

Children develop attachment relationships with caregivers they trust to care for and protect them, and children's care reflects the interplay of cultural and ecological processes. Central to children's care and relationships is the importance communities place on action that is directed by one's own thoughts and feelings (autonomy) or by the thoughts and feelings of others (social harmony). In the former, attachment relationships are characterized by recurring separation and reunions, and learning centers on exploration; in the latter, by continuous contact and care and accommodation to others and context. This view of attachment represents revised thinking, and this chapter considers cultural differences in conceptions of good care, competent children, and close relationships in light of traditional and revised attachment theory and research. Also considered is current understanding of the ecological circumstances of resource uncertainty during human evolution that likely preferenced infants capable of developing multiple, simultaneous attachment relationships.