



## WELCOME TO OUR Monthly Newsletter

### **Back to Basics: Attachment Theory**

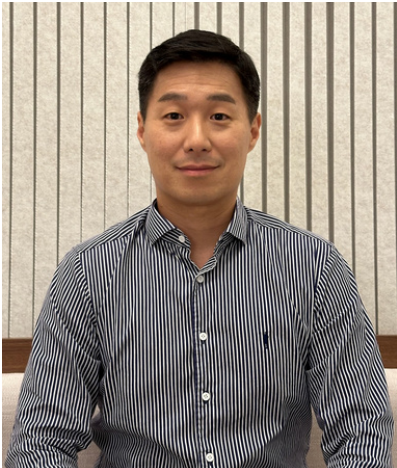
Attachment theory is pivotal in understanding the link between early relationships and mental health in children and adolescents. Secure attachments established in infancy form a foundation for emotional resilience and healthy socioemotional development, while insecure attachments are associated with increased vulnerability to mental health disorders. Neurobiological research underscores the impact of early caregiving experiences on brain development, highlighting how secure attachments shape neural circuits involved in emotion regulation and social cognition.

Therapeutic interventions informed by attachment theory prioritize strengthening caregiver-child bonds to mitigate the effects of early adversity. Approaches such as Circle of Security or attachment-based psychotherapy focus on promoting secure attachments and healing relational trauma. By equipping caregivers with the skills to attune to their child's needs, these interventions offer a reparative pathway towards optimal developmental outcomes and mental well-being in children and adolescents.

Embracing attachment theory in clinical practice enhances our understanding of the profound influence of early relationships on mental health and guides evidence-based interventions to foster healthy attachment bonds.

### **In this newsletter you will find:**

↓ Pitstop Presents, Pitstop Insights and more. Keep Reading!



## **Dr Ji Won Seo**

Child and Adolescent Advanced Psychiatry Registrar

### **Qualifications**

MBBS

### **Special Interests:**

- Mood and anxiety disorders
- Neurodevelopmental disorders (ADHD, ASD)
- Trauma and Stressor-related disorders
- Obsessive-Compulsive and related disorders

### **Who do you think would benefit from your service?**

Any age in the child and adolescent group, including parents who have difficulties looking after neonates or toddlers, for making a small change will bring about significant benefits, helping young people reach their born potential when they grow up.

### **What do you enjoy most about your job?**

Talking to young people is so much fun. I get to learn from the purest and most creative minds. It is my privilege to partake in their intergenerational stories.

### **What are some plans you have for 2024?**

I would like to graduate from my trainee years and become a fully-fledged consultant psychiatrist. The outcome of my last exam is pending in the near future.

### **Why do you enjoy working at Pitstop Health?**

Pitstop Health's culture is built on a supportive, collegiate environment in which formulations can be professionally shared among clinicians to take a sound approach to recovery.

# Pitstop Insights: Attachment Styles in Patient-Provider Relationships

## Why is this important?

Attachment styles play a significant role in shaping how individuals form and maintain relationships throughout their lives. Secure attachment, characterized by a sense of safety and trust in early caregivers, enables individuals to explore the world with confidence and effectively regulate their emotions (~55-60% of population). In contrast, insecure attachment styles (~35-40%), including avoidant, anxious/preoccupied, and disorganized, stem from early experiences where needs were inconsistently met, leading to difficulties in forming healthy relationships.

These attachment styles have been linked to various adverse impacts on emotional regulation and distress tolerance. For instance, **individuals with disorganized attachment styles may be at higher risk for poor treatment outcomes**, while those with **preoccupied attachment styles may experience greater levels of chronic pain and disability**. Understanding patients' attachment styles can therefore be crucial for clinicians in providing tailored care and support.

## Assessment Tips

- Assess a patient's observed comfort in sharing information with you
- Explore their previous relationships and experiences with other care providers
- Observe whether patients present as overly dependent (preoccupied) or excessively independent (avoidant)
- Consider asking them to complete the Adult Attachment Questionnaire if you prefer an objective scoring to support your evaluation

## Treatment Approach

- Preoccupied patients will likely need more support, reassurance and regular contact
- Avoidant attachment will need time to develop trust; hence engagement should slowly increase over time
- **Consider referring them to a psychologist/counsellor if you are unable to provide regular support for these individuals.**

# Meet Our Team



**Dr Patrik Ho**  
Child, Adolescent and Adult  
Psychiatrist

**Waiting Period: 3 months**



**Dr Jack Hsu**  
Child and Adolescent  
Psychiatrist

**Good availability**



**Dr Ji Won Seo**  
Child and Adolescent  
Psychiatry Advanced Trainee

**Good availability**



**Alex Catt**  
Registered Psychologist

**Good availability**



**An Yang**  
Counsellor / Play Therapist

**Good availability**



**Bonnie Kang**  
Senior Speech Pathologist

**Good availability**



**Nicole Ho**  
Clinical Psychologist

**Good availability**



**Shawn Wang**  
Clinical and Organisational  
Psychology Registrar

**Good availability**

## Referral Process

**Medical Objects is our preferred referral method.**

Alternatively, send the referral to [reception@pitstophealth.com.au](mailto:reception@pitstophealth.com.au)



[reception@pitstophealth.com.au](mailto:reception@pitstophealth.com.au)



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