

Early Relationships

(bonding with your young child)

Help your child...

- **Feel safe.** The caregiver is seen as a “safe haven” or refuge from the world. The child takes refuge when afraid or upset.
- **Feel cared for.** Caregivers accurately read and respond to cues for needs. As a result, the child believes their world is reliable and people can be trusted to meet their needs.
- **Experience comfort.** When the child experiences distress, they learn they can receive comfort and be soothed by their caregiver.
- **Feel valued.** Caregivers express delight in their children. They appreciate who they are, rather than what they do or accomplish.
- **Feel confident to explore.** Caregivers allow the child to explore and try new things and celebrate growth.
- **Experience emotional connection.** Caregivers and the child share an emotional connection. The child knows their caregiver is emotionally present.

7 Routines to Promote Bonding:



1. Play and let your child lead



2. Give your child a hug and say, “I love you so much”



3. Play music or sing together



4. Eat meals together and talk about your day



5. Read books together



6. Play outside together



7. Catch your child doing something good and let them know you noticed