

Examine factors
specifically fathers
role presence social
work essay



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Attachment is the resilient and loving connection an infant fosters with their primary care giver, typically the mother (Bowlby, 1969). Even though Bowlby (1969) primarily judged that infants are inclined to directly bond to a single exclusive care giver, usually the mother, his ' attachment theory' consequently considered the concept of several central attachments with other close care givers within the family dynamics, such as the father. This intimate relationship with the mother and/or father creates the foundations, and in turn inspires knowledge and emotions of security, fulfilment, and happiness within the child, as well as the confidence and security that they will be comforted and supported by their parent in times of distress (Berk, 2012: Bowlby, 1969). Therefore secure attachment provides the conduit for the child, from birth, infancy, childhood, and throughout their lifetime, to nurture and forge an emotional awareness and perception of self-awareness, confidence, and worth within themselves, others, and close surroundings (Berk, 2012: Harter, 2012). This in turn fosters the progression in later life for the child to cultivate an expertise in self-esteem, self-regulation, social skills, and empathy, which strengthens their growth in developing social networks, and relationships ready for school, and consequently adulthood and the complexities of society (Berk, 2012: Harter: 2012). It is every child's fundamental right to be able to establish and develop a healthy emotional development in the first years of life (Department for Education & Skills, 2003: Maggi et al, 2005). Subsequently parents, father and mother, are central to this as their nurturance and support, through attachment, affects this directly, no matter their class, race or culture (DH, 2011: Maggi et al, 2005). The infants first years of life experiences, emotionally, if unstimulated can significantly and adversely affect the brain development which directly

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effects emotional development (as well as impacting on the other domains of development) leading to developmental delays (Her Majesty's Government, 2011; Maggi et al, 2005). Bowlby (1969) referred to the psychoanalytical idea that the quality of attachment the carer-child establishes has profound implications concerning the child's emotions of security, and furthermore capacity to create trusting relationships. Consequently it can be considered that the father-child bond can directly reinforce a child's development emotionally and socially by a father's involved presence, and may be damaged by the father's total absence (Geddes, 2008). For this reason Health Visitors are in a critical position in the early years arena, due to their specific professional knowledge in this domain (DH, 2009b; NMC, 2004), to encapsulate primary prevention to search, assess, and identify problems early, such as problems with the child's emotional wellbeing, in order to address the problem appropriately and promptly, and support, work in collaboration with the family, and refer families and children to the relevant support services if indicated (DH, 2009b, 2011; Tickell, 2011). In the United Kingdom greater emphasis has been placed on fathers to co-parent their children, and therefore become dynamically engaged in caring for their children (O'Brien & Schemilt, 2003; O'Brien, 2005), owing to shifting 'traditional' and 'stereotyped' roles in the evolving family, work, and socio-economic arena, such as increased maternal employment, conversely increased paternal unemployment (O'Brien & Schemilt, 2003; O'Brien, 2005; West et al, 2009; Williams, 2007). This evolution of the father's roles can be observed in the Brannen and Nilson (2006) intergenerational study across four generations of fathers that suggested there were cultural changes to fatherhood, via the different generations and life spans, with the evolving

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prominence and attitude away from main wage earner to the increased commitment of the 'hands on' dad with increased emphasis and concern with nurturing and a more intimate father-child relationship. Similarly the negative effects of the father being the main economic provider for the family is not indicative of being a 'good father', as the long working hours of the father often conflicts with their caring input with the child (Featherstone, 2010). Contrastingly the positive effects fathers experience from such a close bond were their work stress was often alleviated by the happy and caring reciprocal emotional bond between the father and child (Williams, 2007). Accordingly fathers are still willing to actively embrace and encourage caring for their children, even when it conflicts with perceived societies' 'norms' and stereotypes of the fathers' role, such as the main economic provider for the family (West et al, 2009: Williams, 2007). Conversely mothers and female perceptions of the 'fathers role' can also influence and be detrimental to the father-child relationship, such as when the father-child ventures out to clinics, baby/toddler clubs, or nursery, as they may be perceived with suspicion and scrutiny, and/or ostracised from other mothers/women due to their pre-conceived perceptions, leading them to withdraw from such bonding activities (Williams, 2007). Importantly the mothers' and fathers' parenting roles and styles can also stimulate the degree and quality of parent-child attachment and emotional wellbeing (Santrock, 2004), because whereas mothers' act as the child's stress regulator, a father's role is that of a challenging, but reassuring play partner (Bogels & Brechman Toussaint, 2006: Doucet, 2006). Lamb (2010) suggests to the mounting analysis offering an adept appreciation of the factors stimulating the degree of father participation in caring for their child. Subsequently there is also <https://assignbuster.com/examine-factors-specifically-fathers-role-presence-social-work-essay/>

compounding evidence indicating positive effect of father-child attachment has directly on emotional development (O'Brien, 2005: Lamb, 2010).