

Five behavioral stages occur during successful feeding. Recognizing these steps can assist nurses in identifying potential feeding problems caused by improper feeding techniques. **Prefeeding behavior**, such as crying or fussing, demonstrates the infant's level of arousal and degree of hunger. To encourage the infant to grasp the breast properly, it is preferable to begin feeding during the quiet alert state before the infant becomes upset. **Approach behavior** is indicated by sucking movements or the rooting reflex. **Attachment behavior** includes activities that occur from the time the infant receives the nipple and sucks (sometimes more pronounced during initial attempts at breastfeeding). **Consummatory behavior** consists of coordinated sucking and swallowing. Persistent gagging might indicate unsuccessful consummatory behavior. **Satiety behavior** is observed when infants let the parent know that they are satisfied, usually by falling asleep.

Promote Parent–Infant Bonding (Attachment)

The process of parenting is based on a relationship between the parent and infant. Neonates are complex individuals, capable of influencing and shaping their environments, particularly their interaction with significant others. Promoting positive parent–child relationships necessitates an understanding of behavioral steps in attachment, variables that enhance or hinder this process, and methods of teaching parents to develop a stronger relationship with their children, especially by recognizing potential problems (see also [Assessment of Attachment Behaviors](#), earlier in the chapter).

Infant Behavior

Nurses must appreciate the individuality and uniqueness of each infant. According to the individual temperament, infants change and shape the environment, which influences their future development (see [Patterns of Sleep and Activity](#), earlier in the chapter). An infant who sleeps 20 hours a day will be exposed to fewer stimuli than one who sleeps 16 hours a day. In turn, each infant will likely elicit a different response from parents. An infant who is quiet, undemanding, and passive may receive much less attention than one who is responsive, alert, and active. Behavioral characteristics such as irritability and consolability can influence the