

2 Child Development

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Child development involves the biological, psychological and emotional changes that occur in human beings between birth and the conclusion of adolescence. It is—particularly from birth to five years— a foundation for a prosperous and sustainable society.

Childhood is divided into three stages of life which include early childhood, middle childhood, and late childhood (preadolescence). Early childhood typically ranges from infancy to the age of 6 years old. During this period, development is significant, as many of life's milestones happen during this time period such as first words, learning to crawl, and learning to walk. Middle childhood/preadolescence or ages 6–12 universally mark a distinctive period between major developmental transition points. Adolescence is the stage of life that typically starts around the major onset of puberty, with markers such as menarche and spermatarche, typically occurring at 12–14 years of age. It has been defined as ages 10 to 24 years old by the World Happiness Report WHR. In the course of development, the individual human progresses from dependency to increasing autonomy. It is a continuous process with a predictable sequence, yet has a unique course for every child. It does not always progress at the same rate and each stage is affected by the preceding developmental experiences. As genetic factors and events during prenatal life may strongly influence developmental changes, genetics and prenatal development usually form a part of the study of child development. Related terms include developmental psychology, referring to development from birth to death, and pediatrics, the branch of medicine relating to the care of children.

Developmental change may occur as a result of genetically controlled processes, known as maturation, or environmental factors and learning, but most commonly involves an interaction between the two. Development may also occur as a result of human nature and of human ability to learn from the environment.

There are various definitions of the periods in a child's development, since each period is a continuum with individual differences regarding starting and ending. Some age-related development periods with defined intervals include: newborn (ages 0 – 2 months); infant (ages 3 – 11 months); toddler (ages 1 – 2 years); preschooler (ages 3 – 4 years); school-aged child (ages 5 – 12 years); teens (ages 13 – 19 years); adolescence (ages 10 - 25 years); college age (ages 18 - 25 years).

Parents play a large role in a child's activities, socialization, and development; having multiple parents can add stability to a child's life and therefore encourage healthy development. A parent-child relationship with a stable foundation creates room for a child to feel both supported and safe. This environment established to express emotions is a building block that leads to children effectively regulating emotions and furthering their development. Another influential factor in children's development is the quality of their care. Child-care programs may be beneficial for childhood development such as learning capabilities and social skills.

The optimal development of children is considered vital to society and it is important to understand the social, cognitive, emotional, and educational development of children. Increased research and interest in this field has resulted in new theories and strategies, especially with regard to practices that promote development within the school systems. Some theories seek to describe a sequence of states that compose child development.

Child development stages

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Child development stages are the theoretical milestones of child development, some of which are asserted in nativist theories. This article discusses the most widely accepted developmental stages in children. There exists a wide variation in terms of what is considered "normal", caused by variations in genetic, cognitive, physical, family, cultural, nutritional, educational, and environmental factors. Many children reach some or most of these milestones at different times from the norm.

Holistic development sees the child in the round, as a whole person – physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially, morally, culturally, and spiritually. Learning about child development involves studying patterns of growth and development, from which guidelines for 'normal' development are construed. Developmental norms are sometimes called milestones – they define the recognized development pattern that children are expected to follow. Each child develops uniquely; however, using norms helps in understanding these general patterns of development while recognizing the wide variation between individuals.

One way to identify pervasive developmental disorders is if infants fail to meet the developmental milestones in time or at all.

Ministry of Women and Child Development

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The Ministry of Women and Child Development, a branch of the Government of India, is the apex body responsible for the formulation and administration of the rules, regulations, and laws relating to women and child development in India. The incumbent minister for the Ministry of Women and Child Development is Annpurna Devi, who has held the portfolio since 2024.

Developmental psychology

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Developmental psychology is the scientific study of how and why humans grow, change, and adapt across the course of their lives. Originally concerned with infants and children, the field has expanded to include adolescence, adult development, aging, and the entire lifespan. Developmental psychologists aim to explain how thinking, feeling, and behaviors change throughout life. This field examines change across three major dimensions, which are physical development, cognitive development, and social emotional development. Within these three dimensions are a broad range of topics including motor skills, executive functions, moral understanding, language acquisition, social change, personality, emotional development, self-concept, and identity formation.

Developmental psychology explores the influence of both nature and nurture on human development, as well as the processes of change that occur across different contexts over time. Many researchers are interested in the interactions among personal characteristics, the individual's behavior, and environmental factors, including the social context and the built environment. Ongoing debates in regards to developmental psychology include biological essentialism vs. neuroplasticity and stages of development vs. dynamic systems of development. While research in developmental psychology has certain limitations, ongoing studies aim to understand how life stage transitions and biological factors influence human behavior and development.

Developmental psychology involves a range of fields, such as educational psychology, child psychopathology, forensic developmental psychology, child development, cognitive psychology, ecological

psychology, and cultural psychology. Influential developmental psychologists from the 20th century include Urie Bronfenbrenner, Erik Erikson, Sigmund Freud, Anna Freud, Jean Piaget, Barbara Rogoff, Esther Thelen, and Lev Vygotsky.

Child Development Index

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The Child Development Index (CDI) is an index combining performance measures specific to children—education, health and nutrition—to produce a score on a scale of 0 to 100. A zero score would be the best. The higher the score, the worse children are faring.

The Child Development Index was developed by Save the Children UK in 2008 through the contributions of Terry McKinley, Director of the Centre for Development Policy and Research at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, with support from Katerina Kyrili.

The indicators which make up the index were chosen because they are easily available, commonly understood, and clearly indicative of child wellbeing. The three indicators are:

Health: the under-five mortality rate (the probability of dying between birth and five years of age, expressed as a percentage on a scale of 0 to 340 deaths per 1,000 live births). This means that a zero score in this component equals an under-five mortality rate of 0 deaths per 1,000 live births, and a score of 100 equals our upper bound of 340 deaths per 1,000 live births. The upper bound is higher than any country has ever reached; Niger came the closest in the 1990s with 320 under-five deaths per 1,000 live births.

Nutrition: the percentage of under fives who are moderately or severely underweight. The common definition of moderately or severely underweight, which we use here, is being below two standard deviations of the median weight for age of the reference population.

Education: the percentage of primary school-age children who are not enrolled in school. For our measure of education deprivation, we use the opposite of the Net Primary Enrolment rate—i.e., 100—the NER. This gives us the percentage of primary school-age children who are not enrolled.

What does the Child Development Index tell us about how children are faring around the world?

Are some countries making good progress in improving child well-being? Is it getting worse in other countries? The Child Development Index answers these questions. The index measures child well-being over three periods from 1990. Japan is in first place, scoring just 0.4. Niger in Africa is in 137th place, with the highest score, 58, in 2000–2006.

Overall, child well-being has improved by 34% since 1990, but progress is slow.

Comprehensive Child Development Act

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The United States Congress passed the Comprehensive Child Development Act in 1971 as part of the Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971. The bill would have implemented a multibillion-dollar national day care system designed partially to make it easier for single parents to work and care for children simultaneously, thereby alleviating strain on the welfare system. It was vetoed by President Richard Nixon.

Child Development Associate

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The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education (ECE) in the U.S. The credential is awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition. To earn a CDA, applicants must demonstrate their competency in areas which support the healthy growth and development of children, both in center-based care, family or home based care, and in home visiting programs.

Integrated Child Development Services

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is a government program in India which provides nutritional meals, preschool education, primary healthcare

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is a government program in India which provides nutritional meals, preschool education, primary healthcare, immunization, health check-up and referral services to children under 6 years of age and their mothers. The scheme was launched in 1975, discontinued in 1978 by the government of Morarji Desai, and then reinstated by the Charan Singh soon after with support of the Indira Gandhi opposition.

The Tenth five-year plan also linked ICDS to Anganwadi centres established mainly in rural areas and staffed with frontline workers. In addition to improving child nutrition and immunization, the programme is also intended to combat gender inequality by providing girls the same resources as boys.

A 2005 study found that the ICDS programme was not particularly effective in reducing malnutrition, largely because of implementation problems and because the poorest states had received the least coverage and funding. During the 2018–19 fiscal year, the Indian federal government allocated ₹16,335 crore (US\$1.9 billion) to the programme, which is 60% of the funding for the programme while the states allocated the remaining 40%. The widespread network of ICDS has an important role in combating malnutrition especially for children of weaker groups.

One-child policy

the only child literature: Research evidence and theory development; *Psychological Bulletin*. 100 (2): 176–189. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.100.2.176. "Consultative

The one-child policy (Chinese: 独生子女政策; pinyin: yí hái zhèngcè) was a population planning initiative in China implemented between 1979 and 2015 to curb the country's population growth by restricting many families to a single child. The program had wide-ranging social, cultural, economic, and demographic effects, although the contribution of one-child restrictions to the broader program has been the subject of controversy. Its efficacy in reducing birth rates and defensibility from a human rights perspective have been subjects of controversy.

China's family planning policies began to be shaped by fears of overpopulation in the 1970s, and officials raised the age of marriage and called for fewer and more broadly spaced births. A near-universal one-child limit was imposed in 1980 and written into the country's constitution in 1982. Numerous exceptions were established over time, and by 1984, only about 35.4% of the population was subject to the original restriction of the policy. In the mid-1980s, rural parents were allowed to have a second child if the first was a daughter. It also allowed exceptions for some other groups, including ethnic minorities under 10 million people. In 2015, the government raised the limit to two children, and in May 2021 to three. In July 2021, it removed all limits, shortly after implementing financial incentives to encourage individuals to have additional children.

Implementation of the policy was handled at the national level primarily by the National Population and Family Planning Commission and at the provincial and local level by specialized commissions. Officials

used pervasive propaganda campaigns to promote the program and encourage compliance. The strictness with which it was enforced varied by period, region, and social status. In some cases, women were forced to use contraception, receive abortions, and undergo sterilization. Families who violated the policy faced large fines and other penalties.

The population control program had wide-ranging social effects, particularly for Chinese women. Patriarchal attitudes and a cultural preference for sons led to the abandonment of unwanted infant girls, some of whom died and others of whom were adopted abroad. Over time, this skewed the country's sex ratio toward men and created a generation of "missing women". However, the policy also resulted in greater workforce participation by women who would otherwise have been occupied with childrearing, and some girls received greater familial investment in their education.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) credits the program with contributing to the country's economic ascendancy and says that it prevented 400 million births, although some scholars dispute that estimate. Some have also questioned whether the drop in birth rate was caused more by other factors unrelated to the policy. In the West, the policy has been widely criticized for human rights violations and other negative effects.

Behavior analysis of child development

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