

2011

# Attachment Theory: In search of a relationship between attachment security and preschool children's level of empathy

Knight, R.

Knight, R. (2011) Attachment Theory: In search of a relationship between attachment security and preschool children's level of empathy, *The Plymouth Student Scientist*, 4(1), p. 240-258.

<http://hdl.handle.net/10026.1/13933>

---

The Plymouth Student Scientist  
University of Plymouth

---

*All content in PEARL is protected by copyright law. Author manuscripts are made available in accordance with publisher policies. Please cite only the published version using the details provided on the item record or document. In the absence of an open licence (e.g. Creative Commons), permissions for further reuse of content should be sought from the publisher or author.*

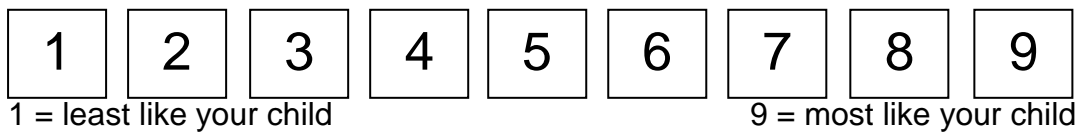
## Appendix B: Mother's Instructions

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part ☺

This task should take no longer than 20 minutes and is to be completed by the child's mother.

### Instructions

1. Lay out the enclosed number cards 1 – 9 in order as seen below:



2. Read carefully each statement from 1 – 90.
3. Think carefully about what position you feel would be the best place for the statement. For low think “is this the opposite of what my child would do” and for high think “is this exactly like my child”. Try and base your decision on more than one instance of the said behaviour. If it's just not been seen then place in the middle, don't place very low as you would need to have seen the opposite. There are tips on some of the statements to help. Please answer as openly and honestly as you can. Most behaviour's included are simply a “normal” stage of development for preschool aged children.
4. Place each statement below the relevant number.
5. When all 90 statements have been sorted, use a paper-clip to attach the statements to the number you have put them with. Do this for all 9 number cards.
6. Place all 9 paper-clipped number cards/statements in the enclosed envelope with your participant number on. Please write the age of your child in MONTHS, on the front of this envelope. DO NOT put in the large envelope with your child's name on – this is to ensure anonymity.
7. Please return as soon as possible, preferably in the next week to Crosspark Preschool.

Once again, many thanks!!

## **Appendix C: Mother's Debrief**

### Debrief

Thank you very much for your contribution to my research project. As I explained in the letter you received, the purpose of this study was to look for a link between the quality of parent-child interaction and children's level of empathy. Confidentiality will be maintained and you have the right to withdraw you and your child's data at any point. A poster will be displayed within the preschool, showing the general findings from this study.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me:

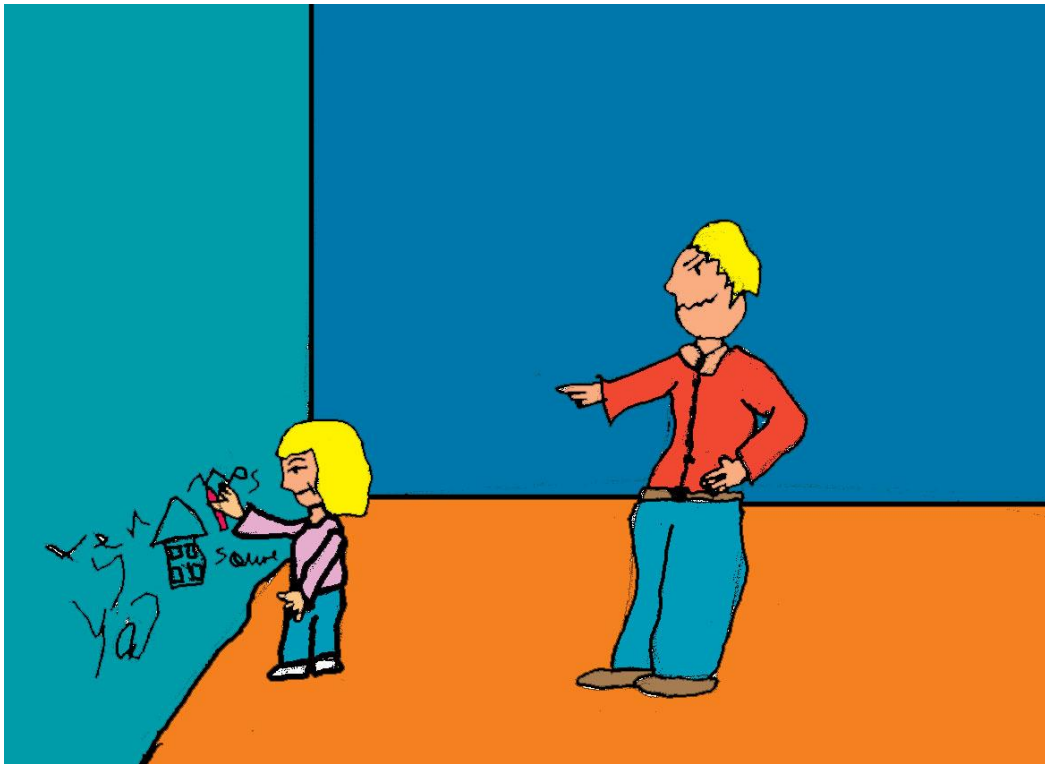
rebecca.knight1@students.plymouth.ac.uk

Or my project supervisor Dr Dave Rose:

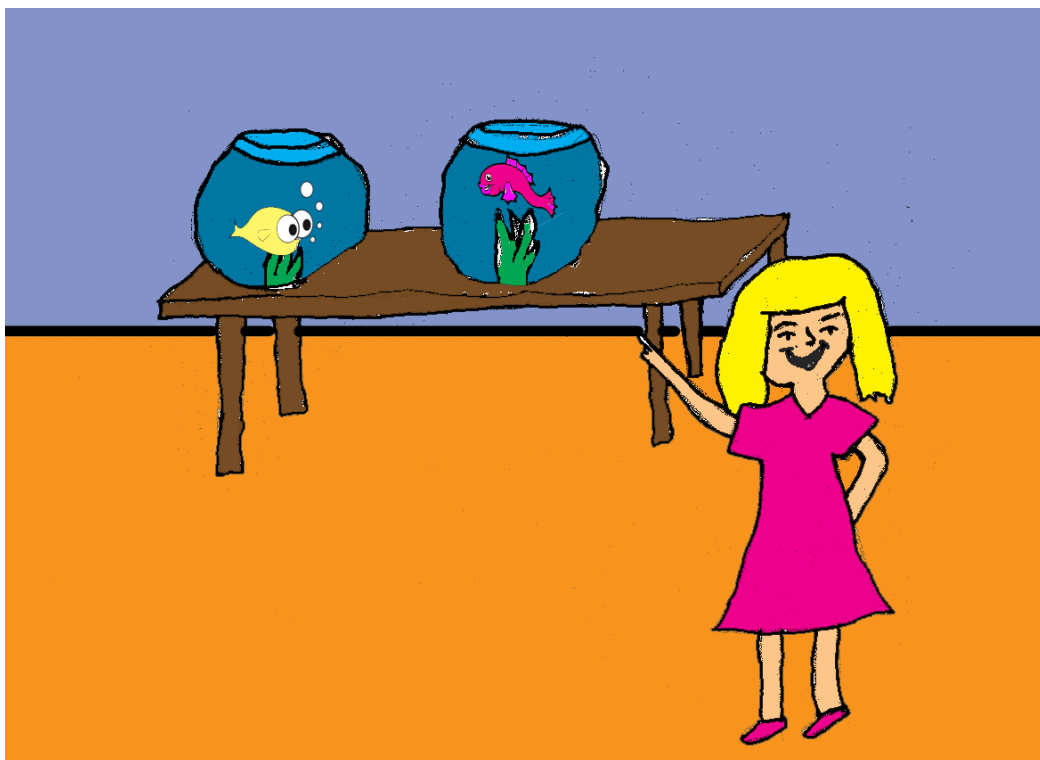
d.rose@plymouth.ac.uk.

Once again, thank you!

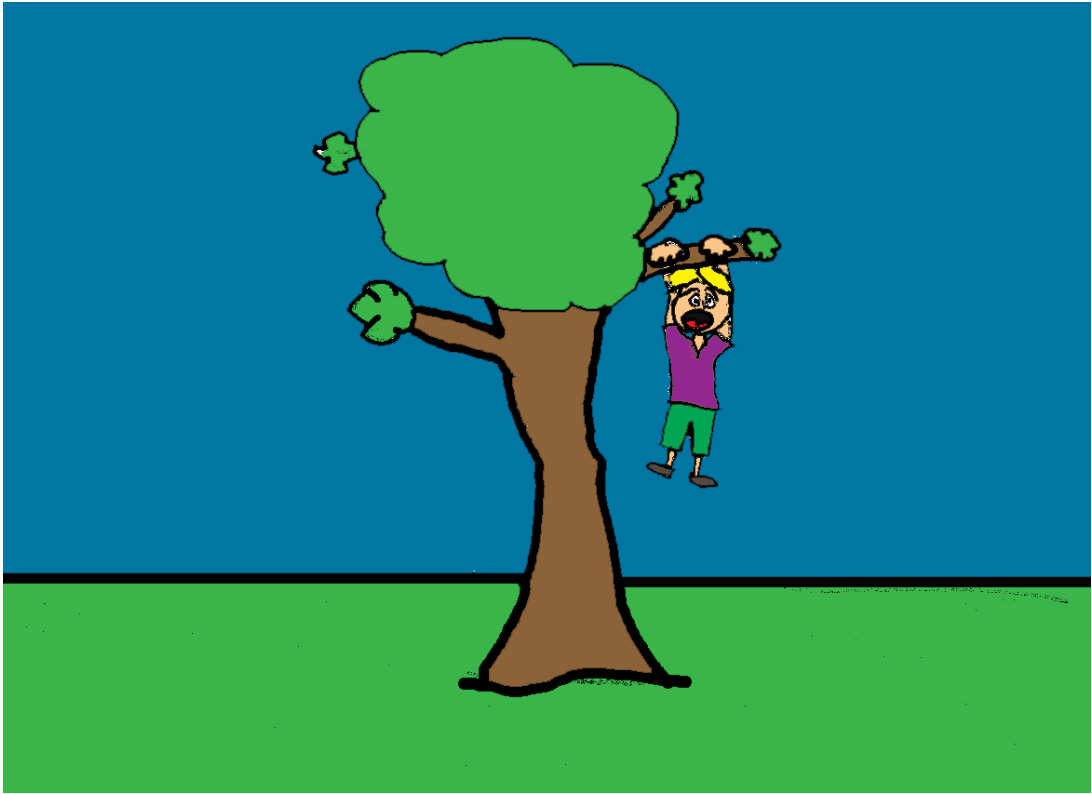
**Appendix D: Pictures and short narratives**



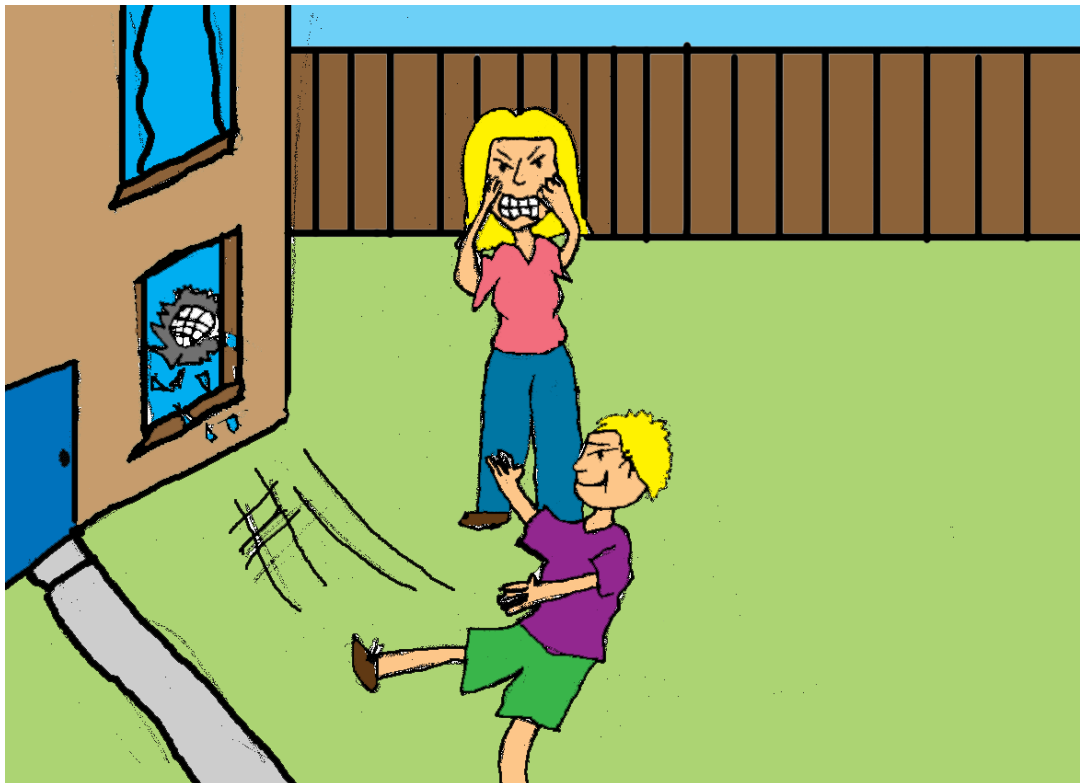
1. Susie is doing some drawing. Her Dad catches her drawing on the wall.



2. Polly's Mum and Dad take her to the fish shop to buy some new pet fish.



3. Billy was climbing a tree when he slipped and fell. He is left hanging from a branch.



4. James kicks a football and smashes his Mum's house window.



5. Bella is in bed feeling unwell, she has a sore head and tummy ache.



6. Ted is swimming in the sea when a great big white shark starts to chase him.



7. Alfie dropped his favourite teddy bear. His Mum didn't see so it was left behind.



8. Ryan and his Mum visit the seaside. Ryan has been good all day so she buys him a big lollipop.

**Appendix E: Cartoon Visual Aids**





**Appendix F: Score Sheet**

Score Sheet

Child Participation Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ months

**Picture 1**

Question 1:

Question 2:

**Picture 5**

Question 1:

Question 2:

**Picture 2**

Question 1:

Question 2:

**Picture 6:**

Question 1:

Question 2:

**Picture 3**

Question 1:

Question 2:

**Picture 7**

Question 1:

Question 2:

**Picture 4**

Question 1:

Question 2:

**Picture 8**

Question 1:

Question 2

**Appendix G: Mother's Letter**

23 Dartmoor View  
Saltash  
Cornwall  
PL12 6WF  
2<sup>nd</sup> January 2010

Dear Parent,

I am a final year student at Plymouth University and I am about to undertake a research project for my dissertation. My aim is to investigate the influence of parent and child interactions on children's empathic responses.

I have received permission from the manager \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ where your child attends, to run the project in this setting.

The ethics committee based at Plymouth University have granted ethical approval for this study. I also have an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau check and a Project Supervisor, Dr Dave Rose, who will oversee this project.

If you are happy to help me with my project I will require a little of your input as well as your child's. To briefly outline the study, I am looking at parent and child interaction which will require you to complete a sorting task of statements, at home in your own time. Further instructions will be enclosed with the group of statements.

Following this, your child will be able to take part in a task in the familiar setting of their preschool. This will entail watching 4-8 illustrated scenarios supported by short narratives. These will portray different emotions and your child will be asked to rate emotions elicited for the character and themselves, which should last approximately 20 minutes.

The study will cause no harm to your child and they will be asked directly at the time of the task if they wish to take part. Your child can withdraw at any time. All children will be assigned a number, so the data gathered will remain entirely anonymous and will only be known to me as that number. If you decide to withdraw your contribution at any time, it will be destroyed.

If you are willing for yourself and your child to take part please return the attached consent form to \_\_\_\_\_ by Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

Please feel free to contact me at any time:  
rebecca.knight1@students.plymouth.ac.uk

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Knight

-----

I give consent for myself and my child ..... to take part in your study

I do not wish for myself and my child ..... to take part in your study

Printed name .....

Signed .....