



Keeping an Eye on the Body

Some clues that might suggest attachment rupture, stress and emotional dysregulation.

Changes in the Face

- Gaze aversion
- Increased blinking
- Clenching teeth/lips together
- Grimacing
- Yawning
- Biting of the lips
- Wincing

Changes in Posture

- Large postural shifts from one position to another
- Decrease in postural tone, presenting as slouching (hypoarousal which may be associated with feelings of helplessness and shame)
- Increase in postural tone, presenting as very upright posture (hyperarousal which may be associated with feelings of anger and irritability)
- Stretching, leaning or pushing against furniture as a means of regaining regulation
- Shifting between sitting and standing

Changes in Functioning and Movement

- A loss of motor planning ability, so the young person may seem less coordinated/more clumsy
- Speaking may lose fluency
- Presence of burping or flatulence

Note

When young people are seeking a lot of touch and are active, they may be elevated or they may be engaging in what their body needs to calm down. Tolerating those behaviours, reflecting on them and adjusting them slightly to have more deep pressure can be more beneficial than limit setting. For example, if the young person is pacing around the room it may be helpful to join them, and encourage 'stamping' with each step.

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