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Section B

Early Child Development

Early Child Development (ECD)

- Questions for consideration
 - Is ECD highly programmed and the timing of events highly predictable?
 - Is development smooth and linear or marked by starts and stops?
 - Are newborns and infants passive observers of the world around them or do they actively engage?
 - Are children either vulnerable or resilient?

Early Child Development

- Child development is highly interactional—the organism and the world around him

Early Child Development

- Development is not a zero-sum game that pits early against later development
- Rather, the central question is how later development is informed by earlier events

Early Child Development

- Early development establishes capacity, development orientation to the world, and expectations as to how things and people behave

Nature and Nurture: The Interaction

- Children reared by adoptive parents with substance abuse or antisocial personalities are more likely to be aggressive and hostile than children born to similar parents but reared by non-substance abusing parents

Nature and Nurture: The Interaction

- Genetic influences do not necessarily predetermine an outcome—genes often interact with environment
 - PKU and diet
 - Schizophrenia and family supports
 - Height and nutrition

Nature and Nurture: The Interaction

- Self-regulation is a central aspect of ECD
- Management of physiological arousal, emotions, and attention
- Self-quieting behavior
- Managing impulses (e.g., Simon says, concentrating on a task, ignoring distractions)

Emotional Development

- Empathy
- Managing one's feelings
- Management of strong emotions

Temperament

- Typical ways of reacting to events
- General mood
- Capabilities for self-regulation
- Activity level

Temperament

- By four months of age temperament is relatively stable

Emotional Responsiveness

- Newborns: cooing or crying in response to temperature, hunger, fatigue
- Preschoolers: interpretation of experience, what others think or are doing, responsiveness of others to them

Emotional Responsiveness

- Starting in infancy we take our cues from those around us
 - Fear
 - Excitement
 - Depression

Effect of Parents on Emotional Development

- Parents socialize the emotional development of their children
- With parental discord, depression, or maltreatment, children are more likely to experience more difficulty in emotional regulation

Effect of Parents on Emotional Development

- Children rely on their parents for understanding, experiencing, and managing their own feelings
- Children who experience insecure attachments or coercive relationships are thus more vulnerable to emotional disorders

Emotional Development

- Emotional development is closely linked to self-understanding
 - Two-year-old: “mine”
 - Three-year-old: I; “do it myself”
- Emotions develop such as pride, shame, embarrassment, guilt

Emotional Regulation

- Using emotions effectively in relationships
 - Emotional expression is heavily influenced by family and culture norms
 - ▶ Examples: dealing with frustration, delaying gratification, moderating, the response to stress, controlling anger

Emotional Regulation

- Effort control: the ability to inhibit a response one is all set to control
 - Red light/green light
 - Simon says
 - Saving money for something
- Parental influences interact with temperament—the more excitable a child, the more challenged is effort control

Emotional Regulation

- Self-regulation of attention and cognition are ***executive functions***
 - The ability to think, retrieve, and remember information, solve problems, ability to use symbols (e.g., writing, mathematics)
 - Controlling attention is the precursor to planfulness

Emotional Regulation

- “Means-ends” behavior is a precursor of executive functioning
 - Infant (12 months): remove an obstacle to retrieve a toy
 - Persistence

Emotional Regulation

- Development of a second symbolic system
 - Language
 - Thought
 - Self-reflection
 - Code organization

School Failure and School Readiness

- School failure in adolescence and beyond is closely linked with academic skills at school entry

Language

- Language acquisition is a resilient process: people learn to speak on their own
- Reading acquisition is fragile; it usually requires instruction

Language

- First spoken words between 10 and 15 months
- Language acquisition is the same whether you verbally or manually speak
- Word learning explosion starts at 18 months: nine new words a day, everyday, through pre-school years

Language

- Pre-school children whose parents talk with them a lot have a larger vocabulary on school entry
- School-age children whose teachers talk with them a lot perform better on standardized tests
- Vocabulary size and IQ are highly inter-correlated

Complex Reasoning

- At less than 1 month of age, infants can imitate another person's gestures when that person is no longer in view (e.g., sticking out tongue)
- At 6 months they can match the number of pictures shown with the number of drum beats
- By 6 months they can understand physical properties (e.g., that unsupported objects fall)
- Between 9 and 12 months they can learn new behaviors by watching others (e.g., unlock a container) and retain that information

Social Development

- By 12 months infants develop the capacity to learn from others (e.g., to unlock a container)
- By 3 months they develop the capacity of perspective taking (e.g., that others' preferences may differ from their own)
- By 5 years of age, children develop a “theory of the mind” (e.g., predict others' intentions, deceive others, understand that beliefs and reality are not always the same)

Social Development

- Infants have an innate drive to master their environment

Achievement Motivation

- Mastery motivation
 - A child's propensity to explore, persist, and derive pleasure from achievement
- Intensive motivation
 - Engage in activity without external pressure
- Cognitive aspects of motivation
 - Expectations for success, challenge seeking, self-perceptions of competence

Achievement Motivation

- Children enter kindergarten with high achievement motivation—for many, it declines from there

Social Development

- The rise of the importance of peers is proportionate to the decline in the number of siblings

Year	Average number of children in a U.S. family
1965	2.44
1998	1.85

Social Interactions

- By 2 months babies get excited when seeing other babies
- By 4 months babies stare at each other
- By 6 to 9 months babies actively try to get each others attention
- By 9 to 12 months babies imitate each other
- By 12 to 24 months reciprocal play is initiated
- Between 2 and 3 years conflict resolution is explored