Basic Needs of Children

I. What are "basic needs of children"?
   · basic, fundamental experiences or environmental conditions found through research to be essential to optimal child growth and development

   Historically (and even today): most child guidance advice has centered on how to control children's behavior and/or what adults think children need. We now have research-based information on what children actually need.

II. Why are the "basic needs of children" important?
   · they contribute to positive/optimal growth and development of children
   · the majority of developmental and behavioral "problems" or difficulties stem from young children not having their basic needs met

   Thus, they should be the starting point for parenting knowledge and skills (since w/o this knowledge, parents are uninformed re: what children need and are thus less likely to be able to meet their needs)

   Meeting children's needs doesn't spoil them. Rather, it teaches them that that they are valued, helps them to develop trust, decreases stress and distress in the child, assists them in proceeding down a more optimal developmental trajectory, and decreases the likelihood of developmental and behavioral problems (e.g., Brown, 2000; Dunn & Kontos, 1997).

III. What are the basic needs of children?
   A. (Kamptner, 2005)
      1. attachment: connectedness, warmth, love, security, sensitive attunement (→child is respected, feels valued, etc.)
      2. time and attention from parents* (e.g., Kelly, 1996)
      3. feeling understood, that someone's "got it" about them; having the sense of being someone who counts (which comes from the capacity of the parent to empathically tune in to child); having at least one adult who feels that they are the most special, wonderful person in the world* (e.g., Karen, 1994; Siegel, 2006)
4. individuality: treats/views young child as a unique individual who has own thoughts, feelings, interests*

Also:
- self-efficacy
- praise, recognition
- autonomy and opportunities for self-expression
- new experiences, stimulation, opportunities to explore
- responsibility (fosters autonomy and effective personal functioning)
- (...also consider Erikson's tasks for each developmental stage...)

- attachment (i.e., nurturing relationships)
- physical protection, safety, and regulation
- experiences tailored to individual differences
- developmentally-appropriate experiences
- limit-setting, structure, and expectations
- stable, supportive communities and cultural continuity

* is a part of a secure attachment parent-child relationship