

# International Alternative Care Conference

Geneva, 3 to October 2016



*What children need from caregivers: Are there skills which cannot be taught in formal education?*

Hermann Radler

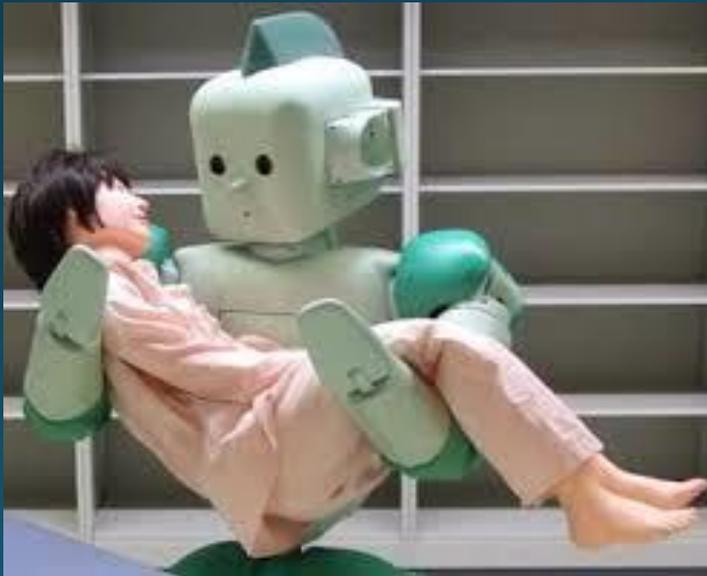
## Hosts



## Partners



# The problem implied in formal training of caretakers is .....



## Child development takes place best in (secure) relationships.

We have to have in mind that also caretakers are using one of them:

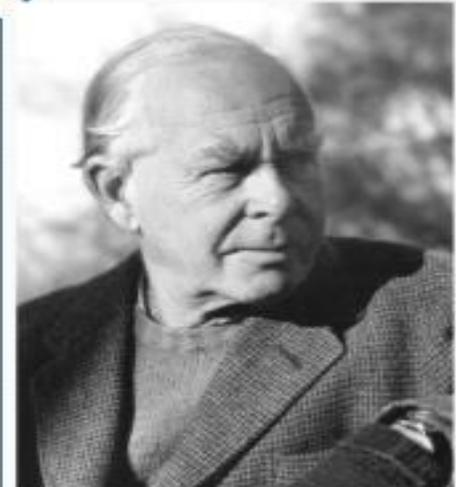
Attachment Style	Parental Style	Resulting Adult Characteristics
<b>Secure</b>	Aligned with the child; in tune with the child's emotions	Able to create meaningful relationships; empathetic; able to set appropriate boundaries
<b>Avoidant</b>	Unavailable or rejecting	Avoids closeness or emotional connection; distant; critical; rigid; intolerant
<b>Ambivalent</b>	Inconsistent and sometimes intrusive parent communication	Anxious and insecure; controlling; blaming; erratic; unpredictable; sometimes charming
<b>Disorganized</b>	Ignored or didn't see child's needs; parental behavior was frightening/traumatizing	Chaotic; insensitive; explosive; abusive; untrusting even while craving security
<b>Reactive</b>	Extremely unattached or malfunctioning	Cannot establish positive relationships; often misdiagnosed

Being able as a caregiver to give secure attachments seems to be the golden key for successful youth care.



## JOHN BOWLBY (1907-1990)

- British Child Psychiatrist & Psychoanalyst.
- He was the first attachment theorist, describing attachment as a "lasting psychological connectedness between human beings".
- Bowlby believed that the earliest bonds formed by children with their caregivers have a tremendous impact that continues throughout life.
- According to Bowlby, attachment also serves to keep the infant close to the mother, thus improving the child's chances of survival.





Insecure attachments can have unfortunate consequences. If a child cannot rely on an adult to respond to their needs in times of stress, they are unable to learn how to soothe themselves, manage their emotions and engage in reciprocal relationships.

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## Attachment-based care means:

Caregivers need many different practices and skills that they employed in order to build trusting relationships with the children.

Caregivers are skilled in relationship building with children and so they were observed to be physically and emotionally warm, kind, caring, friendly, respectful, attuned, available, predictable, consistent, clear, supportive and calm.

## The practices are including:

- "Being present when the children arrive and leave"
- "Giving children time – taking things very slowly"
- "Giving children personal space" & "knowing when to step back"
- "Getting down to the children's level"
  - "Using eye contact and smiling"
- "Using language that affirms love and care"
- "Acknowledging children's feelings"

Workforce development is a key driver for care reform and developing the care workforce contributes in important ways to creating and sustaining the suitability of the care provided to children and youth in these settings, as defined by the *Guidelines*.

Thank you for your attention

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