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| **Applications of Research into Attachment:** Care of children. | |
| The research into attachment suggests that the way parents/carers care for their children can have a significant impact on their development throughout life. Therefore it is important to consider what is good and bad parenting. Yet not all childcare takes place in the home, therefore it is important to consider other care settings, such as nurseries and hospitals. | |
| **Care of children in hospitals.**  Before research was conducted into attachment, hospitals only considered the physical factors involved in treating and caring for children in hospitals. Yet, research showed that it is important to consider psychological factors too. Around 50 years ago, new-born babies were taken away from their mothers after birth; they were kept in separate wards in the hospital, usually over a week. Some mothers did not have contact with their children for the first 24 hours after birth. Even after that, contact was often limited, especially if the baby was in intensive care. Reasons included protecting mother and baby from infection and it gave mothers chance to recover after giving birth.  However, research into attachment influenced hospital policies and they began to change. Research showed the importance of giving mother and babies the opportunity to bond as soon as the baby was born. Nowadays, they encourage skin to skin contact with the mother and the father, giving the baby a sense of closeness and comfort – the beginning of bonding. Findings have shown that the more contact a baby has with its mother/father in the days immediately after the birth, then the better quality of attachment. Therefore due to psychological research, hospitals encourage bonding with between mother/father and baby, and the baby is put at the mother’s bedside, so that they can have continued contact.  **Care of children in nurseries.**  ‘There is a debate about whether nursery care (1) damages children because they are separated from their carers for long periods of time (1). Research into attachment can establish how carers can establish bonds with their children while still using nurseries (1) but also what nursery workers can do to compensate for the absence of the carer during the day (1). | |
| **Exam Question:** **Jan 2010** Describe how psychological research has influenced the care of children.  **Mark Scheme Answer:** Up to 4 marks can be given for a detailed and developed response eg  ‘Research shows that skin-to-skin contact can help in the early attachment  process (1). For this reason, midwives are keen that new born babies go to  their mothers as quickly as possible (1). The opportunity to bond is thought to  improve the relationship between mother and child (1). Not only does this  benefit the child in the short-term, but it is thought to establish a template for all future relationships (1)’. | **June 2011: Describe one application of research into attachment**  One application of research into attachment has been the change of hospital policies. Around 50 years ago, hospitals only considered physical factors in treating children; new born babies were taken away after birth and kept separately. However, research showed the importance of giving mother and babies the opportunity to bond as soon as they were born. Now, hospitals encourage skin to skin contact after birth to give the baby a sense of closeness and comfort – the beginning of bonding. Also, babies are now put at the mother’s bedside, so they can have continued contact. |
| **Jan 2013 Outline one other application of research into attachment**  ‘There is a debate about whether nursery care (1) damages children because they are separated from their carers for long periods of time (1). Research into attachment can establish how carers can establish bonds with their children while still using nurseries (1) but also what nursery workers can do to compensate for the absence of the carer during the day (1) | |