



API -

Attachment Parenting Inter

February 2006 Newsletter

There is No Doctrine for Attachment Parenting: Being AP is a Frame of Mind!

by Diana West

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Since the beginning of civilized time, parents have been drawn together by the common bonds of parenting philosophies, forming communities of mutual support and information based upon those principles. The evolution of Internet bulletin boards and email lists has expanded our interaction capabilities exponentially, nearly eliminating the previous geographical limitations of parenting communities. Now parents from all countries and cultures are able to participate in parenting discussions, and many have found that they naturally gravitate to the large online parenting community bound together by the concept of Attachment Parenting (AP).

Some of the earliest posts to the AP online community have been from parents who question and berate themselves for not adhering to what they perceive to be the practicing requirements of AP. Depending upon the mood of the discussion, these might be the use of slings, extended breastfeeding, co-sleeping, or perhaps the avoidance of strollers, cribs, playpens, vaccinations, circumcisions, television, synthetic fabrics, allopathic medicine, disposable diapers, plastic toys, pacifiers, or bottles. Each time a parent questions whether she is truly an AP parent because they have chosen not to follow one or another of these methods, it is a heartbreaking blow to the essential self-assurance that all parents deserve. The fact that there seem to be earmarks of Attachment Parenting makes so many of us think that if we do not practice all the "correct" AP methods, then we cannot call ourselves an AP parent. I heartily disagree. I believe that being AP is a frame of mind.

More Info On Nighttime Parenting

8 Infant Sleep Facts Every Parent Should Know

<http://www.askdrsears.com/html/7/T070200.asp>

The Family Bed

by Thine Thevenin

Three in a Bed

by Deborah Jackson

Crying Baby, Sleepless Nights

by Sandy Jones

"The important issue in nighttime parenting is not where your baby sleeps, but how responsive you are to a baby's nighttime needs and how open you are to finding the best sleeping arrangement for your family."

-Sears and Sears

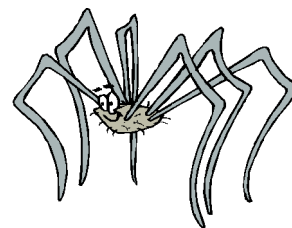


API-Canton meets the second Tuesday of every month. We are currently meeting at the Stark County District Library - North Branch on 25th St. NW in the basement meeting room.

Upcoming Events



Feb. 22nd - NINO (Nine In Nine Out) Meeting at Amy Dunnerstick's home. Contact Amy (apmammaof2@yahoo.com) if you need directions.



API-Canton
Websites:

Home Page:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/apmammaof2/?yguid=198814301>

Discussion Group:

<http://www.orgsites.com/oh/apicantoncircle/index.html>

An Attachment Parent is not one because of the type of carrier she uses to transport or maintain proximity with her kids. She may not have the physical ability to carry a child beyond his first six months. She may not have ever learned the knack of using a sling and may instead prefer a Snuggli. Or perhaps she has more than one child, or very spirited children, who are more practically conveyed in a stroller.

An Attachment Parent is not one because of the way that she feeds her child. She may have had a breast reduction and lack the capability to produce a full milk supply. She may have to supplement, but the supplement you see in that bottle may not be formula. Perhaps it's donated breastmilk. Certainly it would be better if she didn't use a bottle, but sometimes, especially outside of the home, that is a much more practical feeding method when supplementation is necessary. It may be that she is bound by a very observant religious culture that prohibits revealing portions of the body, and so in public she may feed her child expressed milk in a bottle.

An Attachment Parent is not one because she and her children sleep together in a family bed. Some children (and some adults) simply do not sleep well next to another person. Even some infants fret and are restless when another body infringes upon their space. These kids are highly sensitive to touch and are easily overloaded. A perceptive mother, such as an AP mother, will understand this about her child and allow him his space, while still maintaining proximity.

An Attachment Parent is not one because she stays home with her children. There are many family circumstances that absolutely require the mother to work outside the home so that her family can have even the most basic of necessities. Even though these families may not appear to have financial difficulties, we can never assume that they don't, because we can't know all of their pressures and obligations.

An Attachment Parent is not one because she does do all of these things. These practices certainly foster attachment, but they are easily circumvented when a parent simultaneously treats her child with disrespect and emotional threats.

An AP parent is defined by how she interacts with her child. Does she make a long-term commitment to spending as much time with her children as she possibly can? Does she include her children in every appropriate aspect of her life?

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Are her children an integral part of her life, rather than an inconvenience that must be quickly taught to comply? Does she respect the individuality, feelings, and thoughts of her children? Is she in tune with her children's needs and does she seek to meet those needs as a primary priority? Does she interact with her children in such a way that an ever-deepening bond is developed, rather than polarizing the respective positions of power between her and the children? Does she seek to be an emotional coach or is she a policeman?

An AP parent is one who wholeheartedly believes that children are inherently good and that by fostering an atmosphere of complete trust and intimacy, a bond is created that provides those children with the foundation and security to become their best selves. It really has little to do with the tools we use to be Attachment parents. All that is important to qualify us to be an Attachment Parent is simply that we parent from an Attachment Parenting frame of mind.

*Diana West is a stay-at-home mother of three children, a La Leche League Leader, the author of *Defining Your Own Success: Breastfeeding After Breast Reduction Surgery*, published by La Leche League International.*

Diana is also the creator and owner of the internet's first virtual consignment shop for mommy and baby goods, Mothers' Online Thrift Shop (MOTS). MOTS was a unique and wonderful place for consignments of gently-used mommy and baby goods.

Join API

Attachment Parenting International (API) is a tax exempt, 501(c)(3), nonprofit, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan organization. API membership is not required to attend API group meetings but is encouraged to sustain the activities of the group and support the work of API. All donations to API are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible.

Individual/Family Membership , \$35.00 (one-year membership includes four complimentary quarterly issues of the Attachment Parenting: The Journal of Attachment Parenting International).

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