

Developing Secure Attachment

You may have started to hear the words **develop a secure attachment** since you started talking to professionals about having a baby.

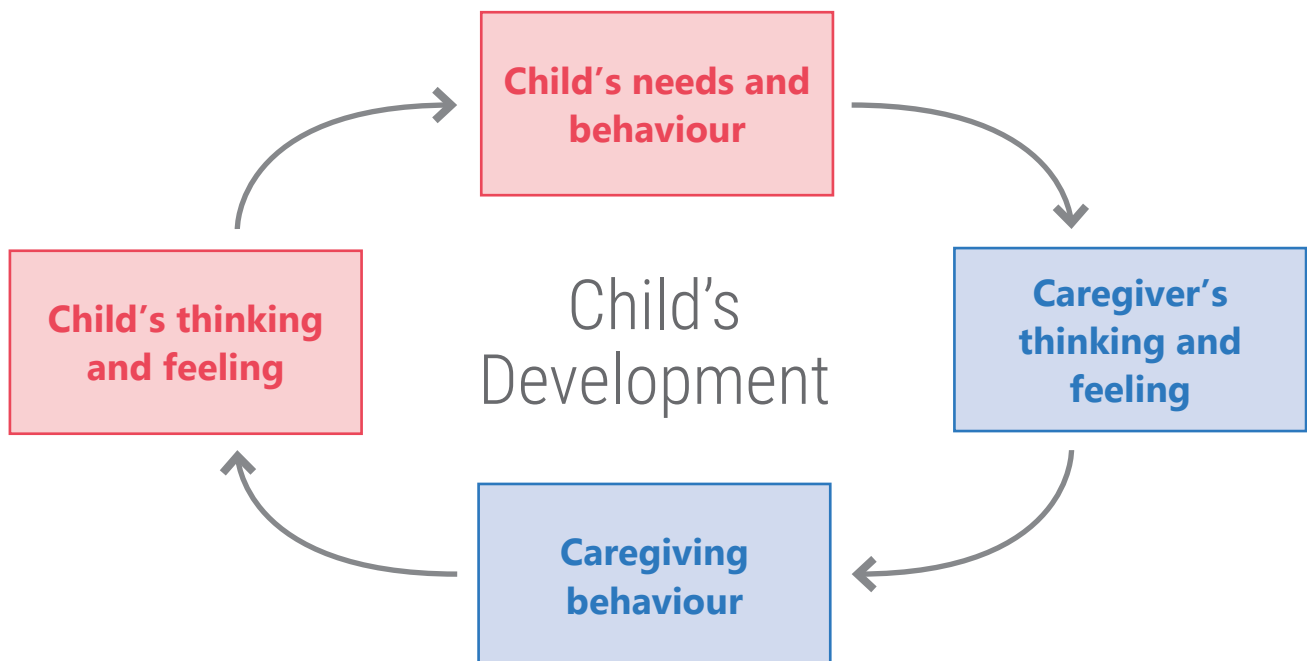
What does it mean?

Some people say it is like a bond, but attachment is much more than that and has a far greater impact for the child long term.

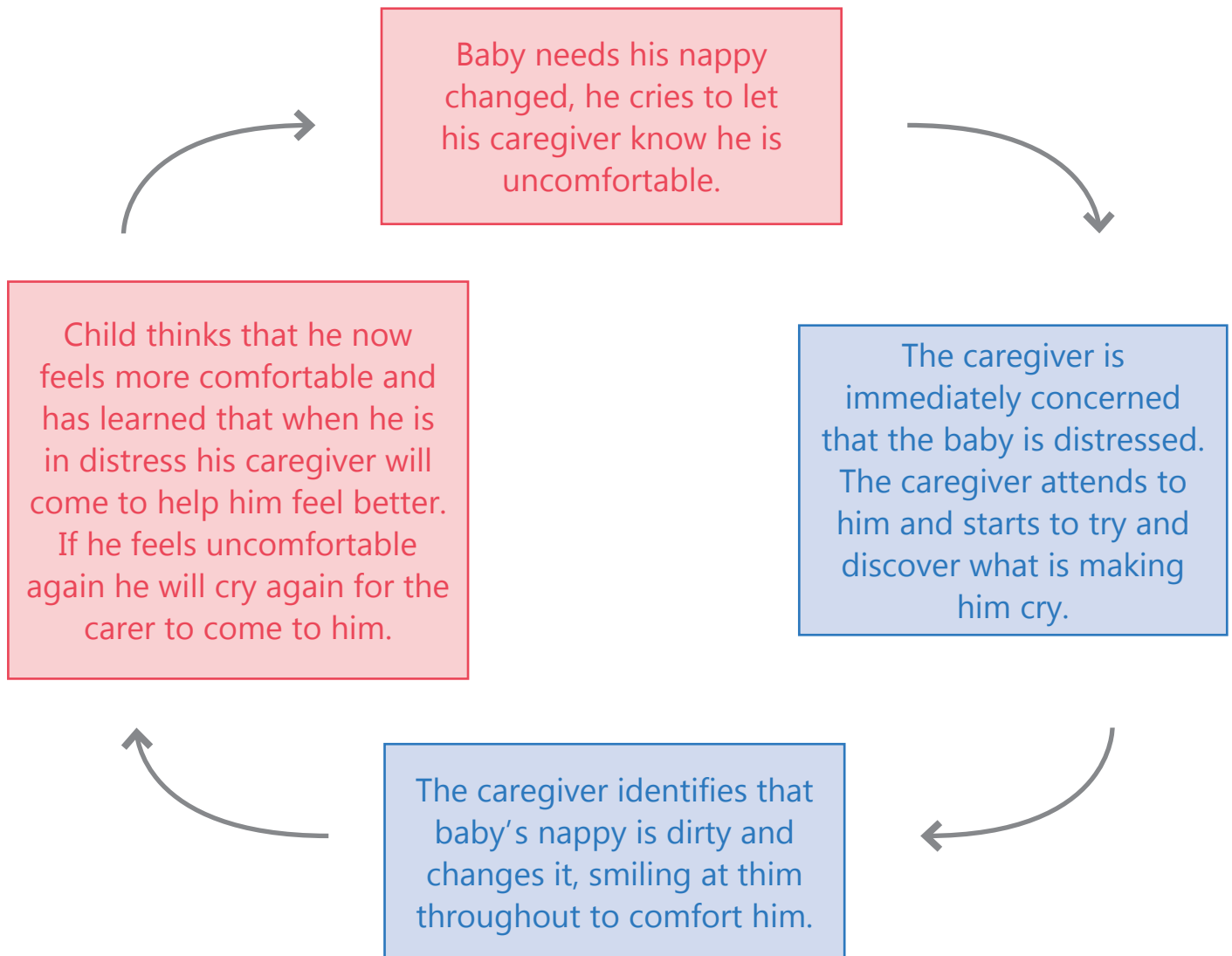
What is it and how is it made?

Attachment is how the baby or child understands his or her relationship with the caregiver, and to start with this is unconsciously formed by the child in response to how he or she is cared for.

This is usually described as a cycle like this:



It may be helpful to think of a real-life example - in this example the child gets the care that he needs:



In the above example, if repeated consistently this type of relationship between a child and a caregiver will result in a **secure attachment** between them. This is where the baby can rely on the caregiver to meet his needs.

Now that we know about what **secure attachment** looks like, let's think about what can happen if the caregiver's response is insecure and so does not meet their child or baby's needs. To do this we can look at a matching game exercise on the following page.