This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike License. Your use of this material constitutes acceptance of that license and the conditions of use of materials on this site.
Section B

Early Emotions and Self-Regulation
Definition of Emotion

- Feeling, or state of mind, generated from one’s interaction with biochemical (internal) and/or environmental (external) factors
  - Emotions can have a positive or negative valence
  - Involves physiological arousal, expressive behaviors, and, in some cases, conscious experience
Emotions in Infancy and Early Childhood

- Basic
  - Joy (3 months)
  - Sadness (3 months)
  - Disgust (3 months)
  - Anger (2–6 months)
  - Surprise (first 6 months)
  - Fear (6–8 months)

- Self-conscious
  - Empathy (1½-2 years)
  - Jealousy (1½-2 years)
  - Embarrassment (1½-2 years)
  - Pride (2½ years)
  - Shame (2½ years)
  - Guilt (2½ years)
The Function of Early Emotions

- Communicate needs
  - Solicit external response from a caregiver
  - Promotes survival
    ▶ E.g., hunger cry

- Relational
  - A way to engage in interactions with others and to understand others’ emotions
    ▶ E.g., reflexive smile → social smile

- Energize development and fuel children’s behavior
What Is Emotion Self-Regulation?

Definition: the capacity to control behavioral expression of basic emotions
- In particular, the expression of negative emotions like anger or fear
Kopp’s Developmental Phases of Self-Regulation

- Neurophysiological modulation (birth to 3 months)
- Sensorimotor modulation (3 to 9+ months)
- Control (12 to 18+ months)
- Self-regulation (24+ months)

Source: Kopp. (1982).
Neurophysiological Modulation (Birth to 3 Months)

- Modulation of arousal
- State transitioning (e.g., sleep-wake cycle)
- Organized behavior patterns (e.g., thumb or finger sucking)
  - Reflection of central nervous system maturity
  - Transition from intra- to extrauterine regulation
  - Temperamental differences present at birth in reactivity to sensory stimuli
Sensorimotor Modulation (3 to 9+ Months)

- Increased volitional regulatory behavior
- Parallels achievement of motor milestones
  - Reaching, grasping, locomotion
- Awareness of contingent behavior
Control (12 to 18+ Months)

- Emerging ability to show awareness and compliance with social or task demands

- Self-initiated monitoring of behavior
  - Physical acts
    - E.g., walking and exploration
  - Communication
    - E.g., reciprocal interaction
  - Emotional signals
    - E.g., behavioral inhibition
Self-Regulation (24+ months)

- Increased flexibility in adapting behavior to meet situational demands
- Newfound, but varying, capacity for delay and waiting
- Self-awareness develops
  - Self vs. other
- Gestural communication expands
  - Intent, desires, refusals, sharing, etc.
How Do We Measure Regulatory Behaviors?

- Regulation behaviors
  - Attention: orienting, looking to the parent
  - Self-soothing: thumb sucking
  - Communication: requests, gestures
  - Avoidance: turn away

- We can observe these behaviors during situations that are emotionally challenging
  - Novel
    - Stranger approach
  - Fear-eliciting
    - Masks
  - Frustration-eliciting
    - Toy removal, delay of gratification