

# ATTACHMENT SEMINAR

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# LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Defining attachment
- Identifying healthy attachment
- Identifying compromised attachment
- Attachment-informed parent support
  - Promoting healthy attachment
  - Preventing attachment problems
  - Intervening in parent-child relationship difficulties
- Making useful referrals

# What Lens Do you Use for Viewing Parent-Child Interactions and Addressing Problems?





- Chat to your neighbour about your lens' that you bring into your work with parents and young tamariki.

# DEFINING ATTACHMENT

Attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space.

Mary Ainsworth

# DEVELOPMENT OF ATTACHMENT

By his first birthday he is likely to have become a connoisseur of people. Not only does he come quickly to distinguish familiars from strangers but amongst his familiars he chooses one or more favorites.

John Bowlby

# DEVELOPMENT OF ATTACHMENT

They are greeted with delight; they are followed when they depart; and they are sought when absent. Their loss causes anxiety and distress; their recovery, relief and a sense of security.

John Bowlby



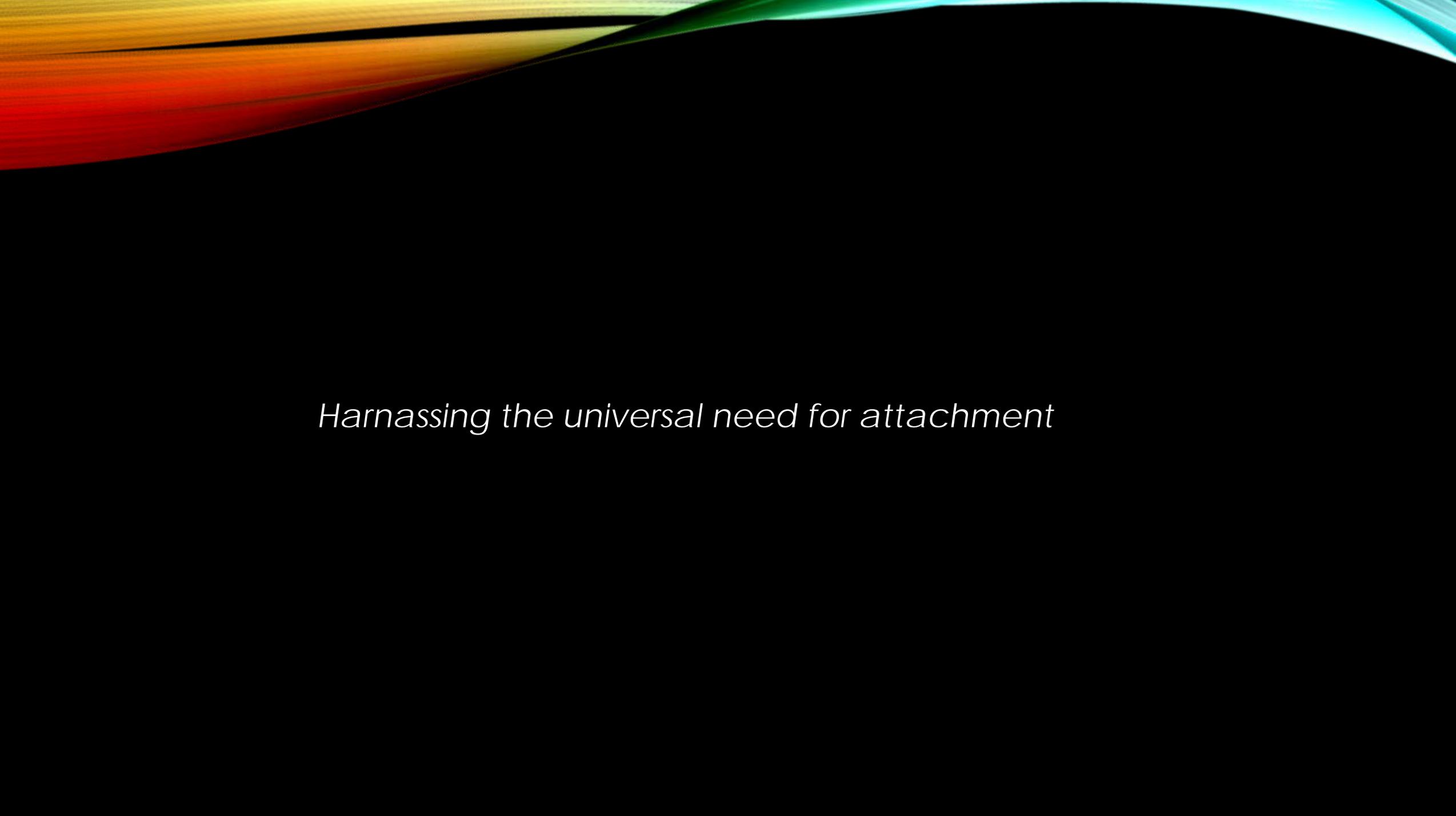
## Intervening in Parent-Child Relationship Difficulties

Preventing Attachment Problems

Promoting Healthy Attachment



Promoting Healthy Attachment



*Harnessing the universal need for attachment*

“Humans are a weed species.”

Steve Suomi

# Humans have succeeded in a wide variety of environments

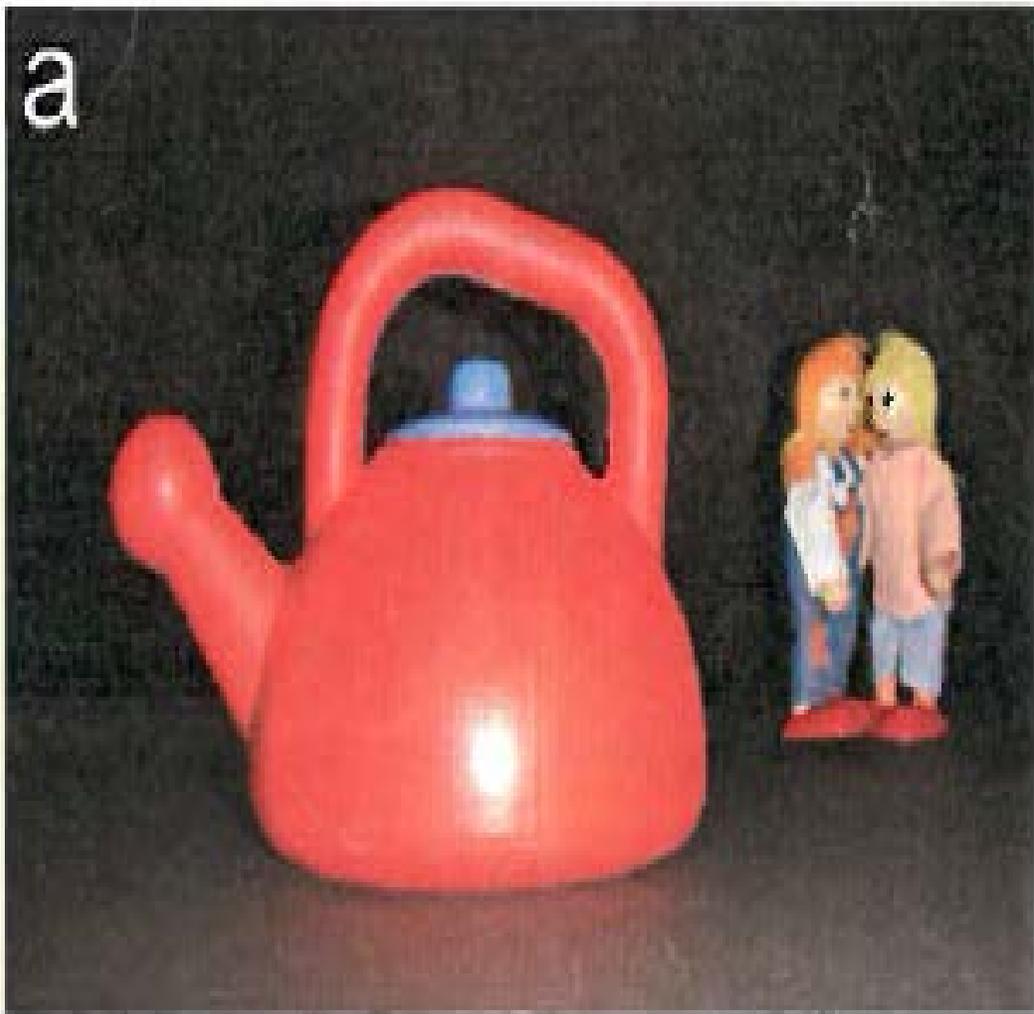
- ▶ Our dependence on relationships with others for survival
- ▶ Our ability to adapt to a wide variety of environments, including a wide variety of caregiving environments

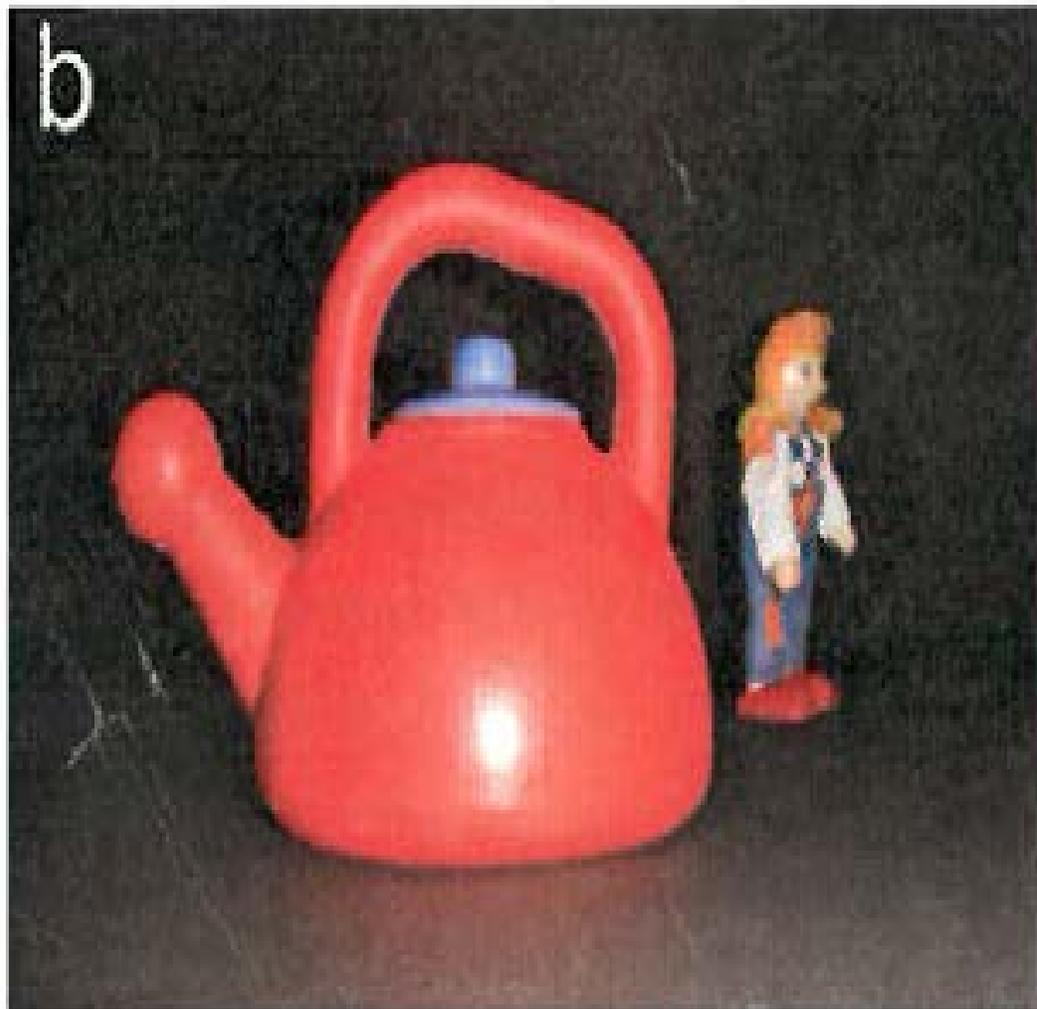
# Promotion Principle #1 Using Attachment Priming to Promote Healthy Attachment

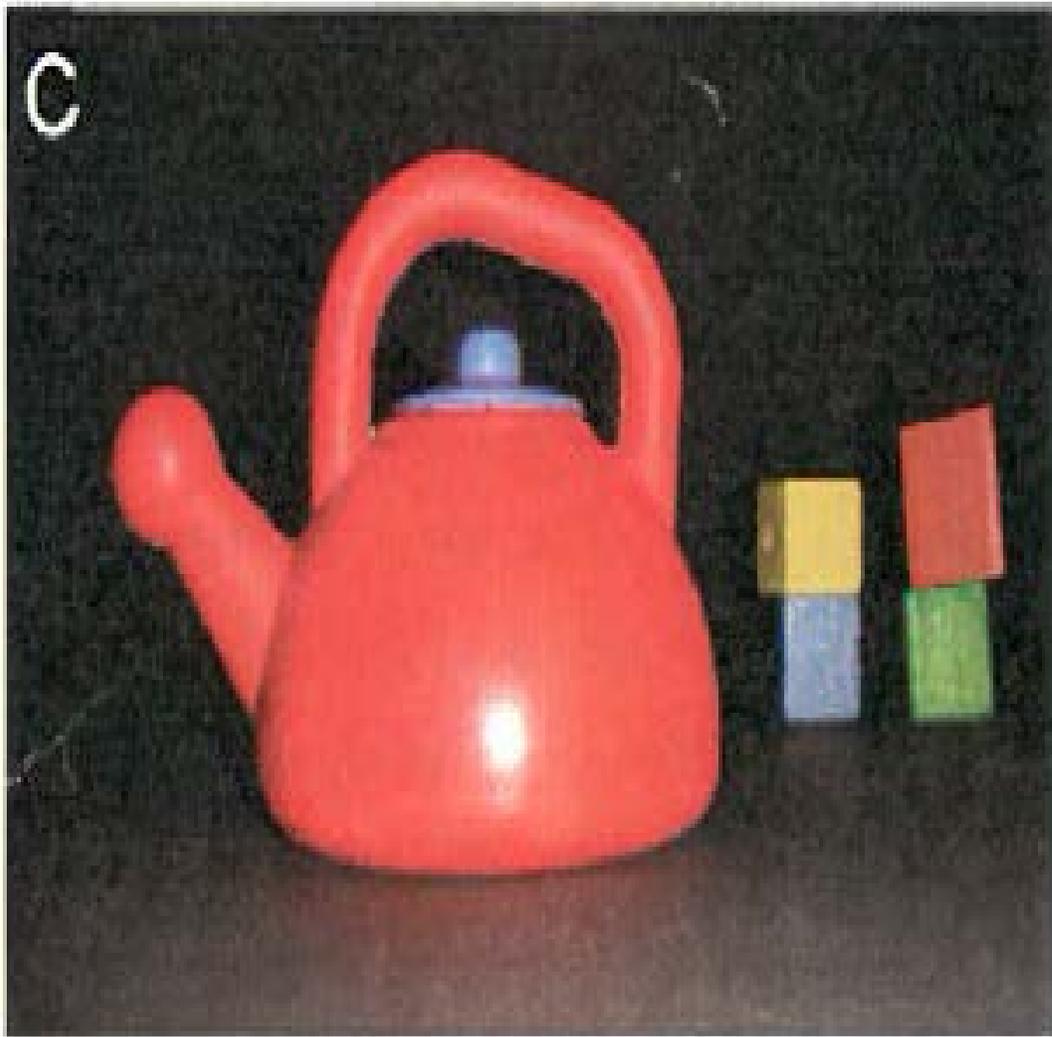
- ▶ Setting the stage for certain behaviors
- ▶ We can “prime” affiliative and attachment behaviors by focusing on conditions that set the stage for these behaviors.

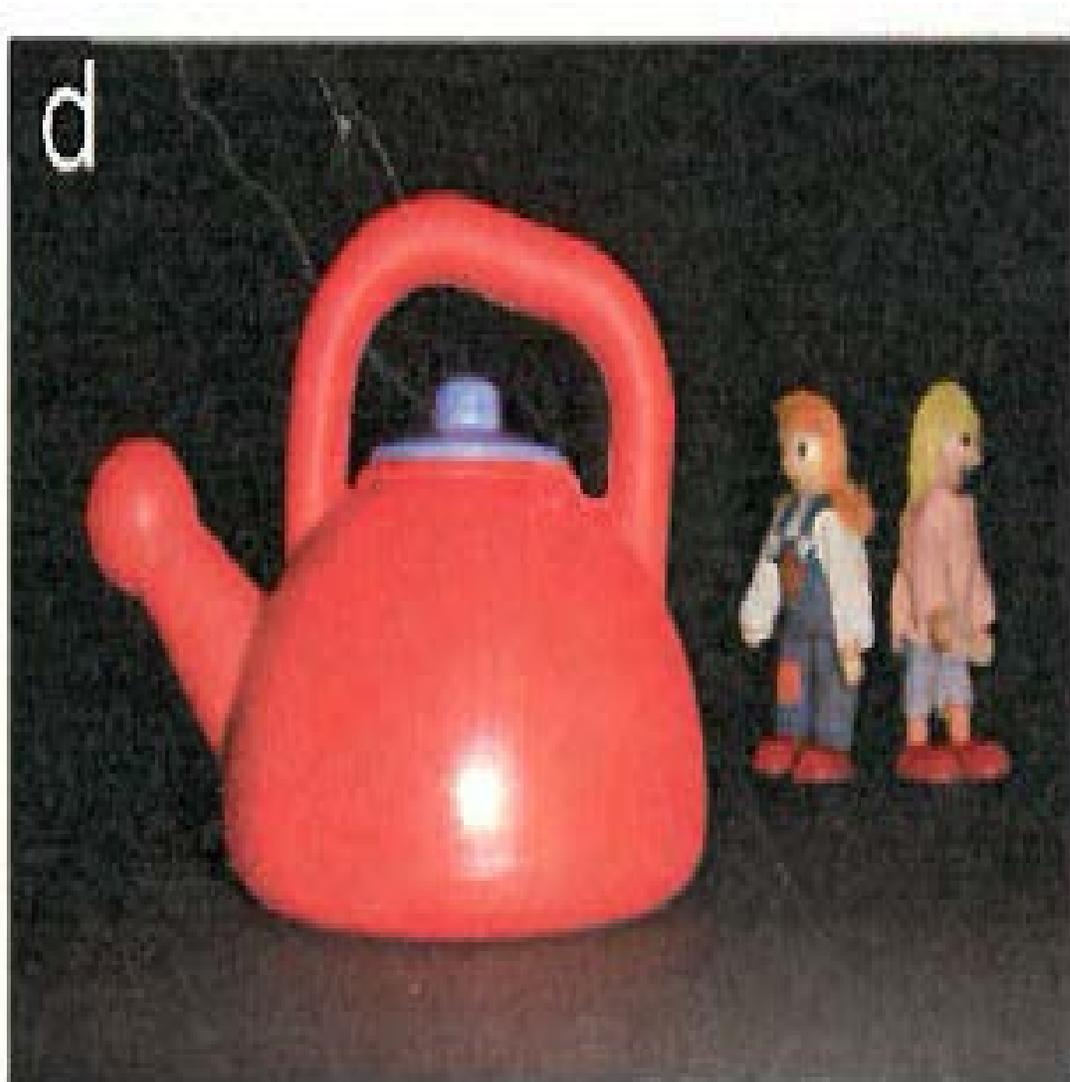
# Attachment priming improves prosocial behavior in 18-month-olds

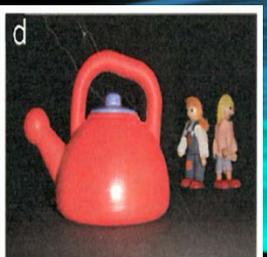
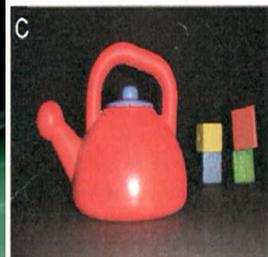
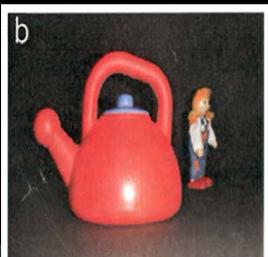
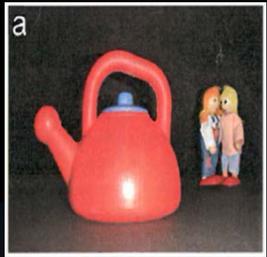
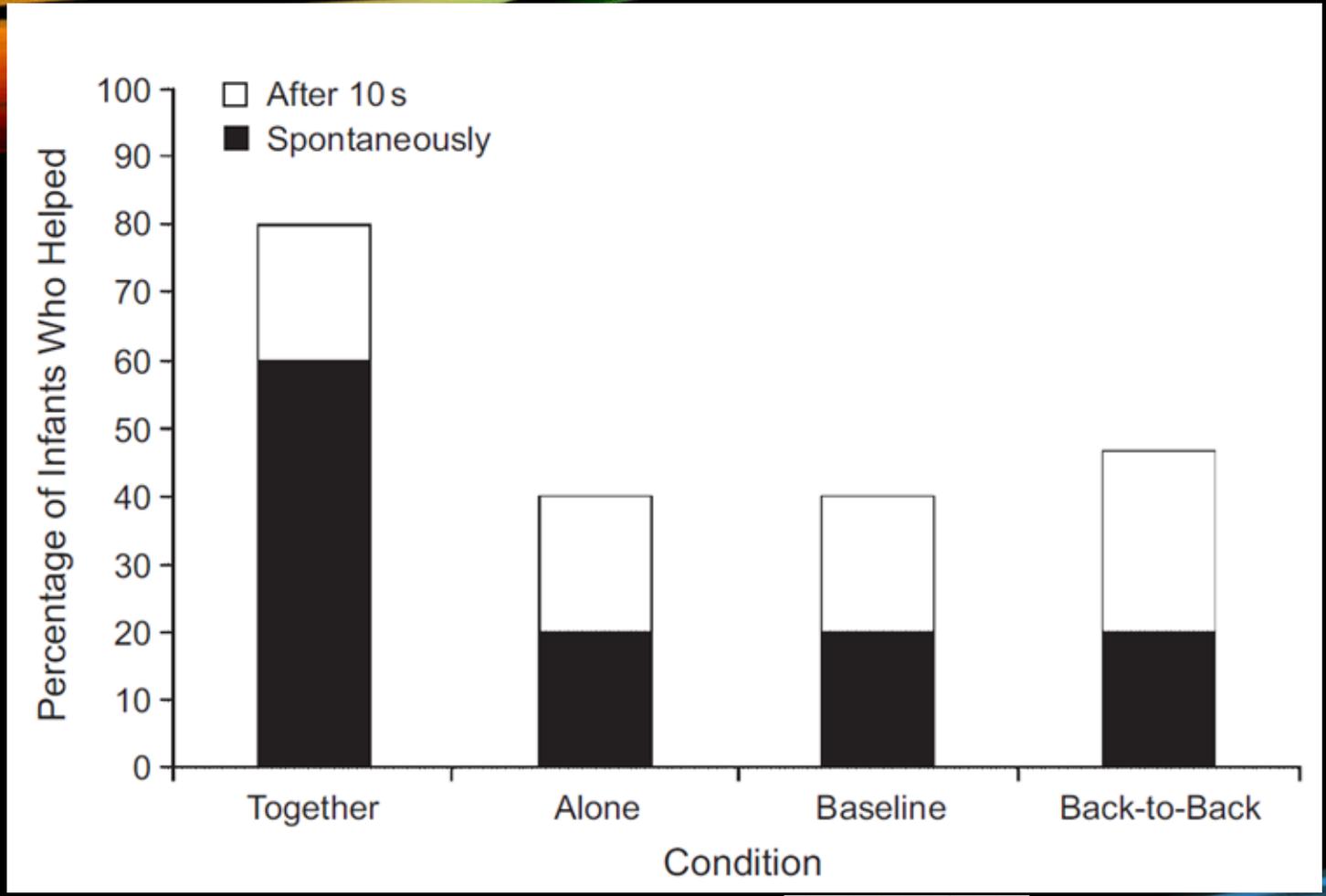
Over & Carpenter (2009), *Psychological Science*.











# USING ATTACHMENT SECURITY PRIMING TO IMPROVE CHILD BEHAVIOR

- Experience of positive caregiver-child interaction increases child's cooperative behavior and compliance.



## ATTACHMENT SECURITY PRIMING IN ADULTS

- Pictures of mother and child
- Remembering positive experience with attachment figure

# ATTACHMENT SECURITY PRIMING IN ADULTS

- More positive mood
- Willingness to forgive spouse
- Generosity

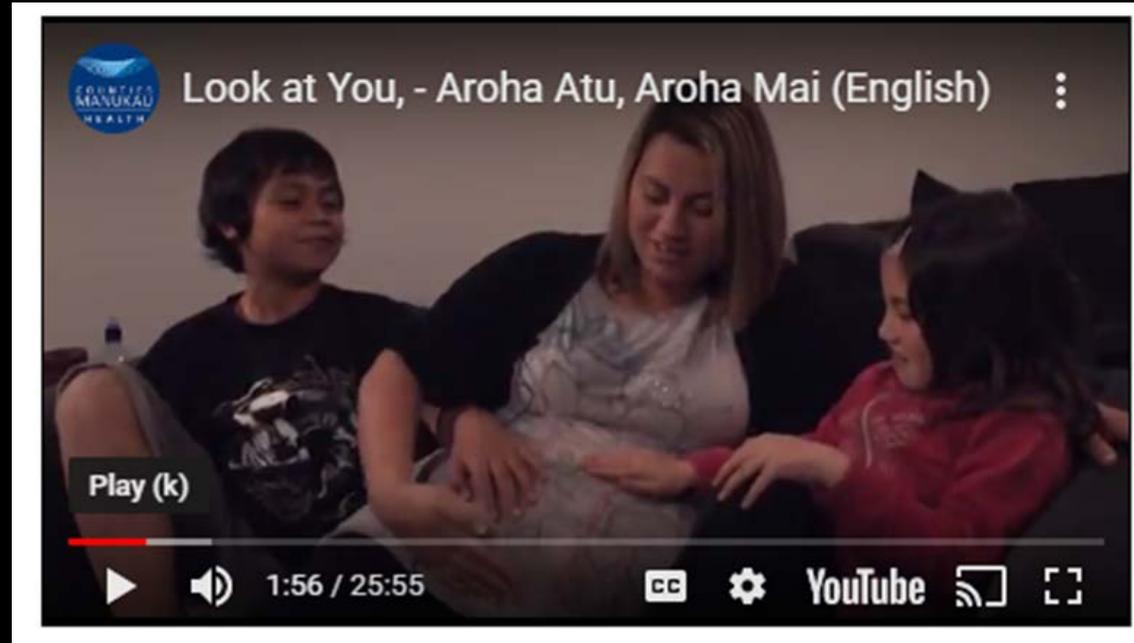


## IMPLICATIONS OF ATTACHMENT SECURITY PRIMING FOR PROMOTING POSITIVE PARENTING

- Experience of positive caregiver-child interaction increases caregiver's sensitive responsiveness to child's attachment signals

# RESOURCE FOR PROMOTING HEALTHY ATTACHMENT

- Aroha Atu, Aroha Mai



# RESOURCE FOR PROMOTING HEALTHY ATTACHMENT

- Video about reading infant's social and emotional needs (serve & return)
- Attachment priming
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHz2xO\\_ZdjE&list=PLJrTWotrJqdxYDh-I5T6\\_B84EZhYO4wKS&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHz2xO_ZdjE&list=PLJrTWotrJqdxYDh-I5T6_B84EZhYO4wKS&index=2)



# PROMOTION PRINCIPLE

If a community values its children, it must cherish its mothers.

John Bowlby



# PROMOTION PRINCIPLE

It is our job as early childhood educators and parenting researchers to assure new parents that attachment is a process, *not dependent on any single event or specific parenting practice.*

Howard Steele



# PROMOTION PRINCIPLE

As we promote best practices in parenting, we need to be mindful of parents' unique role in determining what is best for their family.

Focus on "good enough" parenting

# PROMOTION PRINCIPLE

- Tell parents what a fabulous job they are doing of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Responding to their child's cues
- Asking for help
- Coping with sleep-deprivation



Preventing Attachment Problems

Promoting Healthy Attachment

# HEALTHY ATTACHMENT IS A BALANCE



# HEALTHY ATTACHMENT PROVIDES

SECURE  
BASE

Support for exploration



# HEALTHY ATTACHMENT PROVIDES



## Safe haven

Support for seeking proximity  
and comfort when distressed

# ORGANIZED PATTERNS OF ATTACHMENT

- Secure (B)
- Ambivalent/resistant (C)
- Avoidant (A)

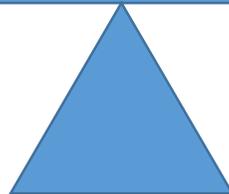
# Secure



independence



relationship



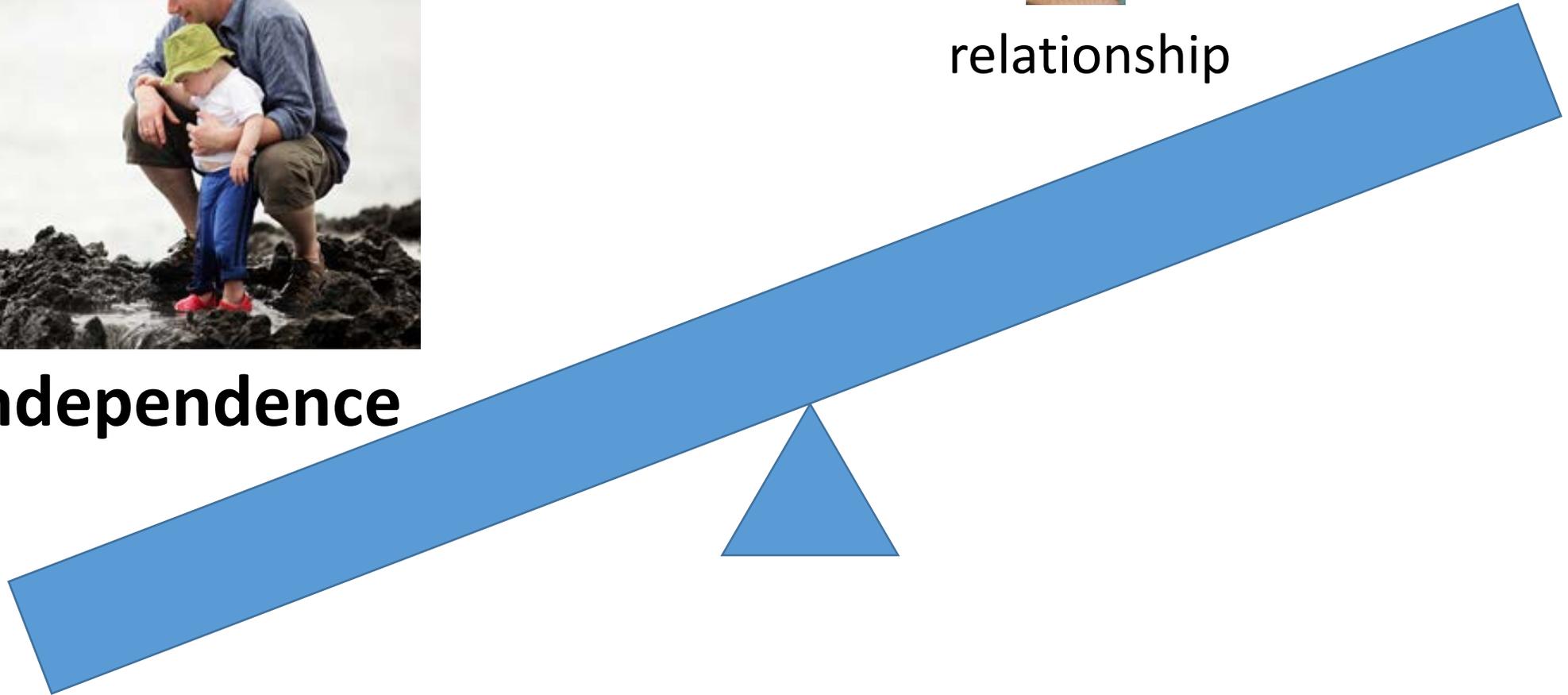
# Avoidant



**independence**



relationship



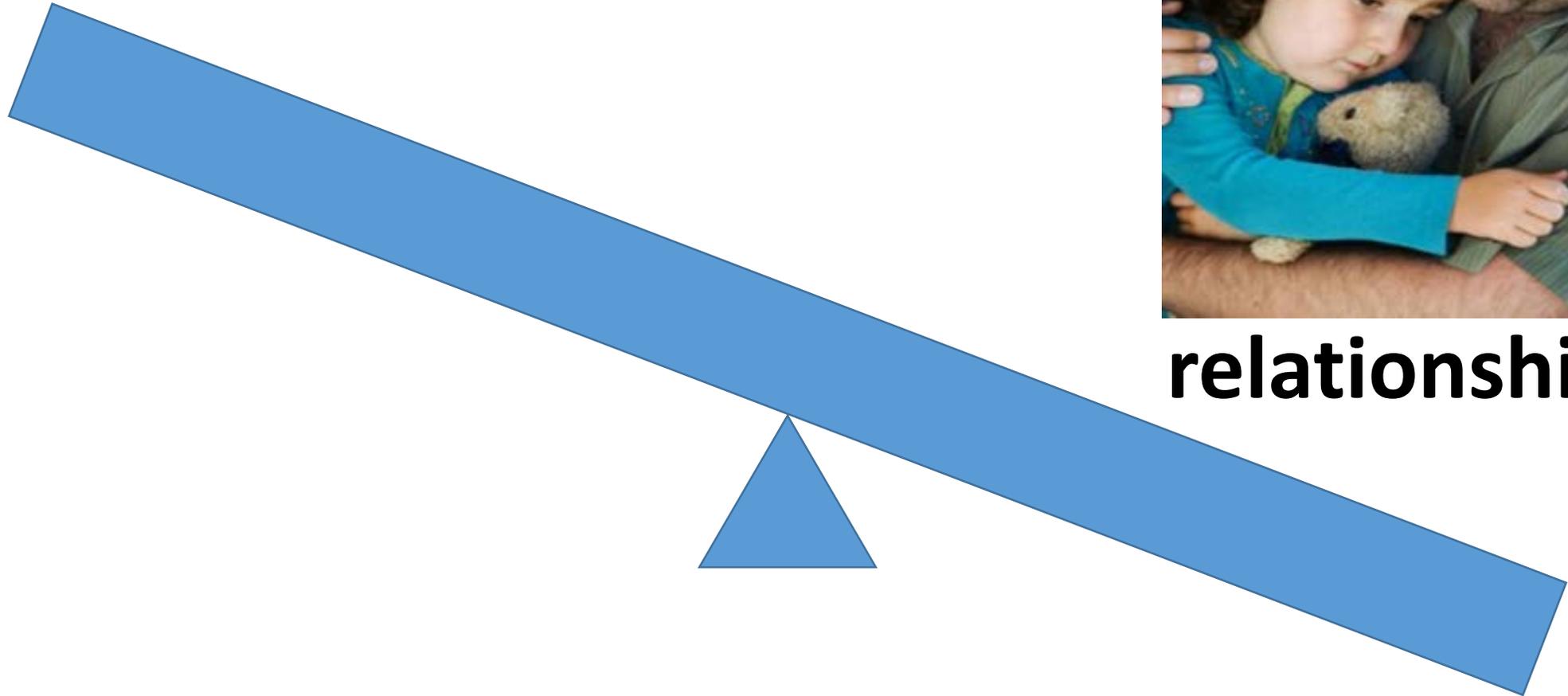
# Ambivalent/Resistant



independence



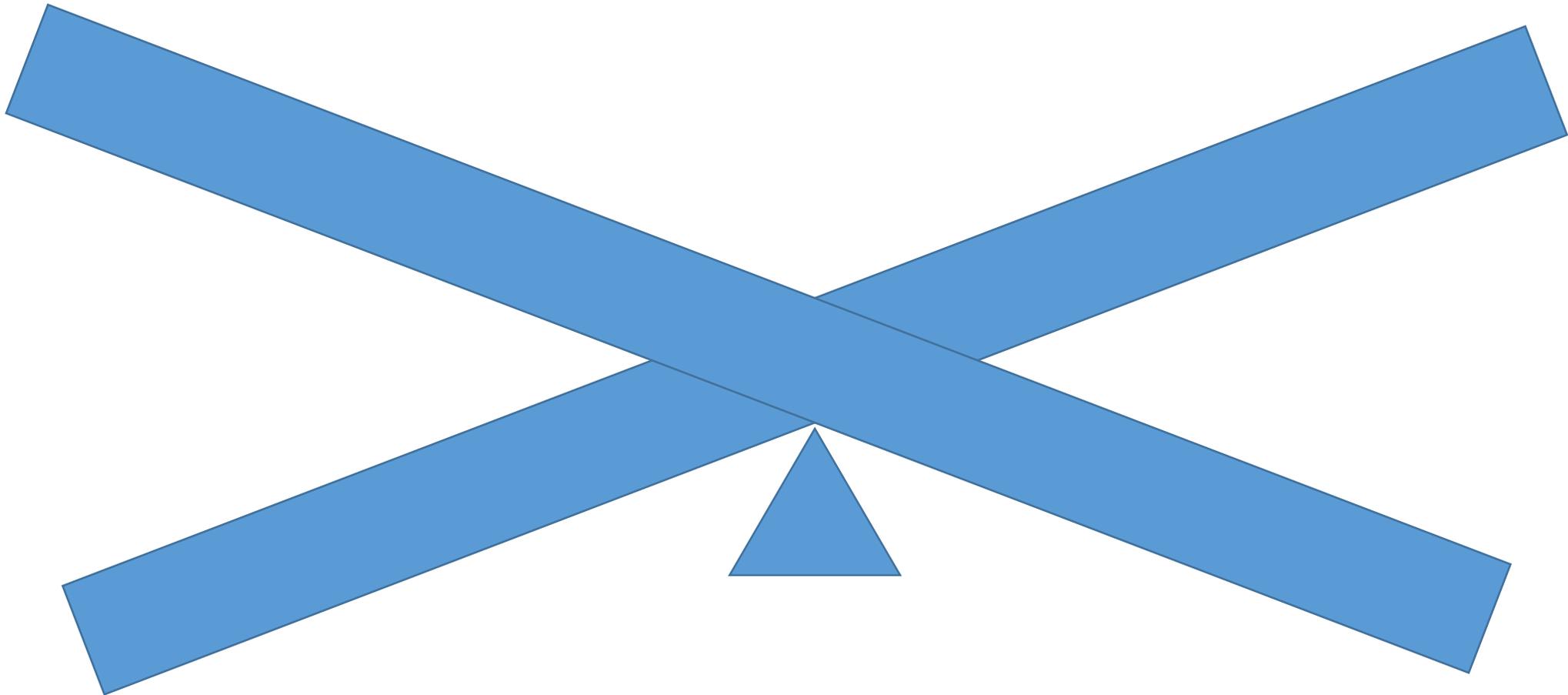
**relationship**



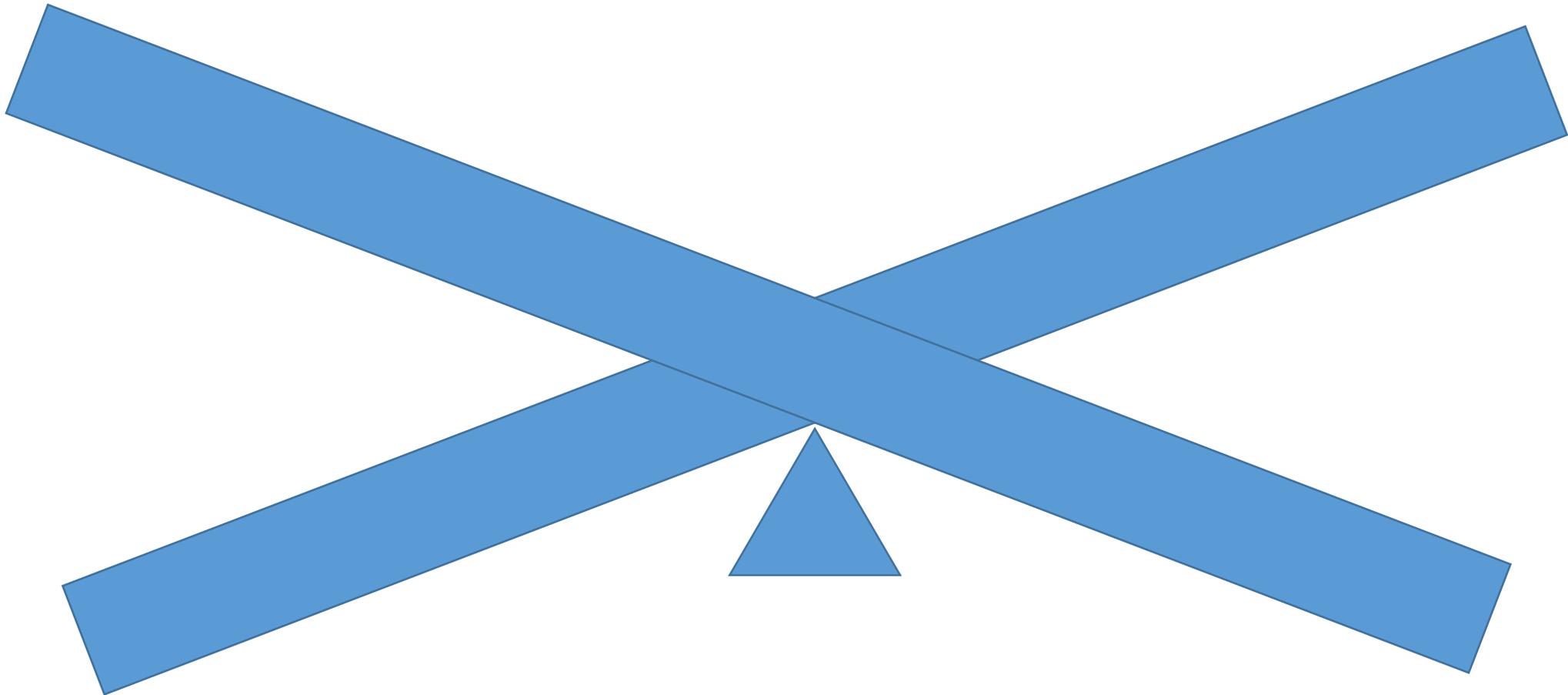


# DISORGANIZED ATTACHMENT

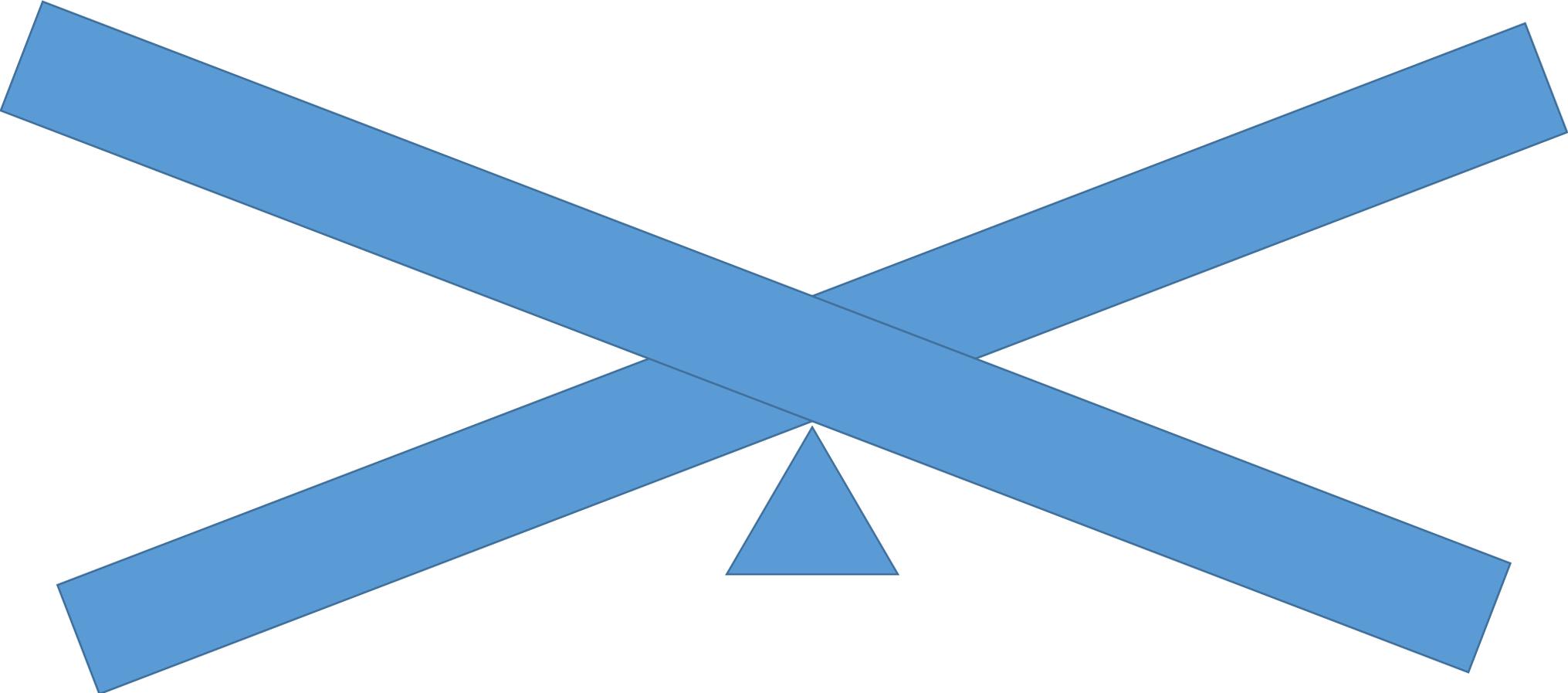
# Loss is Disorganizing



# Maltreatment is Disorganizing



# Clinically Depressed or Traumatized Parent is Disorganizing



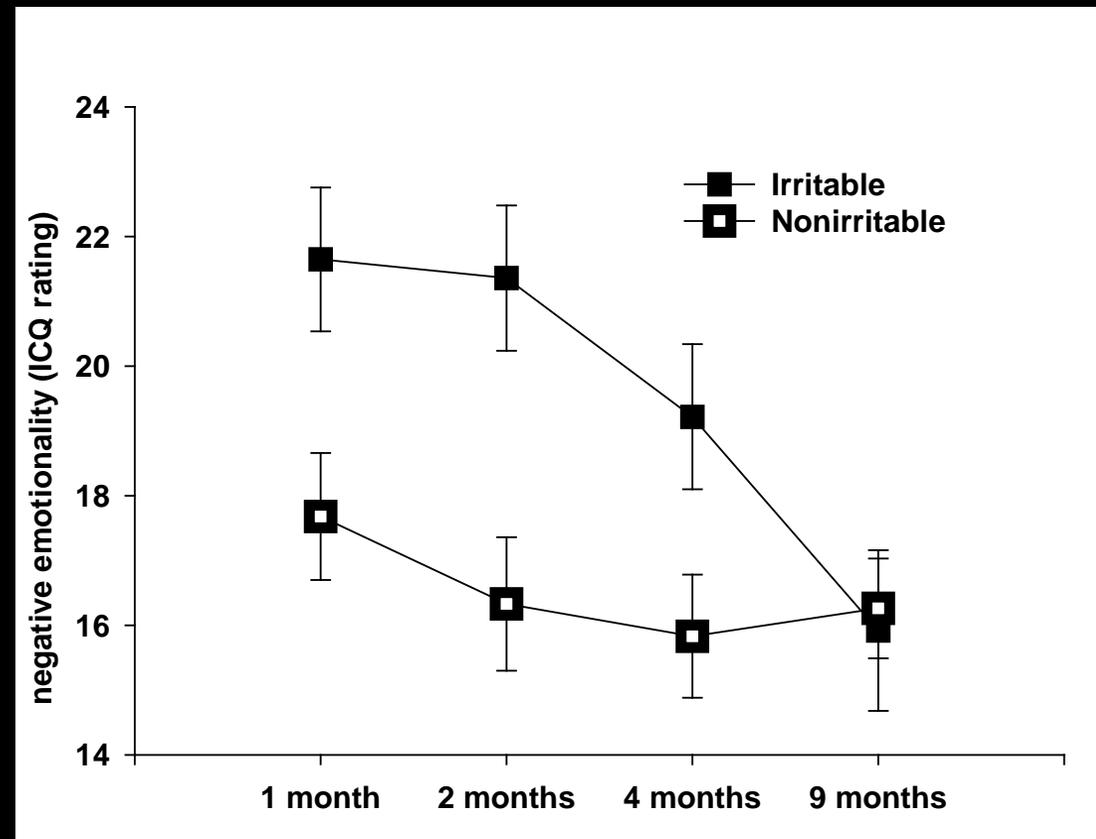
# MAIN POINTS OF ATTACHMENT RESEARCH

- Secure attachment is a protective factor
- Insecure attachment, especially disorganized, is a risk factor



# RESEARCH ON INFANT FUSSINESS AS RISK FACTOR FOR INFANT-PARENT PROBLEMS

# MATERNAL RATINGS OF FUSSINESS IN IRRITABLE AND NONIRRITABLE NEONATES

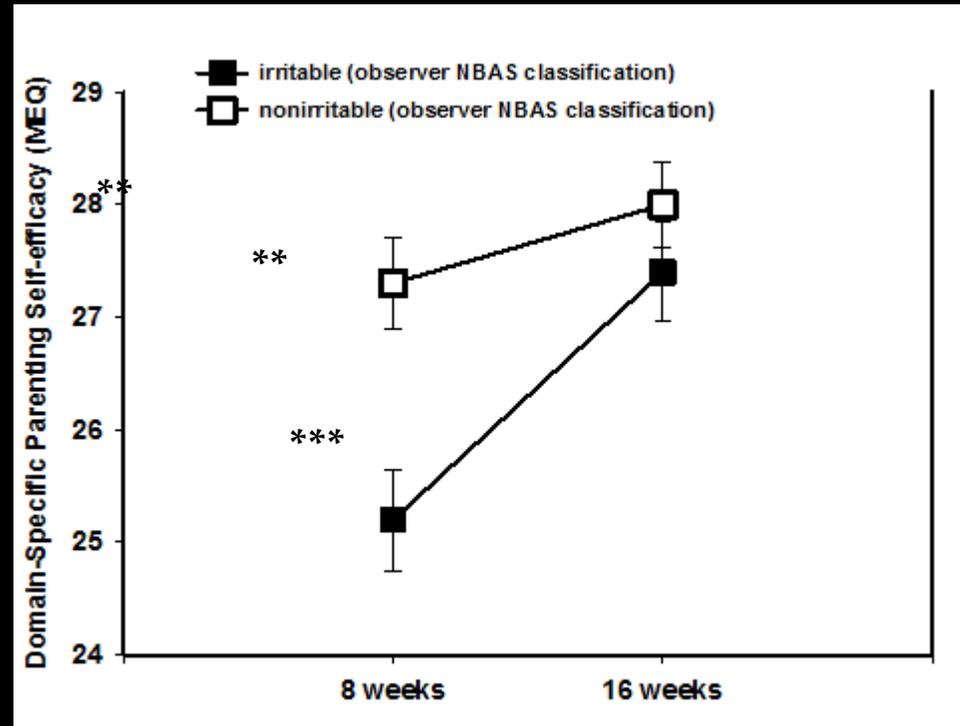


# PARENTING SELF-EFFICACY

Irritability X Time  $F(1, 51) = 8.42^{**}$

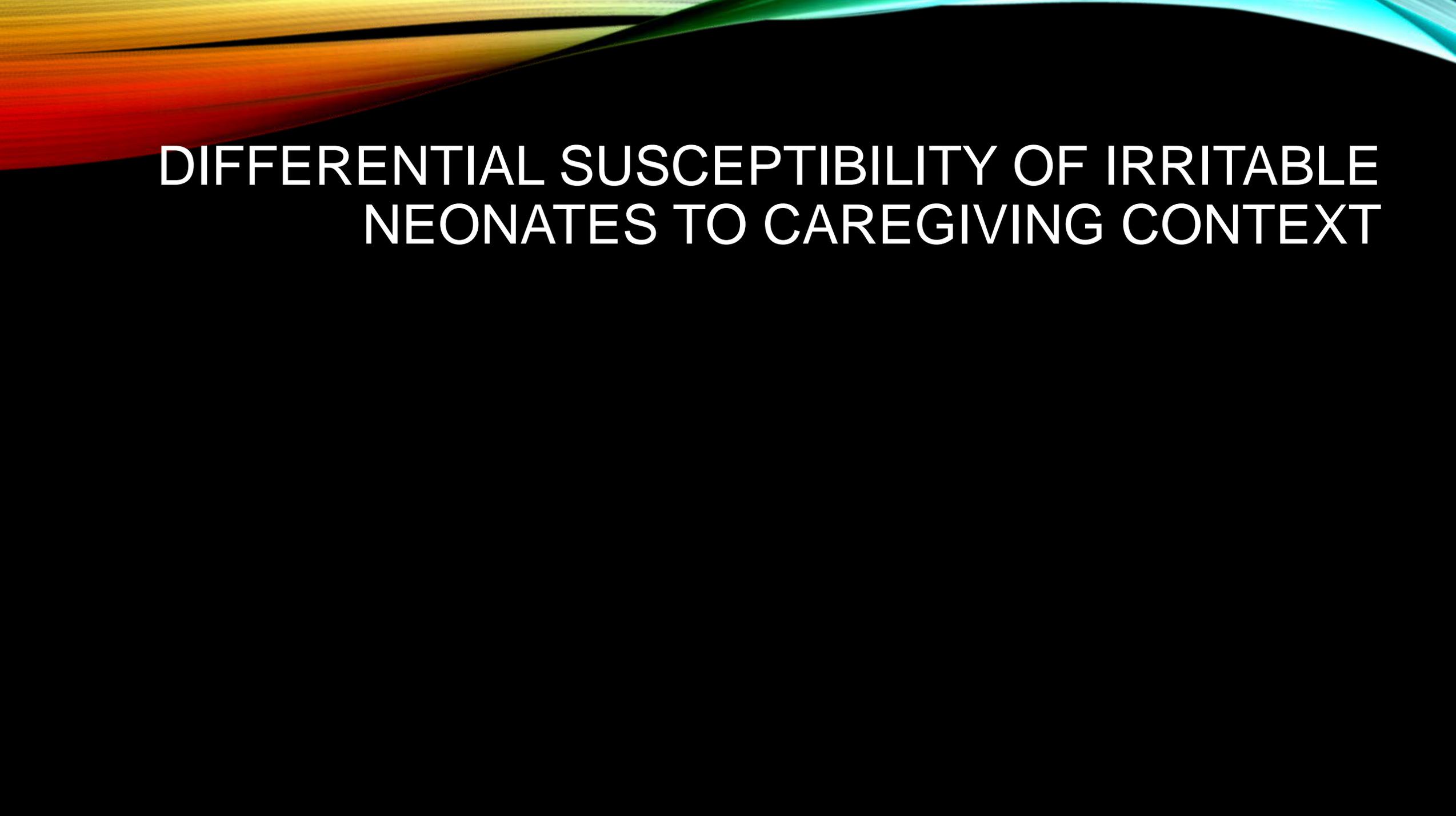
Irritability  $F(1, 51) = 7.67^{**}$

Time  $F(1, 51) = 20.88^{***}$



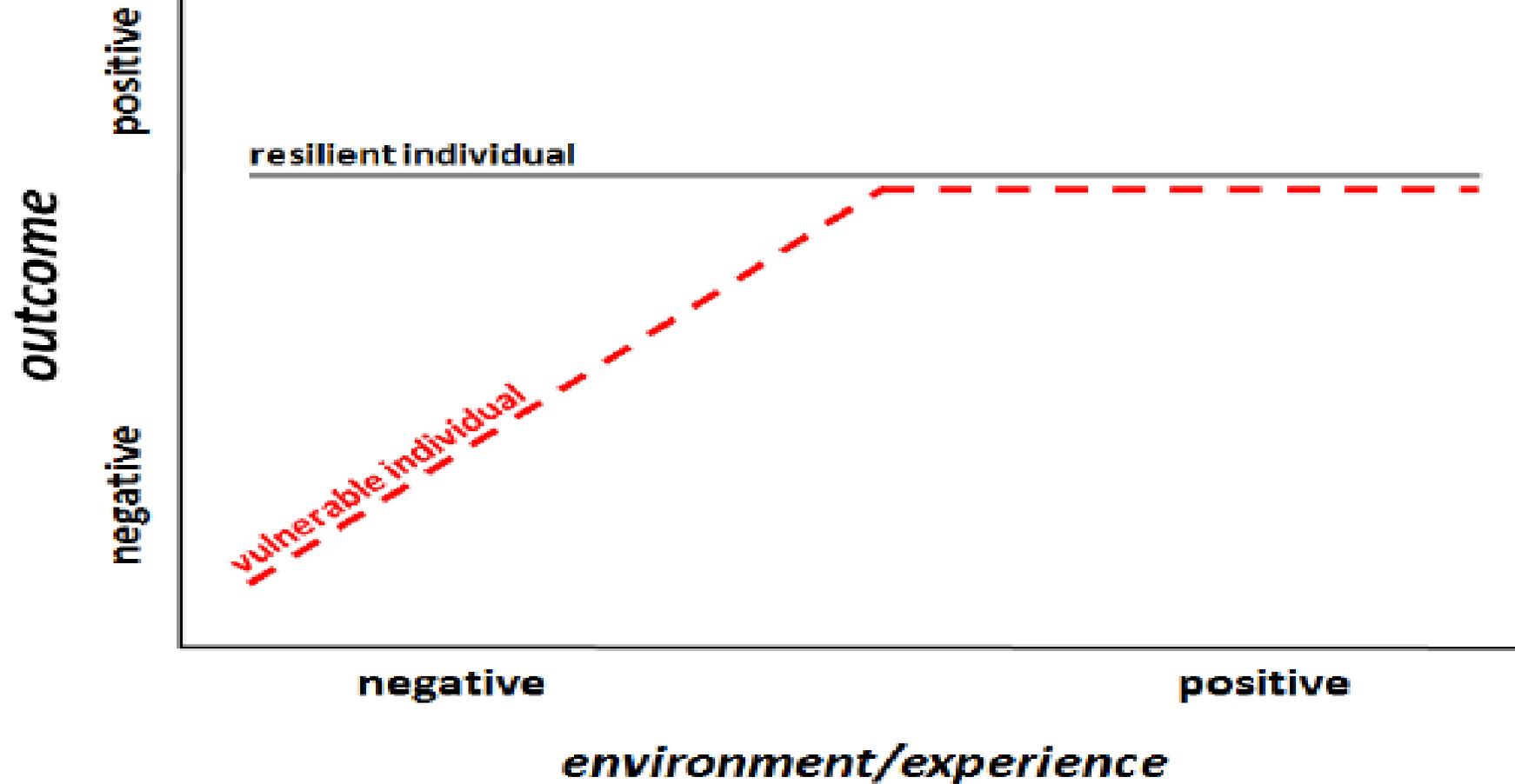
# PRINCIPLE FOR PREVENTION OF PROBLEMS IN FUSSY BABIES

- Mothers of irritable infants exhibit an increase in parenting self-efficacy *despite the infant's continued difficulties with emotional regulation compared to nonirritable neonates.*
- Working with parents of babies and young children is "a little like having God on your side."
  - Selma Fraiberg

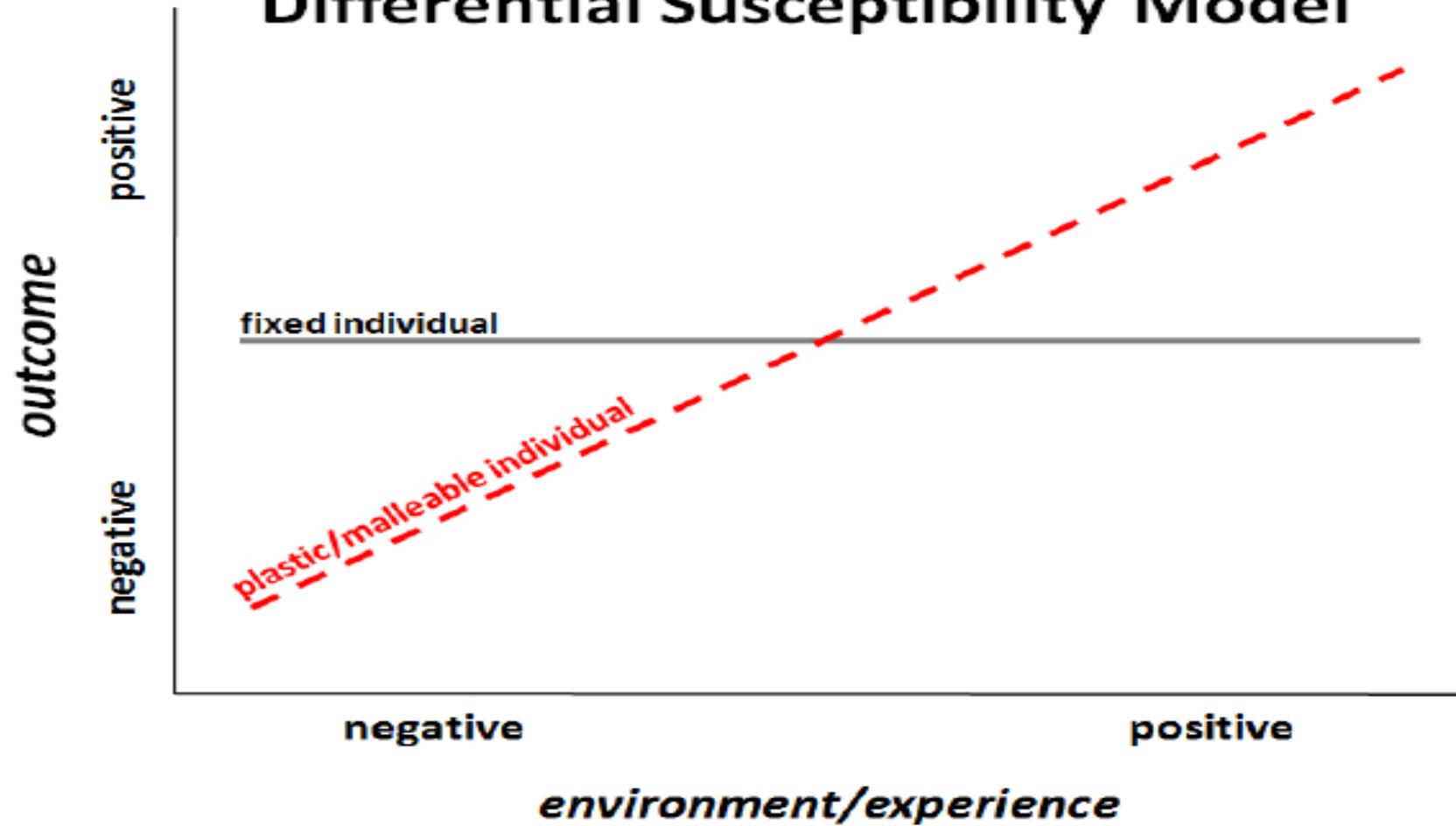


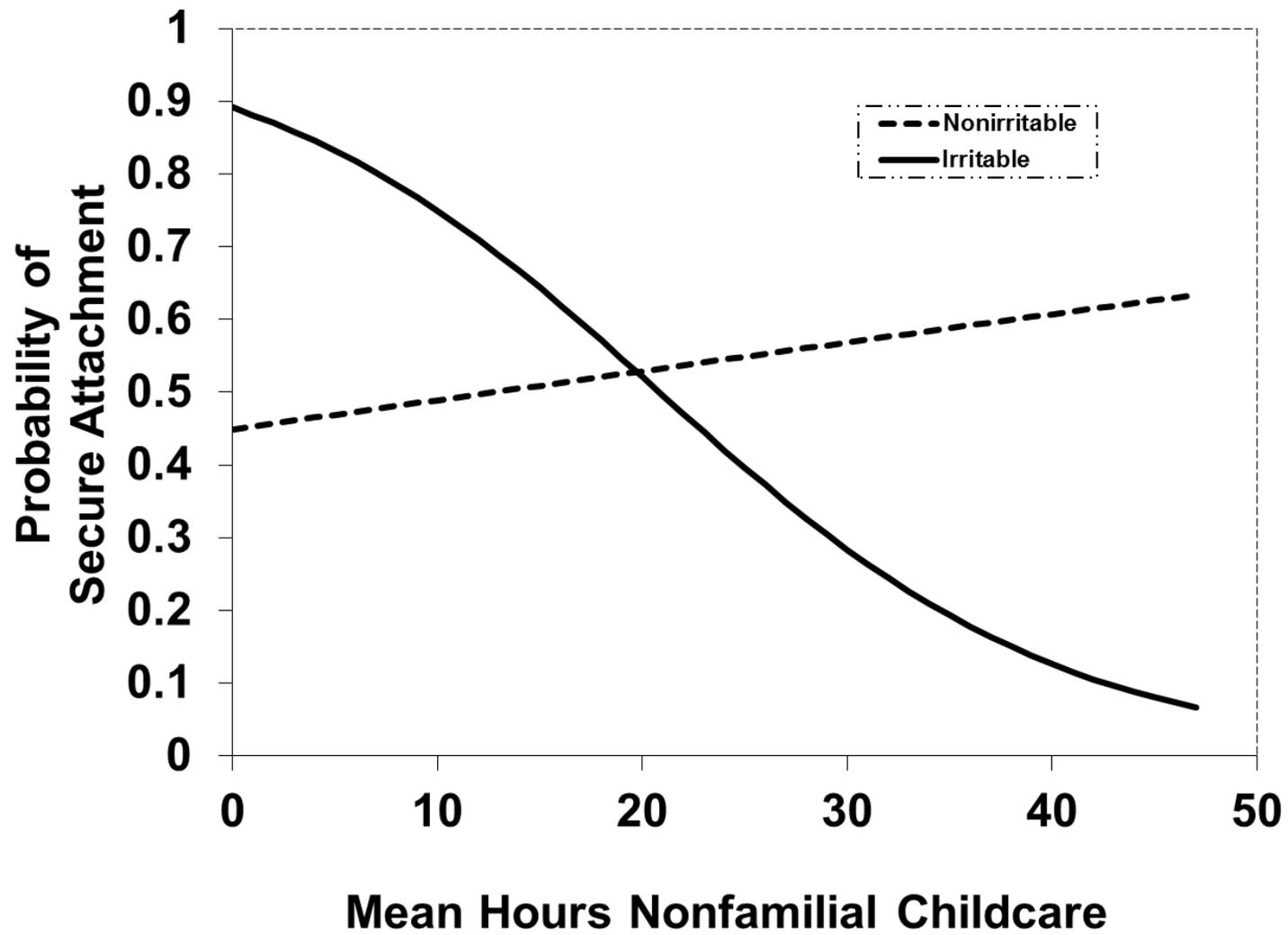
# DIFFERENTIAL SUSCEPTIBILITY OF IRRITABLE NEONATES TO CAREGIVING CONTEXT

# Diathesis-Stress/Dual Risk Model



## Differential Susceptibility Model





# PRINCIPLE FOR PREVENTION OF PROBLEMS IN FUSSY BABIES

- It takes a village
- Susceptible rather than vulnerable – “orchid child”
- Helping parents see their positive impact on their child



## Intervening in Parent-Child Relationship Difficulties

Preventing Attachment Problems

Promoting Healthy Attachment

# Parent-Child Interaction Therapy

<https://pcit.lab.uiowa.edu/>

# Child-Directed Interaction (CDI)

“The most precious gift we can offer anyone is our attention.”

-Thich Nhat Hanh

“When mindfulness embraces those  
we love, they will bloom like flowers.”

-Thich Nhat Hanh

# CDI - PRIDE Skills



**Praise** (labeled) Give specific praise for positive behaviors

"Thank you for sharing."

**Reflect** Say what they say

"Yes. That is green."

**Imitate** Do what they do

If child builds with blocks, you build with blocks.

**Describe** Describe what they do

"You're pushing the tractor."

**Enjoy** Relax and delight in your child



Why I talk about the *power of attention* instead of “negative attention-seeking behavior” or “just doing that to get attention”

- ▶ “Attention-seeking” or “just doing that to get attention” evokes
  - ▶ negative idea about children’s need for attention and their attachment needs
  - ▶ defensiveness in parents as implies they are not giving their child enough attention

# MAKING USEFUL REFERRALS FOR PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP ISSUES

- Referrals for parent-child relationship issues are most useful when:
  - The referral addresses the parent's concern – the parent feels heard
  - The referral is provided at the time the parent wants help – the parent feels their concern is taken seriously
  - The referral expands the network of support and guidance for the parent – the parent feels supported in developing a relationship with another provider

# INFANT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- **DHB's** and work alongside Maternal Mental Health Services
  - **WDHB - Mātua Tūhonongā**
  - **CMDHB - Whakatupu Ora**
  - **ADHB – Koanga Tipu**



# IMHAANZ

INFANT MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

## OTHER SERVICES



### Brainwave™

early years last forever

whakamana i te tamaiti



## Ohomairangi Trust

*"Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi engari, he toa takitini"*

- IMHAANZ - <https://www.imhaanz.org.nz/>
- Child and Family Unit – Mother and Baby Unit (3 beds)
- Ohomairangi Trust - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1N\\_QnZrgb7g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1N_QnZrgb7g)
- University of Iowa PCIT lab - <https://pcit.lab.uiowa.edu/>