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Section C

Socially Toxic Environments: Implications for Child Brain Development
Exposure to toxic environmental factors—whether physical, chemical, or social—are probabilistic. When present they do not seal one’s fate; they just up the odds.

There is a cumulative nature to the negative effects of toxic environments ... the more that are present, the worse the odds.
Environmental Press

- The combined set of forces working in a setting to shape behavior and development

- It arises from circumstances confronting and surrounding an individual

- Over time people tend to conform to the demands of their environments
People tend to resemble their environments

— Rudolph Moos
The Secrets of the Street

- Snowden’s Secret
- Dantrell’s Secret
- Milgram’s Secret

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The Good Samaritan Experiment

- Study conducted with theology students: those who were in a hurry to get to an important event were much less likely to help a stranger on the sidewalk writhing in pain than those who had extra time to get to the event.

- Context drives behavior (Milgram’s Secret)
Theories of how neighborhood and community affect child development

- **Stress theory:** the role of cortisol on altering neurodevelopment
- **Social organization theory:** the importance of role models and values consensus in a neighborhood
- **Epidemic theory:** the broken window hypothesis
- Institutional explanations: institutions, such as parks and recreation, rather than people