

# The Improvement Measures of the Attachment Status of Left-behind Children

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## Abstract

The attachment status of left-behind children is an important content of social interaction and an important factor affecting the psychological development of left-behind children. From the perspective of social interaction, the paper analyzes the attachment status of left-behind children and provides measures to improve the situation of attachment of left-behind children in order to build up a secure attachment relationship. The parents-children association, the teacher-child association and the peer association should be taken into consideration in order to help the left-behind children gain security, trust and psychological support from positive social association.

## Keywords

Left-behind children; Attachment status; Improvement measures.

## 1. Introduction

Since the national teleconference for left-behind children, the establishment of the "education network for left-behind children" and the publication of the "survey report on the left-behind children in Chinese situation" by the all-china Women's Federation, the educational and psychological development of the Left-behind children has been an academic and social issue of great concern to the educational and psychological circles as well as the government. The report to the 19th National Congress of the Left-behind children accentuates the need to improve the care and service system for women and the elderly.

## 2. The Theoretical Basis and Principles of the Improvement of Left-behind Children's Attachment

### 2.1. The Theoretical Basis

Attachment relationship firstly was attracted attention because of its close relationship with infant's mental health. The emergence and development of attachment is the main achievement of children's early social life. For example, Freud payed more attention to the great importance of the relationship between family members for the healthy development of children and the decisive role of children's early life experiences in the development of adult personality. People should attach importance to the early development of Children's physical and mental health.

The theory of attachment emphasizes the importance of the child's physical and mental development and the attachment relationship between the primary caregiver, considering that the initial relationship between the child and his or her primary caregiver constitutes the starting point for all subsequent relationships. The attachment relationship between children and their caregivers plays an important role in a person's life. Attachment and instinctive reactions have similar roots and are important for the self-protection and survival of the species. The stability and healthy development of individual psychology depends on whether there is a safe base in the center of individual psychology structure.

According to the theory of multiple attachment, children can form different attachment relationships with people in different roles (such as parents, grandparents, teachers and peers) in different environments (such as family, kindergarten, etc). Although attachment relationships result in different types of families and different roles for the attachment object, children feel safe, supported and encouraged to engage in positive exploratory behavior with the attachment object providing a secure base. Separation anxiety occurs when they are separated.

## **2.2. The Principles of the Improvement of Left-behind Children's Attachment**

The discussion of measures to improve the attachment status of left-behind children should abide by the principles of objectivity and development.

The principle of objectivity is the first principle. The main body of left-behind Children's attachment is human". The human behavior and psychological phenomenon are complex and diverse, affected and restricted by various factors. Each left-behind child's development base and speed is not the same. Therefore, the objective principle of measures to improve the attachment status of left-behind children mainly includes two aspects: firstly, we must take into account the left-behind children's own characteristics of physical and mental development and the objective environment of their lives, differences in conditions, family types, etc. At the same time, the characteristics of the attachment object such as the caregiver should be taken into account. The objective combination of various factors can effectively improve the situation of left-behind children attachment.

The developmental principle means that the improvement of the attachment status of the left-behind children must be viewed in a developmental perspective. The attachment object of left-behind children should not only pay attention to the physical and mental characteristics of left-behind children, but also pay attention to their budding tendency of physical and mental development. From the perspective of social interaction, we can actively guide the left-behind children's safe attachment and provide them with a sense of security and belonging through role models and emotional support. The left-behind children can actively explore the world around them and grow up positively and healthily.

## **3. The Measures to Improve the Attachment Status of Left-behind Children**

Attachment is a positive and intimate emotional bond between children and their primary caregivers. It is a deep, firm and continuous emotional bond between individuals and significant others in the process of development. Significant others refer to the individual socialization and the formation of psychological personality process has an important impact on the specific figures. Everyone has a need for attachment. The object of attachment must be a "significant others" who can be trusted and who can provide support and protection. The left-behind children usually live with one of their parents, grandparents, etc. One or both of their parents are working away from home. Therefore, the "significant others" who can provide support, trust, protection and security for the left-behind children may be parents, grandparents, teachers, peers and so on. These are three forms of left-behind children's social interaction (parent-child interaction, teacher-child interaction and peer interaction) covered by the "important others". Therefore, the improvement measures of left-behind children's attachment from the perspective of social communication are mainly analyzed and discussed from the perspective of three kinds of social communication.

### **3.1. Positive Parent-child Interaction Enhances Attachment**

According to the research on the mental status of the left-behind children in China, there are only two effective ways to help the left-behind children: guiding their core self-evaluation and

helping their parent-child relationship. The parent-child relationship refers to the relationship between parents and their children, It can also include the relationship between the next generation relatives. In a broad sense, parent-child communication refers to the communication between children and their primary caregivers which is a process of verbal and non-verbal information transmission and comprehension feedback between children and their primary caregivers. Because the left-behind children lived in the family type is mainly the other generation of guardianship and single-parent guardianship. The “significant others” of the left-behind children may be the parents or the grandparents who are closely related to the individual.

The family type of the left-behind children makes the grandparents and mothers become the “important others” in the process of the left-behind Children’s physical and mental development and become the main attachment objects in the process of establishing their attachment relationship. Therefore, grandparents and mothers play a very important role in the process of left-behind children’s attachment, which has an important impact on the establishment of their secure attachment.

### **3.2. Positive Teacher-child Interaction Provides Attachment Support**

As good parent-child communication and peer communication, the left-behind children’s teacher-child communication can bring them a sense of security and belonging and become their emotional dependence. The teacher-child interaction refers to the interaction between teachers and children in kindergarten, which is the interaction and influence of various forms, properties and degrees between teachers and children. The study of multiple attachment theory shows that when the features of teacher-child attachment are used to predict children’s social interaction ability, it is more predictive than parent-child attachment. “Kindergarten education guidelines (for trial implementation)” points: “In social education, guiding children to participate in games and other activities, experience and peer co-existence of the fun, strengthening communication between teachers and students, peer to peer, cultivate close, friendly attitude of children to others, teaching the necessary communication skills; learn to live in harmony.” In the kindergarten, teachers are not only the model of left-behind children, but also the leader of positive social behavior. Teachers should try their best to create a psychological environment for left-behind children that makes them feel safe, warm, trustworthy and encourages them to explore and create.

When the left-behind children enter kindergarten, teachers play an important role in the development of their attachment relationship. The role of teachers is reflected in three aspects: firstly, to improve and enhance the social ability that left-behind children can not form well in their families. Secondly, according to the different social abilities and characteristics of the left-behind children. Thirdly, it is to directly participate in the left-behind Children’s communication activities in the communication to give example, guidance and help to train the left-behind children to form a good, positive social communication ability and quality. Good teacher-student attachment can compensate for the unsafe parent-child attachment.

### **3.3. Positive Peer Interaction Makes up for A Lack of Attachment**

Peer interaction refers to the interaction between children of the same or similar age, which is the interaction and influence between peers or individuals of the same level of psychological development in common activities. With the growth of left-behind children, the interaction between left-behind children and other children continues to increase.

The increasing number of peer interaction is of unique and important significance to the socialization process and development of left-behind children. A good communication relationship between children and young children can make the left-behind children feel a sense of security and belonging as a good parent-child relationship. It becomes an emotional

dependence of the left-behind children's attachment development. It plays an important role in emotional support to make up for the lack of parent-child attachment.

#### 4. Conclusion

Many theories of children's psychological development emphasize the influence of parent-child interaction on individual's life-long personality development. For the left-behind children whose parents or single parents are away, increasing the frequency of contact is a positive condition for parent-child communication, which contributes to the improvement of attachment. Increasing the frequency of contact can be achieved through a variety of means and safeguards. For example, the choice of online video chat. If it is possible, parents can send their children to the cities where they work for a period of time. Governments at all levels and education departments have accelerated the reform of the existing urban-rural segregation system, so that the left-behind children have the opportunity to stay with their migrant parents under the system.

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