



**mum or dad**



**baby**

**mum or dad**

Smiles at baby.

**baby**

Looks at Mum/Dad's face and sees dilated pupils – a sign that their sympathetic nervous system is pleurably aroused.

**mum or dad**

Registers the baby's positive response and keeps smiling and engaging the baby. Also experiences release of pleasurable chemicals in the brain.

**baby**

Baby's sympathetic nervous system is automatically aroused – pupils dilate and heart beats faster.

**baby**

A natural feel-good chemical (neuropeptide) is released in the prefrontal cortex, which plays a key role in our emotional life. This chemical helps build connections between nerve cells, thus stimulating brain development and making baby feel good.

**baby**

At the same time, another chemical (dopamine) is released in the brain stem. This chemical helps brain cells take up energy (in the form of glucose), so helping new tissue to grow.

**mum or dad**

**END RESULT:**  
Mum/Dad finds the interactions with the baby pleasurable, and is more likely to want to repeat the experience.

**baby**

**END RESULT:**  
Baby learns that interactions with their parents can be pleasurable, and is therefore more likely to respond positively to future interactions.