



FIG 19-1 In the protest phase of separation anxiety, children cry loudly and are inconsolable in their grief for the parent. (© 2015 [iStock.com.](https://www.istock.com/))



FIG 19-2 During the despair phase of separation anxiety, children are sad, lonely, and uninterested in food and play.

The third stage is **detachment**, also called **denial**. Superficially, it appears that the child has finally adjusted to the loss. The child becomes more interested in the surroundings, plays with others, and seems to form new relationships. However, this behavior is the result of resignation and is not a sign of contentment. The child detaches from the parent in an effort to escape the emotional pain