How Parenthood Shaped the Life of Maisie

Eric C Yu

University of Michigan

Humans learn through the influences of external sources. Often times, our perceptions of what we know and understand can be quickly traced back to early childhood experiences. In the video, *A Home for Maisie*, Maisie is identified as a problem child because of her behavioral patterns and how she lashes out; because of this, Maisie has difficulty finding a permanent home. Many families decided to send Maisie back into foster care, but what could Maisie do to be better? Where did these problems actually originate? As seen in various studies, these kinds of behaviors can be attributed to attachment issues that resulted from an early age, the level of quality caregiving in a home, and the relationship built between a parent and his or her child.

In describing the relationship between a parent and child, Mary Ainsworth identified four main attachment patterns. Children could have Secure Attachment, Insecure Avoidant Attachment, Insecure Resistant Attachment, or Insecure Disorganized Attachment. From her actions in the video, Maisie appeared to have Insecure Resistant Attachment. Ainsworth defines Insecure Resistance as “seeking closeness with a parent, but when parents leave and return, the child displays angry, resistant behavior with no way to comfort.” (Schreier 2016a). We see this angry type of behavior at the beginning of the video when Maisie shouts things such as: “don’t touch me” and “gonna kill you, gonna kill you.” An example of extreme violence is presented as well when Maisie punches out and even bruises her foster mom, Sue.