



# Reactive Attachment Disorder: A Parent's Guide



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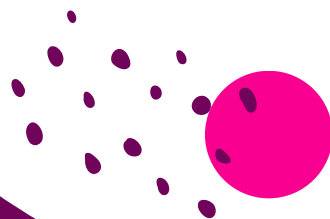
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# What is Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD)?

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Reactive Attachment Disorder is a complex psychological condition that can occur when children do not form secure, healthy emotional bonds with their primary caregivers during early development (before 5 years of age). It can lead to severe difficulties in forming relationships and can impact a child's social and emotional well-being.





# Types of Reactive Attachment Disorder

There are two primary types of RAD:

## **Inhibited Type:**

Children with this type tend to be excessively withdrawn, emotionally detached, and may have difficulty seeking or accepting comfort from their caregivers.

## **Disinhibited Type:**

Children with disinhibited RAD display overly familiar behaviour with strangers and may lack typical boundaries. They may not be discerning in their choice of attachment figures.



# Checklist for Parents: Characteristics of Reactive Attachment Disorder

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To help you identify potential signs of RAD in your child, here is a checklist of common characteristics:

- ✓ Lack of interest in social interactions
- ✓ Difficulty showing or receiving affection
- ✓ Avoidance of physical or emotional closeness
- ✓ Trouble establishing and maintaining relationships
- ✓ Difficulty trusting others
- ✓ Acting out, aggressive behaviour
- ✓ Emotional dysregulation
- ✓ Control issues
- ✓ Inconsistent or minimal seeking of or response to comfort when distressed



# How is Reactive Attachment Disorder Diagnosed?

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Reactive Attachment Disorder is typically diagnosed by Mental Health Professionals, such as Psychologists or Psychiatrists, who assess the child's behaviour, history, and interactions. They may use clinical interviews, observation, and standardised assessments to make a diagnosis.



# If You Suspect Your Child has RAD

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If you suspect that your child may have Reactive Attachment Disorder, take the following steps:

**1. Seek Professional Help:** Consult with a mental health professional who specialises in child and adolescent issues.

**2. Share Concerns with Caregivers:** Communicate openly with your child's caregivers, teachers, and any other adults involved in their life about your concerns.

**3. Educate Yourself:** Learn more about RAD and how it impacts children to better understand and support your child.



# Next Steps to Support a Child with RAD:

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Once a diagnosis is confirmed, the following steps can help support your child:

**1. Therapeutic Support:** Engage in therapy, such as attachment-based therapies, play therapy, and family therapy.

**2. Create a Safe and Stable Environment:** Consistency and predictability in your child's life can help build trust.

**3. Build Trust Slowly:** Be patient and give your child time to develop trust in you and others.

**4. Set Boundaries:** Maintain age-appropriate boundaries to provide structure and guidance.





# Strategies for Supporting a Child with

## RAD:

At Inspire we use and suggest a range of strategies and tools to support children with RAD, some of these are listed below:

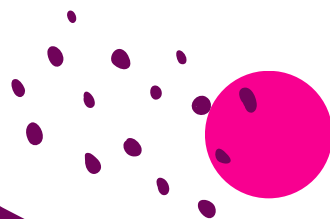
- Therapeutic play
- Structured routine
- Positive reinforcement
- Create a safe space
- Emotional coaching
- Attachment parenting
- Encourage emotional expression
- Empathetic listening
- Consistent caregiving

- Attachment-focused activities
  - Develop trust through reliability
  - Social skill building
  - Understanding triggers
  - Behaviour modification
  - Psychoeducation
  - Mindfulness practices
  - Self-care for parents
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Reactive Attachment Disorder can be challenging, but with early intervention, therapy, and consistent support, it is possible for children to develop secure attachments and lead fulfilling lives. Always remember that you are not alone, and there is help available. Please reach out to Inspire Allied Health and Education Group to see how we can support your child and family.





# Contact

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