

rior Court South Monday for a bail hearing, stemming from his arrest over the weekend on a drug-sales charge.

HE DOGS' PIZZA NAME, AND SHE OWNS BOTH THE Temple Street ... BUT NO MATTER HOW MANY RENOVATIONS OR SPRUCE-UPS KEROUAC

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The development of relationships begins in childhood

Editor's Note: This is the third in a six-part series highlighting Mental Health Awareness Month.

By KATE BERNIER
For The Telegraph

Most of us are familiar with the blissful scene of a mother interacting with her infant or toddler; holding him close to her face, their eyes gazing into each other's, soft and comforting sounds going back and forth. The mother instinctively mirrors the infant's facial expressions, smiling or looking surprised or delighted or showing concern, etc. Researchers and developmental psychologists have discovered that a powerful process is

taking place in the small child's brain during these interactions. The part of the brain responsible for controlling emotion is active during this intense experience, showing that the brain is developing at a rapid rate. This same part of the brain goes quiet when the child is left alone. During the first three years of a child's life, this kind of interaction will typically take place over and over, several times a day, week in and week out. The child will typically seek out his mother's face, show delight when he recognizes her and eagerly



Early parent/child interactions can shape and affect the child's development. A youngster's outlook on relationships is molded by these early interactions.

take part in this primal "dance." When the young child's primary care-giver (often but not always the mother) is emotionally available, the child is learning that relationships can be fun and pleasurable and that he is lovable, special, and worthy of his mother's attention. This relationship becomes the first model upon which later relationships will be based. It is also during this interaction that a small child

is learning to manage strong emotions, to soothe himself, to read social and emotional cues, and to begin to understand his own emotional states. In these early years we can also see the beginnings of the child learning to care for others, such as when a toddler tries to feed his mother or to comfort her if she is hurt. This is where empathy is born. The child will imitate what

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Survey asks why young people stay in, leave N.H.

CONCORD (AP) — Fewer than half of New Hampshire residents ages 20 to 40 say they probably or definitely will remain in the state for the next two years, according to a survey released Monday.

The survey was conducted for Stay Work Play, a nonprofit that promotes the state to young workers and recent graduates, and Eversource, a utility that like many businesses has struggled to attract and retain workers at a time when the state has one of the nation's lowest unemployment rates and one of the oldest populations.

About 60 percent of participants said they were either very satisfied or completely satisfied with New Hampshire overall, and the state scored well

in categories such as education, outdoor recreation and safety. But nearly 30 percent of participants said they would definitely or probably consider leaving New Hampshire in the next two years.

"That's not a place we want to be in," said Will Steward, the nonprofit's executive director.

Work and weather were commonly cited as reasons, though respondents also raised concerns about housing, jobs, cultural opportunities and opportunities to meet people. Highlighting what he called "the saddest slide" during his presentation, Stewart said he was particularly struck by the fact that one in five said they didn't have a single friend nearby.

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he experiences from his caregiver.

This process is called "attachment," and the repeated experience of having his needs met by a loving, responsive, reliable caregiver is called "the cycle of attachment." It is an important process that can have profound effects on the way we feel about ourselves and the way we interact with others later in life. Although parents virtually always want what is best for their children, parents are never perfect; and therefore no one's attachment experience is perfect. Child psychologists have a term, "good enough" parenting to describe a relatively healthy parent that raises a relatively healthy child.

As you may expect, attachment disorders occur when there is a significant disturbance in the attachment cycle in the first three years of life. This

can happen for a broad variety of reasons, but parents are often unaware of the powerful and far reaching learning that is going on in that tiny little head. An attachment disorder will have negative effects on the child's ability to form healthy and satisfying relationships throughout the childhood years. If not addressed, it can become a vicious circle: the child may act out in a desperate attempt to interact with his parent, and the unpleasant behavior results in the parent's increasing displeasure with and withdrawal from the child. Sadly, the parent may think that the child is intentionally being difficult, when in fact, the attachment disorder is what is behind the behaviors.

Early childhood is the ideal time for developing attachment because the emotional brain is growing rapidly. Fortunately, however, it is also true that humans can learn and change throughout the lifespan, as the brain is able to continuously

grow new pathways. In the last few decades much research and clinical practice has focused on understanding and treating attachment disorders. There are treatments and interventions that have been successful in reducing the negative effects of attachment disorders, and in increasing the child's ability to form healthy relationships. If the child and family are struggling, it is best to seek treatment with a therapist who has training in treating attachment disorders.

Treatment provides experiences that re-create the positive attachment cycle over time. It is important for the caregiver in the child's life to understand that many of his seemingly negative actions are a result of the child's fear and confusion about his own feelings, and he is not to blame.

Effective treatment requires an attitude of playfulness, love, acceptance, curiosity and most importantly, of empathy. It

is by experiencing empathy that the child can begin learning about positive and loving relationships.

Greater Nashua Mental Health Center offers a variety of treatments and services for children and their families. There is always hope and help available, and no one should feel that they need to go through life's challenges alone. We are here for you and your child.

We offer a wide array of behavioral health programs, including treatment for substance use disorders, and for individuals challenged with both mental health and substance misuse simultaneously. Our services are available for all ages from children to older adults, and no one is ever turned away due to the inability to pay. In addition, we are the statewide providers of behavioral health services for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

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Health Center today. For an appointment, call our intake line at 603-402-1574. For general information, call our main number at 603-889-6147. Our video-phone number is 603-821-

0073. To speak to someone 24 hours a day, seven days a week if you are in crisis, call 800-762-8191.

Kate Bernier, LICSW, is the director of child and adolescent services at Greater Nashua Mental Health Center.



Greater Nashua Mental Health Center at Community Council

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