ESSENTIALS OF LIFE-SPAN DEVELOPMENT

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6 &8

SOCIOEMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDHOOD

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Emotional and personality development
- Families
- Peers
- Schools

EMOTIONAL AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

- The self
- Emotional development
- Moral development
- Gender

THE SELF

- The development of self-understanding
  - During childhood:
    - Begins to describe themselves in terms of psychological characteristics and traits
    - Children recognize social aspects of the self
    - Social comparison increases

- Understanding others
  - **Perspective taking**: Ability to assume other people's perspectives and understand their thoughts and feelings

THE SELF

- Self-esteem and self-concept
  - **Self-esteem**: Global evaluations of the self
  - **Self-concept**: Domain-specific evaluations of the self
- Children with high self-esteem
  - Do not necessarily perform better in school
  - Have greater initiative (positive or negative)

THE SELF

- Increasing children's self-esteem
  - Identify the causes of low self-esteem
  - Provide emotional support and social approval
  - Help children achieve
  - Help children cope

THE SELF

- **Self-efficacy**: Belief that one can master a situation and produce favorable outcomes

- Self-regulation
  - Deliberate efforts to manage one's behavior, emotions, and thoughts:
    - Leading to increased social competence and achievement

THE SELF

- Initiative versus guilt
  - Children use their perceptual, motor, cognitive, and language skills to make things happen
  - On their own initiative, then, children at this stage exuberantly move out into a wider social world
  - The great governor of initiative is conscience
  - Initiative and enthusiasm may bring guilt, which lowers self-esteem

THE SELF

- Industry versus inferiority
  - Industry - Children become interested in how things work
  - Inferiority - Parents who see their children's efforts as mischief may encourage inferiority

FIGURE 8.1 - KOHLBERG'S THREE LEVELS AND SIX STAGES OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

LEVEL 1
Preconventional Level

Stage 1
Heteronomous Morality

Children obey because adults tell them to obey. People base their moral decisions on fear of punishment.

Stage 2
Individualism, Instrumental purpose, and Exchange

Individuals pursue their own interests but let others do the same. What is right involves equal exchange.

LEVEL 2
Conventional Level

Stage 3
Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity

Individuals value trust, caring, and loyalty to others as a basis for moral judgments.

Stage 4
Social System Morality

Moral judgments are based on understanding of the social order, law, justice, and duty.

LEVEL 3
Postconventional Level

Stage 5
Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights

Individuals reason that values, rights, and principles undergird or transcend the law.

Stage 6
Universal Ethical Principles

The person has developed moral judgments that are based on universal human rights. When faced with a dilemma between law and conscience, a personal, individualized conscience is followed.

EMOTIONAL AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

- Families and moral development
  - Kohlberg underestimated
- Gender and the care perspective
  - **Justice perspective**: Focuses on the rights of the individual and in which individuals independently make moral decisions
  - **Care perspective**: Views people in terms of their connectedness with others
    - Emphasizes interpersonal communication, relationships with others, and concern for others

EMOTIONAL AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

- Gender
  - **Gender stereotypes**: Broad categories that reflect general impressions and beliefs about males and females
  - Gender similarities and differences
    - Physical development
    - Cognitive development
    - Socioemotional development

GENDER

- Gender molds important aspects of peer relations
  - Gender composition of children's groups
  - Group size
  - Interaction in same-sex groups
- Cognitive influences
  - **Gender schema theory**: Gender typing emerges as children gradually develop gender schemas of what is gender-appropriate and gender-inappropriate in their culture

GENDER

- Social influences
  - Social theories of gender
    - **Social role theory**: Gender differences result from the contrasting roles of women and men
    - **Psychoanalytic theory**: Preschool child develops a sexual attraction to the opposite-sex parent
    - **Social cognitive theory**: Children's gender development occurs through observation and imitation of what other people say and do

FAMILIES

- Developmental changes in parent-child relationships
- Maltreatment
- Parents as managers
- Stepfamilies

FAMILIES

- Developmental changes in parent-child relationships
  - Parents spend less time with children during middle and late childhood
  - Parents support and stimulate children's academic achievement
  - Parents use less physical forms of punishment as children age
- Parents as managers
  - Parents manage children's opportunities, monitor behavior, and initiate social contact
  - Important to maintain a structured and organized family environment

CHILD MALTREATMENT

- Types of child maltreatment
  - Physical abuse
  - Child neglect
  - Sexual abuse
  - Emotional abuse
- Context of abuse
  - About 1/3 of parents who were abused themselves when they were young go on to abuse their own children

CHANGING FAMILY IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

- Many of the problems experienced by children from divorced homes begin during the predivorce period
- Frequent visits by the noncustodial parent usually benefit the child
- Children with a difficult temperament often have problems in coping with their parents' divorce
- Income loss for divorced mothers is accompanied by increased workloads, high rates of job instability, and residential moves

CHANGING FAMILY IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

- Gay male and lesbian parents
  - Most children from gay or lesbian families have a heterosexual orientation
- Cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic variations
  - There are trends toward greater family mobility, migration to urban areas
  - Ethnic minority parents are less educated and more likely to live in low-income circumstances

FAMILIES

- Stepfamilies
  - Remarriages involving children has grown in recent years
  - Types of stepfamily structure
    - Stepfather
    - Stepmother
    - Blended or complex

PEERS

- Developmental changes
- Peer status
- Social cognition
- Bullying
- Friends

PEER RELATION & PLAY

- Peer relations
  - Provide a source of information and comparison about the world outside the family
  - Good peer relations can be necessary for normal socioemotional development
- Play
  - Play therapy is used to allow the child to work off frustrations and to analyze the child's conflicts and ways of coping with them

PEER RELATION & PLAY

- Important context for the development of language and communication skills
- Types of play
  - Sensorimotor
  - Practice
  - Pretense/symbolic
  - Social
  - Constructive
  - **Games**: Activities that are engaged in for pleasure and have rules

PEERS

- Peer status
  - **Popular children**: Frequently nominated as a best friend and are rarely disliked by their peers
  - **Average children**: Receive an average number of both positive and negative nominations from peers
  - **Neglected children**: Infrequently nominated as a best friend but are not disliked by their peers
  - **Rejected children**: Infrequently nominated as a best friend and are actively disliked by their peers
  - **Controversial children**: Frequently nominated both as a best friend as being disliked by their peers
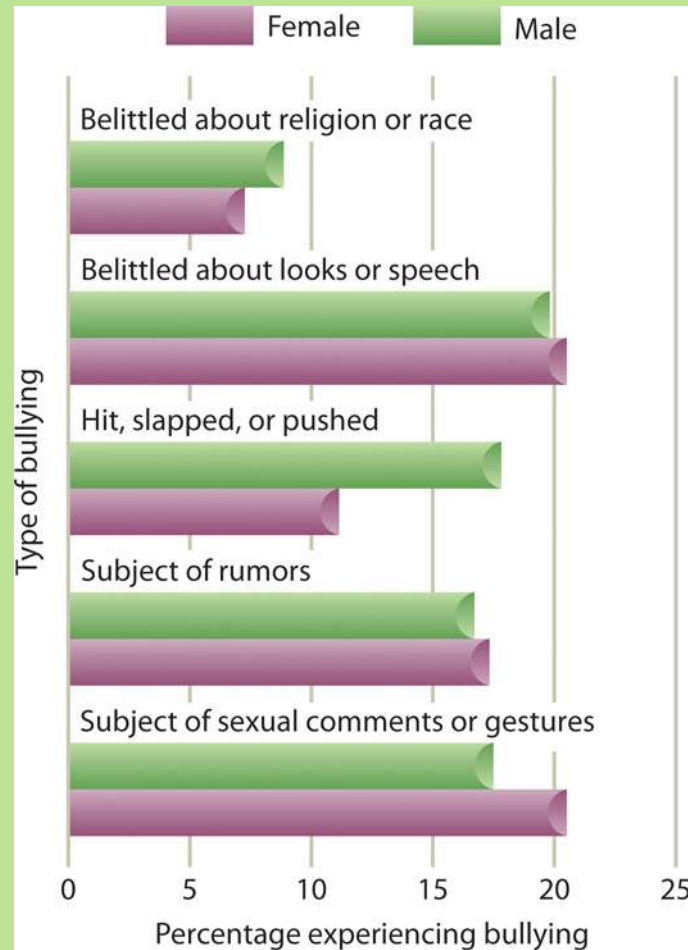
PEERS

- Social cognition – Thoughts about social matters
  - Important for understanding peer relationships
  - 6 steps in processing social information
    - Attend to social cues
    - Attribute intent
    - Generate goals
    - Access behavioral scripts from memory
    - Make decisions
    - Enact behavior

PEERS

- Bullying
  - Verbal or physical behavior intended to disturb someone less powerful
  - Boys and younger middle school students are most likely to be affected
  - Outcomes of bullying
    - Depression, suicidal ideation, and attempted suicide

FIGURE 8.4 - BULLYING BEHAVIORS AMONG U.S. YOUTH

PEERS

- Friends
  - Typically characterized by similarity
  - Serve six functions
    - Companionship
    - Stimulation
    - Physical support
    - Ego support
    - Social comparison
    - Affection and intimacy

SCHOOLS

- Contemporary approaches to student learning
  - Constructivist and direct instruction approaches
    - **Constructivist approach**: Learner-centered approach that emphasizes:
    - Importance of individuals actively constructing their own knowledge and understanding
  - **Direct-instruction approach**: Structured, teacher-centered approach
    - Characterized by teacher direction and control
  - Accountability
    - No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation
    - Statewide standardized testing

SCHOOLS

- Socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and culture
  - Low-income, ethnic minority students have more difficulties in school
  - U.S. students have lower achievement in math and science than a number of other countries

SCHOOLS

- The education of students from low-income backgrounds
  - Face more barriers to learning
  - Most low-SES area schools tend to have:
    - Lower test scores, lower graduation rates, and lower college-attendance rates
    - Young teachers with less experience
    - Fewer resources

SCHOOLS

- Ethnicity in schools
  - Strategies for improving relationships among ethnically diverse students
    - Turn the class into a jigsaw classroom
    - Encourage students to have positive personal contact with diverse other students
    - Reduce bias
    - Be a competent cultural mediator
    - View the school and community as a team

SCHOOLS

- Cross-cultural comparisons of achievement
  - Poor performance of American children in math and science is well publicized
  - Asian teachers spend more of their time teaching math than did American teachers
- **Mindset**: Cognitive view individuals develop for themselves
  - Fixed mindset
  - Growth mindset

FIGURE 8.5 - MOTHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT THE FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN'S MATH ACHIEVEMENT IN THREE COUNTRIES