

## Research Digest: Youth Risk

**Torquati, J. C., & Raffaelli, M.** (2004). Daily experiences of emotions and social contexts of securely and insecurely attached young adults. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 19*, 740-758.

Attachment has been examined as a construct for emotion, cognition, and behavior. Attachment style is often represented as both secure and insecure. Secure attachment correlates with positive emotions while insecure is associated with negative feelings. The researchers aimed to better understand the daily emotions and social contexts of young adults who differed in attachment styles by evaluating mood, companionship, and activities through implementation of contemporaneous reports in a nonclinical sample. The researchers used experience sampling method (ESM) to obtain reports of immediate experience of people's emotional reality.

The sample consisted of 69 undergraduate students enrolled in social science classes at a midwestern university. The students completed standardized measures using the ESM to measure attachment style, emotional experiences, and social context. The results indicated that secure and insecure individuals contrasted in their emotional experiences in everyday settings. Secure and insecure students tended to spend the same amount of time alone and with others such as romantic partners, friends, and roommates. However, secure students reported a high positive emotional connection when with others as opposed to their counterparts who were more likely to maintain extreme negative emotions. In addition, when insecure students were alone, they reported low moods such as loneliness, irritability, and worrisome while secure individuals maintained positive dispositions. The results suggest that secure individuals experience more positive emotions in their daily lives than insecure students and attachment styles have an influence on emotional experiences that go beyond social context.

The researchers' results were consistent with other findings in that insecure individuals may need others around to experience a connection with regards to feeling loved, accepted, and secure. Moreover, the research adds support to current studies and extends the need for further analysis of attachment as it relates to emotion.

*This Research Digest is a product of the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools. The research presented is a sample of state-of-the-art research conducted in the area of Youth Risk Factors and Behaviors by faculty at UNL. For more information on the Center, please contact Holly Sexton at [hsexton1@unl.edu](mailto:hsexton1@unl.edu)*