

Human Development

Chapter 8 – Early Childhood: Personality & Sociocultural Development

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Normally, self-control & social competence improve dramatically 2yr. to 6 yr.

Can be “terrible twos” or terrific twos” but immediate gratification is the driving force.

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Expressions of dependency are direct and physical.

By contrast 6yr. have better skills in dealing with anger and frustration. At this age they have developed their own personal styles.

Theorists disagree about major influences and interaction affecting personality development, socialization and enculturation. Three theoretical perspectives dominate.

Psychodynamic perspectives – emphasizes child’s feeling, drives and conflicts. (Must learn acceptable ways to deal with emotions – Freud) (Balance between autonomy and dependency – Erikson)

Social learning perspectives – links between cognition, behavior and environment.

Cognitive-development perspectives – emphasizes child’s thoughts and concepts as organizers of their social behavior.

Erikson added a personality dimension to the neo-Freudian perspective and made it more socially driven.

Erikson’s 8 Stages of Psycho (internal) – Social (environmental) Development

1. Trust (infancy)
2. Autonomy (toddlers)
3. Initiative (pre-school) – explore own ideas
4. Industry (elementary school) – production
5. Identity (adolescents)
6. Intimacy (early adulthood) – giving all, commitment to other & career
7. Generative (middle adulthood) – family, career, run the world
8. Integrity (late adulthood) – retirement, strength

Developmental Issues and Coping Patterns

New experiences are not always happy ones.

Children must learn how to deal with positive and negative emotions and they must resolve developmental conflicts – autonomy.

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Fear and Anxiety

Fear – response to a specific stimulus or situation.

Anxiety – a more generalized emotional state not associated with a specific situation.

Causes of Fear and Anxiety

Anxiety

- Parents will leave or stop loving them.
- Withdraw of love or attention.
- Physical threats.
- Birth of new baby.
- Internal unacceptable feelings

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Fear

- Doctors/shots
- Dentist/drill
- Dark
- Strangers

Fear and Anxiety are normal feelings and children must develop ways of coping with them.

When not extreme, fear & anxiety can enhance learning.

Coping with Fear and Anxiety

Force & ridicule is usually counterproductive. Ignoring the situation won’t make it go away.

Gentle sympathetic encouragement to confront and overcome is better.

Systematic desensitization may be required for fears that have reached phobia status. Practice relaxation techniques as more realistic representation of the fear are presented.

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Bandura’s participant modeling of appropriate response may be more effective.

Reduce exposure to violent situations – parents fighting, violent TV, etc.

Honig Strategies

1. Learn to recognize and interpret stress.
2. Provide warm, secure base to regain confidence.
3. Talk about feelings.
4. Accept temporary immature behaviors.
5. Explain circumstances at age appropriate level.

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Defense Mechanisms

Psychoanalytic theory says we develop strategies for coping called *defense mechanisms*.

Identification – taking on the attitudes, values, belief of others in order to be more like the ones they want to identify with.

Denial – refusal to admit that the situation exists

Displacement – redirecting fear or anxiety to someone/something else.

Projection – Attributing undesirable thoughts to someone else.

Rationalization – persuading yourself that you don’t want what you can’t have.

Reaction formation – acting in a way opposite to your inclination.

Regression – returning to a more infantile behavior to deal with stress.

Repression – Extreme form of denial where the person literally does not remember the event or circumstance.

Withdrawal – physically or mentally removing yourself from an unpleasant situation.

Historical and Cultural Influences

Cultural beliefs and attitudes influence the degree to which fear is good or bad and to the appropriate response to fear.

Fears & anxieties have a cultural bias.
100 yr. ago – wolves and bears
50 yr. ago – goblins and bogeymen
Today – extraterrestrials and killer robots

Expressing fears is cultural bias.
Western – showing fear is frowned upon
Navajo – fear is normal and healthy

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Emotion Regulation and Self-Regulation

During the ages between 2 and 8, the emphasis is on self regulation – learning to control anger and distress.

Western – *emotion regulation* (Kopp) – inhibit display of positive & negative emotion (e.g. anger/distress, affection/joy, sensation/sexual curiosity)

Compliance – obeying the requests of caregivers

Shame and Guilt – begin in 2 yr. or 3 yr.
Shame – involves desire to undo aspects of self.
Guilt – involves desire to undo aspects of behavior.

Failure to develop emotion regulation may lead to emotional problems, disruptive behaviors, personality disorders, autism.

Distress and Anger

Children learn early not to display negative emotions in public.

Parental expectations increase (e.g. OK for infant to cry when hungry but not for 6 yr.)

Children who still had temper tantrums at 10 yr. had trouble as adults – jobs, marriage, etc.

They learn to channel anger into positive motivation

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Affection and Joy

2yr. display positive feelings – jump up & down clap hands when excited.

Openly joyful or affectionate behaviors may be acceptable for 2 yr. but may become embarrassing in 6 yr.

Sensuality and Sexual Curiosity

2 yr. are sensual creatures – they like gooey, messy things, softness/stiffness of clothes on skin, sights, lights, tastes, and smells.

Masturbation & sex play are common. This is oppressed in west – not so in other parts of the world.

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Developmental Conflicts

As children develop, they experience the conflicts of need for autonomy vs. need for dependence as well as issues of mastery and competence.

Autonomy and Connectedness

Children <2 yr. are fairly cooperative. At around 2 yr., need for autonomy can lead to numerous temper tantrums.

3 yr. are less likely to break rules as a result of developing sense of morality.

2 yr. cling to mothers where older (2½ - 3 yr.) maintain more verbal than physical contact.

Mastery and Competence

Early children learn about & how to control their bodies. This leads to self-confidence.

Initiative vs. *Guilt* – (3 yr. – 6 yr.) this primary developmental conflict involves mastery and competence.

Initiative – the purposefulness of children as they ambitiously explore their surroundings.

Guilt is inevitable as they go against parents' wishes to explore.

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Excessive guilt can dampen initiative. The balance for parents is to instill discipline without creating too much anxiety or guilt.

Learning Competence

Children need to master their environment and feel competent and successful. If they do not, they may give up and become passive. They lack *learning competence*.

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Aggression and Pro-Social Behavior

Children learn to control aggression in favor of helping and sharing.

Freud – aggression is an inherent drive.

Social learning theory – whether or not inborn, variation is a result of reinforcement, punishment, imitation & modeling.

Aggression

Hostile aggression – behavior intended to harm or establish dominance.

Instrumental aggression – goal directed behavior that causes unintended harm.

Assertiveness – standing up for your rights. Does not involve harm.

Aggression may be physical or verbal, directed or displaced.

It is a common response to anger/hostility, associated with shame more than guilt.

Physical aggression increases at the beginning of early childhood then declines to be replaced by verbal aggression.

It declines as other developmental and problem solving skills are acquired. (e.g. 6-7 yr. are less egocentric and understand others POV)

Frustration and Aggression

Frustration-aggression hypothesis – (refuted as the only source of aggression) states that all aggression is derived from frustration (&) all frustration leads to aggression.

Modeling of aggression can also cause aggression (e.g. parents, peers, TV, music, movies)

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Punishment and Aggression

Punishment can create a tendency towards aggression. When spanking is used to curb aggression, children became more aggressive.

Modeling and Aggression

Observing aggressive models can influence anti-social behavior.

Modeling increases when observers perceive a similarity to the model, or when the model is perceived to be powerful or competent.

TV provides many powerful role models.

US children watch TV more than any other activity except sleep.

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Observing TV violence leads to perception that aggression is common place and acceptable. This view is disputed but research supports the finding.

TV often portrays certain people in stereotypical fashion and in general present and unrealistic view of society.

TV can also present and promote pro-social behavior. (e.g. cooperation, sharing, affection, friendship, persistence, control of aggression, and coping) These programs demonstrate positive effects.

Pro-Social Behavior

Pro-Social Behavior – actions intended to benefit others without expectation of reward.

Altruism – unselfish concern for the welfare of others.

Develops early in childhood, as early as 2 yr.

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Judging when behavior is socially appropriate depends on the family/culture/circumstances.

Conditioning, Learning, and Pro-Social Behavior

Behavioral shaping of pro-social behavior is difficult to establish. (Punishment of pro-social behavior may be unethical and rewarding pro-social behavior could also be described as modeling pro-social behavior.)

Role-playing – experiencing another's POV

Induction – being told how pro-social behavior is beneficial.

This is inconclusive.

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Pro-social behaviors change with age and are culturally based in ways that reflect the values of the culture.

Modeling and Pro-Social Behavior

Children who watch someone being generous become more generous themselves.

Models are more effective when child identifies with them.

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Peers, Play, and Development of Social Skills

Children influence each other in many ways.

Bandura's "BoBo doll" experiments showed

- Boys more physical
- Girls more verbal
- Both B/G more influenced by male model behavior

Play and Social Skills

Parten – identified 5 levels of social interaction in young.

1. *Solitary play* – play by themselves
2. *On-looker play* – simply observes others (2 yr.)
3. *Parallel play* – play along side but no interaction (2 yr.)
4. *Associative play* – interact & share materials but no coordination. (4-5 yr.)
5. *Cooperative play* – engage in single activity together. (5-7 yr. +)

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4 yr. engage in social pretend play sharing fantasies with agreed upon rules. This encourages cooperation and other social skills.

Styles and meanings of social play have pronounced cultural meanings. (see table p. 249)

Popularity and the Development of Social Skills

Popularity/unpopularity can be stable over years.

Unpopular children may be more aggressive, withdrawn, "out of synch", abused or neglected, overly sheltered.

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Characteristics of Popular Children in Kindergarten

Initiate activity by moving into group slowly, relevant comments, share information
Sensitive to needs and activities of others
Don't force themselves on other children
Content to play along side other children
Possess strategies for maintaining friendships
Show helpful behavior
Are good at maintaining conversation
Are good at sharing information
Are responsive to other children's suggestions
Possess strategies for conflict resolution
Are less likely to use aggression or physical solutions

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Adults can help unpopular children by teaching social skills directly through modeling and induction and offer and encourage opportunities for successful experiences with peers.

The Role of Imaginary Companions

65% of young children have imaginary companions. This can be a positive social tool

They seem to help children learn social skills and practice conversation.

Possible link with better cognitive and emotional abilities and symbolic thinking.

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Understanding Self and Others

Cognitive-development theorist believe that social behavior coincides concept of self.

Self-Concept

Self-concept develops as a result of self-evaluation + parental-evaluation + peer-evaluation + teacher-evaluation.

Children who are more social have more fully developed self concepts – (Harter, 1983)

Attitudes about self develop early. Often are direct reflections of what others think about them. Tell kid they good/bad, they will believe it and become that.

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In trying to find out about themselves, they will compare themselves to others, ask where they came from, why feet grow, are they good/bad, and on and on and on.

They define themselves in physical terms and possessions.

Personal script – a set of attitudes and beliefs that regulates behavior.

Self and Gender

Sex – genetically determined – biological

Gender – culturally based and acquired

Male-Female Differences During Childhood

Male babies are slightly longer and heavier than female.

Girls have slightly more mature skeletons and more responsive to touch.

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Toddler boys more aggressive, girls more verbal.

Girls enter puberty before boys.

No difference in sociability, self-esteem, motivation, rote learning, and analytical skills.

Gender and Socialization

Gender has two related components: *gender-related behavior* and *gender concepts*.

Gender specific behaviors present in most cultures by 5 yr. And some learn by 2½ yr.

Children often exaggerate gender-specific behaviors and conform to *gender-role stereotypes*.

Mothers tend to be more physical with boys and more talkative with girls.

Parents react more positively to gender specific behaviors appropriate to their sex.

Mothers teach gender specific roles more so than fathers.

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Gender Schemes

Gender schemes – standards (i.e. stereotypes) of behaviors and attitudes appropriate to the sex.

Gender identity – knowledge of who you are as male or female and ability to make judgements about others. By 2½ yr. most can label others as male or female. But a 3 yr. may believe if a boy puts on a dress he becomes a girl.

Gender constancy – understanding (by 5-7 yr.) that gender is stable regardless of superficial appearances.

Self-socialization – intrinsic desire to acquire values, interests and behaviors consistent with their sex.

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Androgyny

Androgynous personality – Characteristics of a person who in high in both desirable masculine and feminine traits.

Androgynous personality is formed by parental attitudes that encourage cross gender behaviors. It is found more with regards to girls than boys.

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Social Concepts and Rules

Children begin internalizing social rules and behaviors early. At 2. yr. they may imitate verbal patterns. (Saying no when doing a bad thing.)

As children grow they see themselves and others with stable character attributes.

They want to understand the motivations and thoughts of others.

Children's Friendships

They may not know what friendship is or what it requires but 4-5 yr. can have close caring relationships over a long period.

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Children's Disputes

Disputes in young children shows sophisticated level of social understanding. (It's my turn! Stop, you'll break it!)

Family Dynamics

Many personality and environmental family dynamics affect development.

Parenting Styles

Parenting styles vary depending on parent's and child's personality, the individual situation and the culture.

Crucial dimensions are *control* and *warmth*.

Parental control – how restrictive parents are in limiting the child's freedom.

Parental warmth – how much affection and approval the parents display.

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Four Parenting Styles

Authoritative – (moderate high control / high warmth) Children are self reliant, competent, high self-esteem.

Authoritarian – (high control / low warmth) Children are fearful, moody, unassertive.

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Permissive – (low control / high warmth) Children are aggressive, rebellious, self-indulgent impulsive.

Indifferent – (low control / low warmth) Children may be destructive and delinquent.

Effects of Different Parenting Styles

Parenting styles vary across cultures with no universal "best". Authoritarian may produce high academic achievers.

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Traditional Parents

In two-parent families, parents often have different parenting styles that balance out.

Negotiation of Shared Goals

Maccoby said that children affect parents and reciprocal interaction affects the family climate.

In some homes the parents rule, in others, the children do.

As children grow, more negotiation is needed.

When either parents or children dominate all the time negotiation becomes difficult and family atmosphere is unstable.

Extremes weaken the socialization process.

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Child Abuse

What constitutes child abuse changes with the times and the culture. Now in the U.S. deliberately causing injury or death to a child is abuse.

Number of child-abuse cases each year

Physical	750,000
Sexual	380,000
Neglect	1,150,000
Emotional	175,000
Other	200,000

Physical Abuse

Abused children number about 1 million per year in U.S. with similar rates in other Western countries. Most often perpetrated by child's own parents – mothers and fathers. It is always accompanied by Psychological Abuse.

Psychological Abuse

It may be even more damaging than physical abuse.

Rejection – refusing requests or needs while implying strong dislikes.

Denial of emotional responsiveness – passive withholding of affection. Coldness or unresponsiveness to communication.

Degradation – humiliation of children in public and assaults on their dignity and intelligence.

Terrorization – forced to witness abuse of a loved one or threats of personal abuse.

Isolation – refusing association with friends or participation in family activities.

Exploitation – taking advantage of innocence or weakness. (e.g. sexual abuse)

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Explanations of Child Abuse

Psychiatric – this view treats the parent as sick and in need of treatment.

Sociological – looks at environmental and sociological factors. Abuse happens more often in poverty-stricken homes. High unemployment increases abuse.

Situational – also environmental factors but more emphasis on family interactions with children as active participants.

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Discipline and Self-Regulation

1950s & 1960s emphasized warnings against strong disciplinary practices. Late 1960s 1970s and 1980s stated need for strong external controls.

1. Foster nurturing atmosphere
2. Suggest, model and reward positive behaviors over punishment.
3. Firmly and consistently enforce realistic expectations.
4. Avoid use of power.
5. Foster sense of control over self and environment.
6. Use verbal reasoning (induction) to help understand rules.

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Sibling Dynamics

The five major dimensions of sibling relationships are rivalry, *attachment*, *security*, *connectedness*, and *shared fantasy*. Judy Dunn

Sibling status – birth order.

IQ differences based on birth order tend to be small.

Older children are powerful role models.