how did you find it was once you stopped co-sleeping
1360 with your first child? Was it difficult when that happened?

EMERGING THEMES

Breastfeeding important
practice.

Co-slept with first child.

Breastfeeding created
strong bond.

Physical closeness
creates strong bonds.

Didn't co-sleep with
second child.

Enjoys when both kids
are in the bed in the
morning.

Interaction.

- 1361 P: Yeah. So, they reason I stopped co-sleeping, and this
1362 might sound a bit cruel, is because I got pregnant-
- 1363 I: Okay
- 1364 P: -again. So, knew there was going to be another baby in
1365 the room as well.
- 1366 I: Yeah.
- 1367 P: So, we tried the whole time I was pregnant. It didn't really
1368 work until it got to the point where, I couldn't even have
1369 anyone in the bed with me, I was so big and uncomfortable.
- 1370 I: Okay.
- 1371 P: But like, we finally managed to get him in but it was
1372 really hard, he hated that. And like, we could go off during
1373 the day, and he'd be fine with other people. But at night time
1374 it was me he wanted, it wasn't even his dad.
- 1375 I: Yeah.
- 1376 P: So, I found it really hard, and he found it really hard. But I
1377 knew in my own heart as well, it was time to cut that cord,
1378 you know?
- 1379 I: Yeah.
- 1380 P: He needed more independence at that stage.
- 1381 I: Yeah.
- 1382 P: And I knew that would be one way to help it.
- 1383 I: Yeah.
- 1384 P: Because like, when we finished co-sleeping as well, all of
1385 a sudden, the bottle was gone, he stopped wetting his
1386 nappies at night. He was fully trained at night time then-
- 1387 I: Okay.
- 1388 P: -so it was like that bit of an independence then.
- 1389 I: Yeah, Yeah.
- 1390 P: Brought him on a bit more.
- 1391 I: Okay. What is your experience with Attachment
1392 Parenting?
- 1393 P: I love it.
- 1394 I: Okay.
- 1395 P: I don't... I don't... I mightn't be like, extreme with my
1396 Attachment Parenting style. But I definitely do some of the
1397 things.

EMERGING THEMES

Child looking for
mother, not Father.

Mother-infant bond as a
"cord".

Child became
independent when co-
sleeping stopped.

Mother provided the
child with sense of
security.

- 1398 I: Okay.
- 1399 P: I don't understand how anyone couldn't.
- 1400 I: Yeah.
- 1401 P: I know that there's other styles like, crying it out at night-
1402 time...
- 1403 I: Yeah.
- 1404 P: ...to get the baby to sleep. I don't believe in that, I believe
1405 that when a baby wants to sleep they'll sleep, and if they
1406 don't – tough- you had a baby.
- 1407 I: Okay.
- 1408 P: Deal with it. Like, so, that's where I'd be the cuddly,
1409 lying in the bed with them, mom.
- 1410 I: Yeah.
- 1411 P: I think I just don't understand how someone couldn't be
1412 an Attachment Parent. I don't judge anyone either.
- 1413 I: Yeah.
- 1414 P: But for me, it was really important.
- 1415 I: Okay. So, you feel that it's important for the relationship
1416 between you and your child?
- 1417 P: Yeah, definitely. It creates a closeness and a bond, and I
1418 think the kids see that.
- 1419 I: Okay.
- 1420 P: Definitely. They need that stability and that closeness.
- 1421 I: Yeah. The final question is, what do you think is
1422 necessary for a child to have a secure attachment style?
- 1423 P: They need they attachment style of parenting anyway... In
1424 my opinion.
- 1425 I: Okay.
- 1426 P: Because they need to know that they're close to their
1427 parents like. Okay, I know I'm the mother now so I'm
1428 probably like, not bashing dads, but I think it's very
1429 important with their mother.
- 1430 I: Mm-hm.
- 1431 P: That they need that, need that connection.
- 1432 I: Yeah.
- 1433 P: So, I think the Attachment Parenting, when they're young,
1434 it creates the stronger bond. So now like, I see it with my

EMERGING THEMES

Child's cry serves a purpose.

Attachment Parenting important for the creation of bonds with children.

AP provides stability and closeness.

Bond with mother more important, or more meaningful than bond with father.

Confidence in son's ability to explore environment.

Mother feels the child is aware she is there.

- 1435 three-year-old, who's nearly four. He's off and he's
1436 becoming more independent. But he knows I'm still here.
- 1437 I: Mm-hm.
- 1438 P: so even though I'm letting him become independent, I let
1439 him do it in his own time, and because of the Attachment
1440 Parenting that I did, we have a very strong connection.
- 1441 I: Yeah.
- 1442 P: So, he'll always know that I'm here. Like, even when he's
1443 twenty, he'll always know he can come home to Mom, if he
1444 needs anything. And I think it all stems from the Attachment
1445 Parenting.
- 1446 I: Yeah.
- 1447 P: They get that comfort, and that closeness from that then,
1448 that never goes away.
- 1449 I: Okay. And why exactly do you think it's so important,
1450 specifically the bond between the child and the mother in
1451 particular?
- 1452 P: Because, I don't know, I suppose, like obviously the other
1453 carries the child. But, like, I think, and this might sound
1454 awful now. Like, my partner is a great dad to our kids, so
1455 I'm not knocking him. But I think, it's very easy for a man
1456 and a dad to live their own lives and get up and go, but
1457 there's something about a mother and a child. The mother
1458 gives up their world for the child.
- 1459 I: Yeah.
- 1460 P: And the different connection there, I don't know what it
1461 is, I don't know why it's there.
- 1462 I: Yeah.
- 1463 P: But there's the different bond between a mother and a
1464 child, and I think if you secure that when they're a baby, it
1465 doesn't break as easily when they grow up.
- 1466 I: Okay. Yeah.
- 1467 P: But I think, I don't know what it is about, I can't even put
1468 it into words. But there's definitely... It's like, did you ever
1469 hear that metaphor; the string that connects everyone?
1470
- 1471 I: Yeah.
- 1472 P: So, it's like, the string that connects everyone, and then
1473 when a mother has a baby. That string is like, reinforced ten
1474 times over.

EMERGING THEMES

Closeness is still there when child becomes independent due to experience with AP.

Confidence in the longevity of the closeness.

Mother has more responsibility than father.

Mother-infant bond is unique.

Secure bond when child is young provide security in the future.

Metaphor to describe the strength of the bond.

- 1475 I: Yeah.
- 1476 P: In my head, anyway.
- 1477 I: Okay. Em, so you think, em, you think that the bond when
1478 the child is young is important because-
- 1479 P: So important.
- 1480 I: Okay.
- 1481 P: Yeah.
- 1482 I: And you think it's important for their future, for their
1483 relationships in their future?
- 1484 P: In their future, I think if the child gets the sense of
1485 security when they're a baby...
- 1486 I: Mm-hm.
- 1487 P ... That they'll know that security is there for life.
- 1488 I: Yeah.
- 1489 P: And, I think if a child has that I think it will strengthen
1490 their relationships that they form when they're older as well.
- 1491 I: Okay.
- 1492 P: If their relationship with their parents is a good healthy
1493 one like.
- 1494 I: Okay.
- 1495 P: But it definitely all stems from the minute that child is
1496 born.
- 1497 I: Okay.
- 1498 P: They know things. This is going to make me sound crazy
1499 now, but when a baby's in your stomach they know things.
- 1500 I: Yeah.
- 1501 P: They do.
- 1502 I: Yeah.
- 1503 P: They do. And my mam used to always say it.
- 1504 I: (giggles)
- 1505 P: Are you laughing at me now? (laughs). No, my mam used
1506 to always say it. When I was pregnant with my second baby.
1507 And I used to be like, "Ugh, what if I don't love this baby as
1508 much as my first one?" and my mam would be like "That
1509 baby can hear everything, you tell that baby you love it."
- 1510 I: Aw, that's lovely.

EMERGING THEMES

Security given to a child when young contributes to the quality of future relationships.

Baby is aware of environment in utero.

Participant's mother is important to her.

Fear of disliking second child.

1511 P: I know. It makes us sound nuts but.

1512 I: (laughs)

1513 P: It's true (laughs).

1514 I: So, is there anything else that you'd like to add, or anything else that you feel you'd like to
1515 say?

1516 P: No. I think I've covered everything. If you don't need any more information I'm happy
1517 with what I've given.

1518 I: Okay. Thank you very much for taking part in this research.

1519 P: No problem. Thanks a million.

Appendix 13.

Participant number 3.

Initial clustering of emerging themes.

Responsibility	Relationships	Emotions	Attachment
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<p>Mother provided the child with sense of security</p> <p>Mother has more responsibility than father</p> <p>Secure bond when child is young provides security in the future</p> <p>Baby is aware of environment in utero</p>	<p>First child – strain on romantic relationship</p> <p>Close relationship</p> <p>Enjoys when both kids are in the bed in the morning</p> <p>Interaction</p> <p>Child looking for mother, not father</p> <p>Mother-Infant bond as a “cord”</p> <p>Bond with mother more important, or more meaningful than bond with father</p> <p>Mother-Infant bond is unique</p> <p>Participant’s mother is important to her</p>	<p>Happiness</p> <p>Post-natal depression</p> <p>Confidence in son’s ability to explore environment</p> <p>Mother feels the child is aware she is there</p> <p>Confidence in the longevity of the closeness</p> <p>Fear of disliking second child</p>	<p>Breastfeeding important practice</p> <p>Co-slept with first child</p> <p>Breastfeeding created strong bond</p> <p>Physical closeness creates strong bonds</p> <p>Didn’t co-sleep with second child</p> <p>Child became independent when co-sleeping stopped</p> <p>Attachment Parenting is important for the creation of bonds with children</p> <p>AP provides stability and closeness</p> <p>Closeness is still there when child becomes independent due to AP</p>
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Appendix 14. 11 March 2017-Participant 4

(I: Interviewer, P: Participant)

- 1520 I: I would first like to thank you for agreeing to take part in
1521 this research. I am interested to hear about your experience
1522 with parenting and parenting practices. So, I'm going to ask
1523 you a few questions now, is that okay?
- 1524 P: Yeah.
- 1525 I: What does parenting mean to you?
- 1526 P: In my opinion, it means being responsible for your child
1527 and caring for them. You have to make sure that your child
1528 has everything they need. I make sure that Lucy is looked
1529 after and is happy, fed and cared for. It is, it is important that
1530 she knows I was there for her and that's wh- that's what
1531 parenting is all about, in my opinion.
- 1532 I: Thank you. Can you tell me about your experience of
1533 being a mother?
- 1534 P: It's a great experience. It can be so stressful, but it makes
1535 me happy to know that I'm able to provide for Lucy. I forget
1536 about how hard it is when I see her smiling and playing and
1537 see that she's okay and happy. Full of joy, cuddles and
1538 laughter.
- 1539 I: Thank you. Describe the relationship you have with your
1540 child.
- 1541 P: Myself and Lucy are very close. She's a very happy baby,
1542 and always smiling. Even when her new teeth are coming in,
1543 she's so good, she doesn't kick up a fuss. We have a strong
1544 bond. When she sees me in the morning she's all smiles, and
1545 when she goes to her nan's when I'm working she's grand
1546 and is always happy to see me when I come back from work.
- 1547 I: Thank you. From your experience, what parenting
1548 practices do you think were and are meaningful to this
1549 relationship?
- 1550
- 1551 P: I always go to Lucy when she's crying or looking for me,
1552 I don't leave her cry on her own. I always pick her up when
1553 she wants to be picked up. And I think that's important. Just
1554 being responsive to your child's and being present is good
1555 for the relationship.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Happiness of the child is very important to the mother. Repeats "in my opinion". Responsibility. Providing for child – "it is important that she knows I was there for her". Emphasis on 'I'. Possibly feeling pressure – possibly parenting alone. Care for. Feed.

Great first, then stressful. Mother is happy that she is 'able to provide' for daughter. It's tough at times but participant forgets about this once she sees her child happy – "full of joys, cuddles and laughter"

Happy baby – "strong bond" – child smiles when she sees mother, even after a brief separation - "always happy to see me when I come back from work".

Prompt response to child's cry - "I don't leave her cry on her own". Picks child up. Present.

- 1556 I: What exactly about these practices do you think makes
1557 them so meaningful?
- 1558 P: I think it's the physical closeness that's important. It's a
1559 comfort to Lucy and to me as well being close to her. She
1560 knows that I'm there for her when she needs me and that I'll
1561 respond to her is she's crying. I think for the child it's nice
1562 knowing that the parent is close by.
- 1563 I: What is your experience with Attachment Parenting?
- 1564 P: I'm not interested in all the attachment parenting
1565 strategies to be honest, but some are just common sense.
1566 Lucy has a cot in my bedroom, and she sleeps in that. But
1567 sometimes in the morning she comes into my bed. I didn't
1568 breastfeed her, but I fed on demand. And those things
1569 allowed Lucy to become more independent. I think that
1570 once you respond to your baby's needs, you are a good
1571 mom.
- 1572 I: Thank you. What do you think is necessary for a child to
1573 have a secure attachment style?
- 1574 P: Well I think being physically there for them and going to
1575 your baby as soon as they cry is important. They cry for a
1576 reason. But giving them independence is important too, like
1577 leaving them run around, playing, and sleeping by
1578 themselves teaches them to be secure.
- 1579 I: Perfect. Do you have anything else you'd like to add, or is
1580 that everything?
- 1581 P: No, that's everything.
- 1582 I: Thanks a million for taking part in this research.
- 1583 P: No problem-
- 1584 I: Thank you.
- 1585 P: - thanks for asking me to be involved.
- 1586 I: Thank you.

EXPLORATORY NOTES

Physical closeness. Comfort for both mother and daughter are important to the participant. Responding to baby's cry. Feels it's nice for baby knowing that mother is nearby.

Child sleeps in own bed in mother's room. Baby comes into mom's bed some mornings. Did not breastfeed but fed on demand. Mother feels this allowed the child more independence. About responding to baby's needs – "I think that once you respond to your baby's needs you're a good mom."

Contributions to development of secure attachment: responding to cry immediately – "they cry for a reason". It is also important to allow the child to explore their environment "leaving them run around, playing, sleeping by themselves teaches them to be secure".

Appendix 15. 11 March 2017-Participant 4

(I: Interviewer, P: Participant)

1587 I: I would first like to thank you for agreeing to take part in
1588 this research. I am interested to hear about your experience
1589 with parenting and parenting practices. So, I'm going to ask
1590 you a few questions now, is that okay?

1591 P: Yeah.

1592 I: What does parenting mean to you?

1593 P: In my opinion, it means being responsible for your child
1594 and caring for them. You have to make sure that your child
1595 has everything they need. I make sure that Lucy is looked
1596 after and is happy, fed and cared for. It is, it is important that
1597 she knows I was there for her and that's wh- that's what
1598 parenting is all about, in my opinion.

1599 I: Thank you. Can you tell me about your experience of
1600 being a mother?

1601 P: It's a great experience. It can be so stressful, but it makes
1602 me happy to know that I'm able to provide for Lucy. I forget
1603 about how hard it is when I see her smiling and playing and
1604 see that she's okay and happy. Full of joy, cuddles and
1605 laughter.

1606 I: Thank you. Describe the relationship you have with your
1607 child.

1608 P: Myself and Lucy are very close. She's a very happy baby,
1609 and always smiling. Even when her new teeth are coming in,
1610 she's so good, she doesn't kick up a fuss. We have a strong
1611 bond. When she sees me in the morning she's all smiles, and
1612 when she goes to her nan's when I'm working she's grand
1613 and is always happy to see me when I come back from work.

1614 I: Thank you. From your experience, what parenting
1615 practices do you think were and are meaningful to this
1616 relationship?

1617 P: I always go to Lucy when she's crying or looking for me,
1618 I don't leave her cry on her own. I always pick her up when
1619 she wants to be picked up. And I think that's important. Just
1620 being responsive to your child's and being present is good
1621 for the relationship.

EMERGING THEMES

Happiness of the child is important.

Responsibility.

Providing for child.

Great and stressful experience.

Good outweighs the bad.

Child happy to see mother after separation.

Responding to child's cry.

Prioritisation – children come before everything else.

- 1622 I: What exactly about these practices do you think makes
1623 them so meaningful?
- 1624 P: I think it's the physical closeness that's important. It's a
1625 comfort to Lucy and to me as well being close to her. She
1626 knows that I'm there for her when she needs me and that I'll
1627 respond to her is she's crying. I think for the child it's nice
1628 knowing that the parent is close by.
- 1629 I: What is your experience with Attachment Parenting?
- 1630 P: I'm not interested in all the attachment parenting
1631 strategies to be honest, but some are just common sense.
1632 Lucy has a cot in my bedroom, and she sleeps in that. But
1633 sometimes in the morning she comes into my bed. I didn't
1634 breastfeed her, but I fed on demand. And those things
1635 allowed Lucy to become more independent. I think that
1636 once you respond to your baby's needs, you are a good
1637 mom.
- 1638 I: Thank you. What do you think is necessary for a child to
1639 have a secure attachment style?
- 1640 P: Well I think being physically there for them and going to
1641 your baby as soon as they cry is important. They cry for a
1642 reason. But giving them independence is important too, like
1643 leaving them run around, playing, and sleeping by
1644 themselves teaches them to be secure.
- 1645 I: Perfect. Do you have anything else you'd like to add, or is
1646 that everything?
- 1647 P: No, that's everything.
- 1648 I: Thanks a million for taking part in this research.
- 1649 P: No problem-
- 1650 I: Thank you.
- 1651 P: - thanks for asking me to be involved.
- 1652 I: Thank you.

EMERGING THEMES

Physical closeness -
comfort for mother and
daughter are important.

Responding to baby's
cry - baby aware that
mother is nearby.

No co-sleeping.

Bottle-fed on demand -
led to independence.

Responding to baby's
needs.

Teach.

Presence, responsive
parent, and allowing
child to explore their
environment contributes
to development of secure
attachment style.

Appendix 16.

Participant number 4.

Initial clustering of emerging themes.

Responsibility	Happiness	Responsivity	Attachment
Responsibility	Happiness of the child most important	Responding to child's cry	Child happy to see mother after separation
Providing for child	Great and stressful experience	Responding to baby's cry – baby aware that mother is nearby	Physical closeness - comfort for mother and daughter are important
Prioritisation – child comes before everything else	Good outweighs the bad		No co-sleeping
Teach		Responding to baby's needs	Bottle-fed on demand – led to independence
			Presence, responsive parent, and allowing child to explore their environment contributes to development of secure attachment style

Appendix 17.

Final table of themes

Major theme 1 – Happiness

Mother's happiness

Participant 1: I suppose first and foremost, you kind of appreciate how lucky you are to be a parent 10/11

Participant 4: I forget about how hard it is when I see her smiling and playing and see that she's okay and happy 1515-1517

Happiness of child important

Participant 2: you just see this little person and thankfully she's so happy all the time 557/558

Participant 3: Parenting to me means making sure my children grow up in a happy home 1043/1044

Major theme 2 - Responsibility

Mother carries the responsibility

Participant 2: I had like, maybe one day in the initial few weeks where I absolutely hated my husband because he was able to get up and walk out the door and go for a run, or go to the shop, and I couldn't, you know? 545-549

Participant 3: I think, it's very easy for a man and a dad to live their own lives and get up and go, but there's something about a mother and a child. The mother gives up their world for the child. 1204-1207

Providing for and responding to the child's needs

Participant 1: ...Just kind of being there when they need you, and trying to teach them things as well like 112/113

Participant 2: ...Responding to her and providing and making sure that she's comfortable and she's happy... 632-634

Participant 3: ...they have everything they need provided for them... 1044/1045

Child's responsivity towards the mother

Participant 1: They're responsive to me, em... Ruby while she's only nearly seven months now, she recognises when I come into the room ... She would light up 57-59, 61

Participant 4: I always go to Lucy when she's crying or looking for me, I don't leave her cry on her own. I always pick her up when she wants to be picked up. And I think that's important. Just being responsive to your child and being present is good for the

relationship ... When she sees me in the morning she's all smiles, and when she goes to her nan's when I'm working she's grand and is always happy to see me when I come back from work. 1531-1535, 1525/1526

Superordinate theme 3 – Attachment

Physical closeness/special bond

*Participant 1: ... I suppose being there, the mother being there for the child when they're actually looking for something, or when they need something. So, again, getting to know the different cries and what cry means what. And... The mother responding promptly to that
218-222*

*Participant 2: You know, from my own experience say, to date now, when I'd go to the crèche to pick her up in the evenings, like she recognises me... she puts her arms out to be lifted
713-716*

*Participant 3: So, when I had my oldest kid, when he was born everything was great, happy, grand. Obviously because he was my first child I was happy... So, he'll always know that I'm here. Like, even when he's twenty, he'll always know he can come home to Mom, if he needs anything. And I think it all stems from the Attachment Parenting
1049-1051, 1191-1194*

*Participant 4: I think it's the physical closeness that's important. It's a comfort to Lucy and to me as well being close to her. She knows that I'm there for her when she needs me and that I'll respond to her if she's crying...
1538-1541*

Development of secure attachment

*Participant 1: I suppose being there, the mother being there for the child when they're actually looking for something, or when they need something
218-220*

*Participant 3: ... when we finished co-sleeping as well, all of a sudden, the bottle was gone, he stopped wetting his nappies at night. He was fully trained at night time then... They need the attachment style of parenting anyway... In my opinion
1133-1135, 1172/1173*

*Participant 2: We're clapping our hands and telling her that she's a good girl...
751-753*

*Participant 4: Well I think being physically there for them and going to your baby as soon as they cry is important. They cry for a reason. But giving them independence is important too, like leaving them run around, playing, and sleeping by themselves teaches them to be secure
1554-1558*

Appendix 18.

Narrative extract

Parenting can mean something different from one individual to another: 'parenting to me means making sure my children grow up in a happy home' (participant 3). Initially, many new parents may not have the time to stop and think for a moment, and realise how fortunate the experience is, particularly when one considers that many people are incapable of bearing children: 'I suppose first and foremost, you kind of appreciate how lucky you are to be a parent' (participant 1).

Some of the participants who were involved in the study recalled the happiness felt when the first child came along: 'So, when I had my oldest kid, when he was born everything was great, happy, grand. Obviously, because he was my first child I was happy' (participant 3). It is clear that when a woman becomes a mother, the child's happiness holds so much worth: 'you just see this little person and thankfully she's so happy all the time' (participant 2). The parenting experience can be intimidating and stressful, but the sight of a happy child can melt away the aftertaste of the more difficult times: 'I forget about how hard it is when I see her smiling and playing, and see that she's okay and happy' (participant 4).

Of course, when an individual becomes a parent, there is a responsibility that comes with the experience. Becoming a mother means becoming a primary caregiver for another person, which involves responding promptly to the needs of the child, as well as being responsible for the nurture, comfort and happiness of the child. Mothers often feel the weight of the responsibility, and can experience emotions that may be difficult to rest easy with: 'I had like, maybe one day in the initial few weeks where I absolutely hated my husband because he was able to get up and walk out the door and go for a run, or go to the shop, and I couldn't, you know?' (participant 2). However, each participant experiences happiness when the child is responsive, and allows the richness of the experience to overrule undesirable emotions.

Parenting is not only about having responsibilities. It is also about creating meaningful relationships and sharing special bonds. For the participants involved, the connection between mother and child is a precious gift. Each day, the mother sees the child developing, and is aware that the child begins to recognise, and delight in the mother's presence: 'I think it's the physical closeness that's important. It's a comfort to Lucy and to me as well being close to her.' The mother gets the well-deserved reward of knowing that the relationship with the child will not be experienced the same way by another person, particularly regarding Attachment Parenting practices, such as breastfeeding: 'If I could have done it longer I would have loved to. But I think that's really meaningful, because that's something literally only a mother can have with their child.' The Mother-Infant relationship is exceptionally important, as it contributes to the type of attachment style which will develop in a child. For some mothers, the Attachment Parenting approach is extremely important, particularly as the practices involved are meaningful ways by which the mother can encourage the child to become more independent: '... when we finished co-sleeping as well, all of a sudden, the bottle was gone, he stopped wetting his nappies at night. He was fully trained at night time then... They need the attachment style of parenting anyway... In my opinion' (participant 3). If the quality of this relationship is favourable from a young age, and the needs of a child are met appropriately, the child can develop a secure attachment style, and be both close to the mother, and comfortable alone: 'Well I think being physically there for them and going to your baby as soon as they cry is important. They cry for a reason. But giving them independence is important too, like leaving them run around, playing, and sleeping by themselves teaches to be secure.'