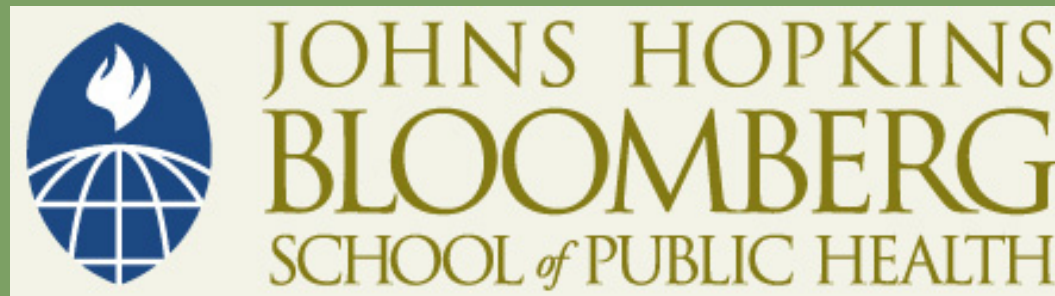


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Section B

What Is Development?

General Questions about Development

- What is development?



Neonatal →

Infancy/Toddlerhood →

Early childhood →

Late childhood → Early adolescence →

Late adolescence

Development Defined

- *Development* refers to stability and change in the biophysiological characteristics of human beings over the life course and across generations (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998)

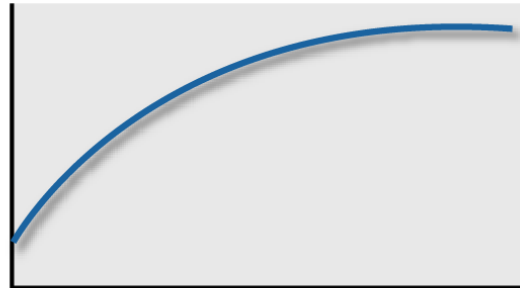
Domains of Development

- **Physical:** changes in body size, proportions, appearance, functioning of various body systems, brain development, perceptual and motor capacities, and physical health
- **Cognitive:** development of a wide variety of thought processes and intellectual abilities, including language, attention, memory, learning, academic skills, problem solving, imagination, and creativity
- **Emotional and social:** involves processes related to one's interaction with others, including emotional communication, self-understanding, ability to manage feelings, knowledge about others, interpersonal skills, personality, friendships, intimate relationships, and moral reasoning and behavior

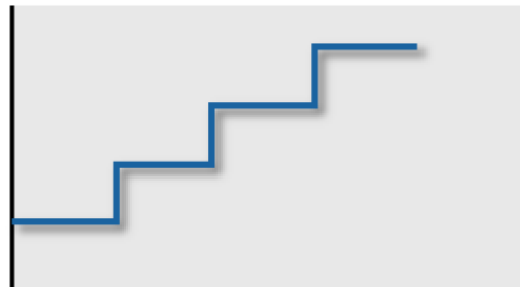
What Is the Nature of Development?

Views on the Nature of Developmental Change

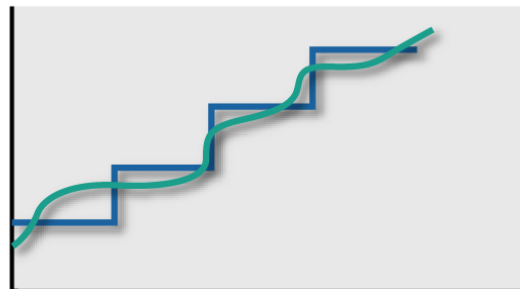
Continuous development



Discontinuous development



Dynamic view of development



Time

Critical Issues in Theories of Development

- Nature vs. nurture
- Critical and sensitive periods
- Universal vs. context specific
- Individual differences

Nature and Nurture

- **Nature:** inborn, biological endowments, heredity, genes
- **Nurture:** environment, physical and social forces influence development
- Most theories view development as a complex interaction of the two influences

Critical and Sensitive Periods

- **Critical period:** time during which a specific biological or environmental event must occur if development is to proceed (e.g., visual processing)
- **Sensitive period:** time that is optimal for development of certain behaviors or functions but not dependent on it

Universal vs. Context-Specific

- **Universal:** children everywhere follow the same course of development
- **Context-specific:** children grow up in distinct contexts with unique physical, social, cultural, economic, and historical circumstances resulting in different courses of development

Contributions to Individual Differences

- Genetic and epigenetic differences
- Differences in children's experiences (e.g., how parents treat children)
- Differing effects on children of similar experiences (e.g., loss, relocation, etc.)
- Children's choice of environments

Characteristics That Interact with the Environment

- Personal characteristics that interact with the environment
 - Dispositions (individual level)
 - a) Liabilities
 - b) Assets
 - Developmental resources (environmental level)
 - a) Liabilities
 - b) Assets
 - Demand characteristics: characteristics (sometimes referred to as personality) that invite positive or negative responses