

Center for Family Development

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Attachment Disorder Checklist

A professional assessment is necessary to determine whether or not a child has an Attachment Disorder. At the Center for Family Development, we use several tests as part of a [comprehensive assessment](#) to determine what attachment issues are causing problems and what will be the most effective treatment plan. We work very closely with the parents to develop a plan to help remediate attachment problems.

This check list can help you identify areas of potential problem. This check list **is not meant to substitute** for a [professional assessment](#) and treatment plan.

Professional assistance may be required for your situation. Much like a home advisor reviews the situation or plans before a remodel or construction, you should review a list such as this before seeking assistance. As the head of household, you are your own personal home advisor and can determine essentially what needs repair. But you will eventually look to professional construction to finish the job. Perhaps reviews of key behaviors can resolve many of the issues with your child. A professional assessment is the only way that the reviews of your child's behavior can be truly diagnosed.

Circle the items if they are frequently or often true.

1. My child teases, hurts, or is cruel to other children.
2. My child can't keep friends for an age-appropriate length of time.
3. My child doesn't do as well in school as my child could do even with a little more effort.
4. My child pushes me away or becomes stiff when I try to hug, unless my child wants something from me, in which case my child can be affectionate and engaging.
5. My child argues for long periods of time, often about meaningless or silly things.
6. My child has a large need to control everything.
7. My child is hyper-vigilant.
8. My child acts amazingly innocent, or pretends that things aren't really bad or a problem when caught doing something wrong.
9. My child does dangerous things such as runs away, jumps out of windows, or other potentially harmful actions. My child seems oblivious to the fact that my child may be hurt.
10. My child deliberately breaks or ruins his things or other's things.

11. My child doesn't seem to feel age-appropriate guilt when my child does something wrong.
12. My child is impulsive. My child seems unable or unwilling to stop doing something my child wants to do.
13. My child teases, hurts, or is cruel to animals.
14. My child steals, or shows up with things that belong to others with unbelievable, unusual, or suspicious reasons for how my child got these things.
15. My child likes to sneak things without permission, even though my child could have had these things if my child had asked.
16. My child doesn't seem to learn from mistakes, consequences, or punishments (my child continues the behavior despite the consequences).
17. My child makes false reports of abuse or neglect. My child tries to get sympathy from others, or tries to get us in trouble, by telling others that I abuse, don't feed, or don't provide the basic necessities.
18. My child seems not to experience pain when hurt, refusing to let anyone provide comfort.
19. My child does not usually ask for things. My child demands things.
20. My child lies, often about obvious or ridiculous things, or when it would have been easier to tell the truth.
21. My child is quite bossy with other children and adults.
22. My child hoards, sneaks food, or has other unusual eating habits (eats paper, raw sugar, non-food items, package mixes, baker's chocolate, etc.)
23. My child often does not make eye contact when adults want to make eye contact with my child.
24. My child has extended temper tantrums.
25. My child chatters non-stop, asks repeated questions about things that make no sense, mutters, or is hard to understand when talking.
26. My child is accident-prone (gets hurt a lot), or complains a lot about every little ache and pain (needs constant attention).
27. My child acts cute or charming to get others to do what my child wants.
28. My child is overly friendly with strangers.
29. My child has set fires, or is preoccupied with fire.
30. My child prefers to watch violent cartoons and/or TV shows or horror movie (regardless of whether or not you allow your child to do this).
31. My child was abused/neglected during the first year of life, or had several changes of primary caretaker during the first several years of life.
32. My child was in an orphanage for more than the first year of life.
33. My child was adopted after the age of twelve months.

If you find that more than a few items (more than five or so) have been circled, your child may be experiencing difficulties that require professional assistance. If, in addition to several items being marked, any of the last three items is checked, your child may be experiencing attachment related problems.

This checklist is not a tool to use to make a clinical diagnosis of Reactive Attachment Disorder, Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or any other mental health disorder. In order to make such a diagnosis a thorough and comprehensive evaluation by a licensed and appropriately trained mental health professional is required. Such a comprehensive and thorough evaluation will rely on clinical interviews, observations, and the use of reliable and valid psychometric instruments to assess a range of domains.