

What Are the Benefits of Developing a 'Triangle of Trust'?

There are many benefits for everyone involved within the 'Triangle of Trust'.

Benefits for the child include:

- feeling known, understood and cared for;
- feeling safe and secure when away from home;
- confident and motivated to explore the world;
- forming a strong attachments and special bond with key person;
- able to take risks and participate in new and unfamiliar experiences.

For the caregiver they will feel:

- reassured and respected;
- supported and listened to;
- involved in their child's experiences and part of their learning journey;
- confident that their child's individual emotional and learning needs are being met.

For the educator, developing strong relationships and partnerships helps:

- to build a holistic picture of the child;
- to adapt to individual needs and interests;
- to mirror and support approaches that the caregiver would normally do in the home;
- increase interactions as children open up more.



Strategies to Develop Strong Attachments in the Early Years

Settings and caregivers can develop strong attachments and trusting relationships with children by working together in partnership to support their overall wellbeing. It is important that adults:

- are aware of children's emotional cues. Tune into facial expressions, body language and sounds to ensure you can respond appropriately and understand their needs;
- respond sensitively and with a warm and caring attitude;
- keep children in mind, checking in and providing a secure base for them to feel safe, secure and cared for;
- communicate any relevant information during handovers and transitions in the day;
- help to establish consistent and predictable daily routines;
- become a responsive play partner, following the child's lead and engaging in talk;
- provide playful opportunities that build on children's interests and needs;
- develop a safe and stimulating environment for children to thrive;
- respond over time to children's needs, emotions and interests with greater understanding.

Disclaimer: Every setting's needs are different and so the recommendations in this resource may not be suitable for all settings. The examples used are not an exhaustive list and it is for you to consider whether it is appropriate to use this guidance within your setting.

A Guide to...

The Key Person Approach and the Triangle of Trust

Adult Information Leaflet



What is the Key Person Approach?

This approach allows each child to have an educator in their childcare setting that they can relate to and form an attachment with. Children are comforted by the familiar and so by developing relationships with one or two members of staff, children can feel safe, secure and be less anxious, stressed and feel less abandoned.



This approach is also important in helping:

- children manage during the day;
- positive, calm and effective transitions to take place;
- meet physical and emotional needs;
- develop strong links between the home and educational settings.



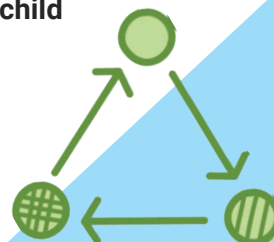
What is the 'Triangle of Trust'?

Within the key person approach, a 'Triangle of Trust' is formed. This is an important relationship between the child, their family and the key person. These relationships build gradually over time, ensuring the child feels emotionally secure and providing a reassuring point of contact for the key caregiver.



For the 'Triangle of Trust' to be formed, a strong relationship must be developed for the benefit of the child's wellbeing and development.

Ultimately, a 'Triangle of Trust' is **promoting everyone working together to support the child** in the early years.



Why Are the Key Person and Triangle of Trust Approaches Important?

Developing a 'Triangle of Trust' gradually over time, allows children and caregivers to develop trusting relationships and form positive attachments.

Attachment is a term used to describe the emotional bond between the child and primary caregiver. Children need to know that they are loved, respected and understood by those around them. As children develop, secure attachments allow them to develop cognitively, socially and emotionally.

Forming strong attachments in the early years of a child's life supports children to separate from their main caregiver without distress, enabling them to explore and engage with the world around them.

