



## *Lysa Parker's eight steps to attachment*

- 1. Prepare for pregnancy and parenting** Educated parents tend to have less fear and better experiences when they are actively involved in the process.
- 2. Feed with love and respect** Feeding is more than giving your baby nutrition, it's part of the attachment process. Breastfeeding is nature's ideal model for attachment, and if you're bottle-feeding, we encourage you to switch sides when feeding and talk to and gaze at your baby.
- 3. Respond with sensitivity** This is the most important finding of most attachment research. Sensitive and responsive parents tend to have securely attached children.
- 4. Use nurturing touch** Children all need touch, and babies even more so, to help them thrive. Holding, babywearing and infant massage are all ways to meet your baby's need for touch.
- 5. Ensure safe sleep, physically and emotionally** Parenting is a 24/7 experience. Whether bedsharing or in a separate sleep surface, babies still need to feel in close proximity and in a safe sleep environment. Even parents who have no intention of bedsharing with their baby need to prepare their bed "as if". When mum and dad need sleep, studies support that bedsharing offers more sleep and better quality of sleep as well as enhancing the breastfeeding relationship. A more dangerous scenario is for parents to fall asleep in a recliner or on a couch. Attachment Parenting International provides safe sleep guidelines on their website.





- 6. Provide consistent, loving care** Babies and young children need consistency of care from a loving, responsive caregiver. Caregiver roulette is damaging to their security of attachment, so if the primary caregiver works outside the home, find a reliable relative, nanny, in-home caregiver or facility with a low adult/child ratio and low turnover of caregivers.
- 7. Practise positive discipline** The goal of positive discipline is to maintain the bonds of trust and empathy, while teaching appropriate boundaries. Positive discipline teaches inner discipline rather than discipline that relies on force, coercion, spanking or other forms of punishment.
- 8. Strive for balance in your personal and family life** Simplify your life and you will be less stressed, and that includes not over-scheduling. Find time to nurture and nourish your body, mind and spirit, because when parents feel burned out there is nothing left to give our children, spouses or partners. Know that finding balance is a journey, not a destination.

[attachmentparenting.org](http://attachmentparenting.org)

