

12. Childhood

Objectives

- List and explain the four major areas of human development
- Understand a baby's early beginnings
- Summarize the ways in which a child develops, physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally
- Identify ways in which family and friends influence child development

Vocabulary

attachment	emotional development	physical development	social competence
cognitive development	gender roles	post-traumatic stress disorder	social development
critical periods	maturation	prenatal development	socialization
developmental psychology	moral development	resilience	temperament

Background

Early childhood development is both fascinating and miraculous. The development of babies in the womb is dramatic, as is their entrance into the world through childbirth. With only their natural genetic "materials" and the love and support of family, they learn and develop rapidly through nurturing, exploration, and play.

Students are challenged to see childhood in terms of the four key areas of developmental psychology: physical, cognitive, social, and emotional. They learn that each area of development is interrelated, but that children do not necessarily mature evenly in all areas.

Students learn about three trimesters of prenatal development and newborn babies' first year of development, in which newborns adjust to life with the support of their parents as their central nervous systems grows to help them develop needed skills and behavior. Students familiarize themselves with the other important first-year milestones of childhood.

Students discover the importance of the emotional bond of parent and child, since attachment to parents represents a critical security blanket for children to feel safe to explore, play, and learn. They learn about

a child's natural temperament and evaluate it in terms of its influence on personality development.

Students next consider a child's physical development, including the "growing pains" of learning to walk. They move on to consider cognitive development, how children learn to think and use language. They next consider a child's social and emotional development, including learning to play, socialize, and develop moral judgment.

The goal for students is to understand these critical stages of development and to realize how each area can be threatened by family or environmental developments such as divorce, death in the family, poverty, or abuse.

Further Resources

Clarke-Stewart, A., and S. Friedman. *Child Development: Infancy through Adolescence*. New York: Wiley & Sons, 1987.

Fogel, A., and Melson, G. *Child Development: Individual, Family, and Society*. St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing, 1987.

For Discussion

Review

1. What are the four major areas of study in human development?
2. What are the four stages of cognitive development?
3. What are three theories or approaches in the study of moral development?
4. According to the U.S. government, what are the four types of maltreatment?

Critical Thinking

1. To what extent do you think ADHD is a legitimate disorder or just a symptom of unstable childhood development?
2. Why is attachment so critical in early child development?
3. Do you agree with the theoretical notion that people are “born with no moral sense”? Why or why not?
4. Which do you think has a more negative impact on child development: divorce or poverty? Why?
5. Do you think there should be laws against emotional abuse? Why or why not?

Activities

1. The Emotional Bond

In pairs, direct students to examine the emotional bond between mother and child. Have them consider and list the separate needs and issues of both people to determine what specific, realistic conditions can cause the bond to break. Is there a specific age range when it is appropriate to “separate”?

2. Debate: Child Development & Family Problems

Divide students into five teams, with each representing one of the “family” issues that can affect development: parenting style, divorce, death in the family, poverty, and abuse. Have teams evaluate and present all the different ways their “family” area might impact the development of a toddler of two years.

3. Internet: Child Abuse Sites

Direct the students to research Web sites dealing with child abuse. Have them examine the content and issues involved and present to the class any impressions, information, or statistics that caught their attention. Encourage discussion.

4. Special Sources: Bringing Up Baby

Ask students to use the library to find books for new parents on raising a newborn baby. Ask the class to make a list of issues and compare books’ advice on these issues. What specifics “dos and don’ts” do they emphasize? Which books seem most valuable?

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As you read Chapter 12, write an answer to each question below.

1. What are the stages of prenatal development?

2. What are some of the important aspects of the baby's first year of life?

3. If a child has not learned a language by puberty, why may it be too late to learn to communicate?

4. How is child play significant?

5. What are some family factors that can affect child development?

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Find the best answer for each item. Then circle that answer.

1. What is the field that studies the different changes that occur as an infant grows into an adult?
 - a. environmental psychology
 - b. behavioral psychology
 - c. developmental psychology
 - d. Gestalt psychology
2. What is the area of human development that involves growth over time of the body and its sexual development?
 - a. physical development
 - b. cognitive development
 - c. social development
 - d. emotional development
3. What is the area that involves the study of changes over time in the way we think, learn, reason, and acquire language?
 - a. physical development
 - b. cognitive development
 - c. social development
 - d. emotional development
4. What term do psychologists use to describe the emotional bond between infants and their parents?
 - a. maturation
 - b. attachment
 - c. resilience
 - d. socialization
5. What is the term used to describe a person's individual style of responding emotionally to events or situations?
 - a. socialization
 - b. maturation
 - c. resilience
 - d. temperament
6. What is the mastery of the social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary to succeed as a member of society?
 - a. socialization
 - b. social development
 - c. social competence
 - d. social maintenance
7. What are the specific times in development when the environment has the greatest impact for development?
 - a. moments of clarity
 - b. moments of insight
 - c. critical masses
 - d. critical periods
8. What do you call the expressions of identity associated with maleness and femaleness?
 - a. gender criteria
 - b. gender roles
 - c. sexual transference
 - d. sexual innuendo
9. What term is used to describe how children develop the system of values on which they base their actions in life?
 - a. moral development
 - b. social development
 - c. emotional development
 - d. physical development
10. What are symptoms felt by someone who has experienced or witnessed traumatic events like child abuse, violence, or war?
 - a. pre-traumatic stress syndrome
 - b. post-traumatic stress syndrome
 - c. prenatal stress syndrome
 - d. postnatal stress syndrome

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Read each description, and write the letter of the correct term on the line.

1. The area of human development that involves the forming of our own sense of self is _____.
 - a. physical development
 - b. cognitive development
 - c. social development
 - d. emotional development
2. _____ is NOT an accurate representation of a childhood growth stage.
 - a. Prenatal (birth to 1-1/2 years)
 - b. Toddlers (1-1/2 years to 3 years)
 - c. Preschoolers (3 to 6 years)
 - d. Adolescents (12 to 20 years)
3. Babies usually say their first word at _____.
 - a. 4–6 months
 - b. 7–8 months
 - c. 9–10 months
 - d. 11–12 months
4. A newborn's physical and behavioral development depends most on the _____.
 - a. use of natural reflexes
 - b. ability to see and hear
 - c. development of the infant's neurotransmitters
 - d. maturation of the central nervous system
5. This statement is NOT accurate: _____.
 - a. social interactions have little effect on temperament
 - b. inhibited children are likely to become inhibited adults
 - c. temperament could be the root from which an individual's personality grows
 - d. different types of temperament are "easy," "difficult," and "slow to warm up"
6. Piaget's stage of cognitive development in which children begin to use abstract thinking is the _____.
 - a. sensorimotor stage (birth to 2 years)
 - b. preoperational stage (2 to 7 years)
 - c. concrete operational stage (7 to 11 years)
 - d. formal operational stage (12 years to adult)
7. It is untrue that _____.
 - a. boys and girls are generally socialized to play differently
 - b. boys usually are encouraged to be nurturing, girls to be independent
 - c. there are inborn as well as biological reasons for differences between the sexes
 - d. attempts are being made to better equalize socialization based on gender
8. Erikson's psychosocial theory of development holds that a child overcomes feelings of inadequacy _____.
 - a. as a toddler (1 to 3 years)
 - b. as a preschooler (3 to 5 years)
 - c. at school age (6 to 12 years)
 - d. at adolescence (12 to 19 years)
9. _____ is NOT a factor that causes some children to react to death differently from others.
 - a. Nutrition
 - b. Age
 - c. Religious belief
 - d. Closeness to the person who has died
10. Swearing at children is considered _____.

a. physical abuse	c. child neglect
b. sexual abuse	d. emotional abuse

Essay Question

Do you think that divorce is always harmful to children? Why or why not?