What is the field of child development?

- Multidisciplinary field devoted to the study of the changes that occur as children grow and mature.
- Professionals from different disciplines such as: psychology, sociology, anthropology, social work, biology, medicine, economics and other related fields who work together to understand the important changes that take place as children grow through childhood.
What Develops in Children?

1. Physical development: growth in size, strength, and muscle coordination.
   
   EX: holding up head, crawling, walking, riding a bike, playing sports.
What Develops?

2. **Cognitive development**: changes in how children perceive the world, think, remember, and communicate.

Examples:
- speech / language
- reading/ writing
- problem solving
- classification- sorting and matching
- seriation- sequencing by size, color
- number concepts
What Develops?

3. **Socioemotional Development**: changes in how children interact with other people, and manage their emotions.

Examples:
- temporary friendships in toddlers
- true friendships in elementary school
- adolescents struggling with intimacy
- showing empathy for others
- social play
- problem solving
Themes in Child Development

1. Nature & nurture
2. Role of neuroscience
3. Diversity & Multiculturalism
4. Positive Development & Resilience
What Drives Development?

**Nature**: the biological forces such as genetics that govern development.

Examples
- color of eyes
- height/weight
- level of intelligence
- basic personality
What Drives Development?

- **Nurture**: the environmental conditions and supports that impact development.

Examples:

- love
- support
- economic factors
- culture
- medical care
Studies show...

- intelligence, behaviors, personality, emotionality are about 40%-60% inherited (nature)

For example:

1. identical twins have same IQ scores than non identical twins b/c they have the same genes. (nature)

2. adopted children having same IQ score as biological parents (nature)
Studies show...

• IQ scores for twins are more similar when they have been raised together instead of being raised apart. (nurture)

Examples:
1. Henry comes from a family that has a history of depression. Does that mean that Henry is likely to have depression?
2. Anna’s parents are obese. Is Anna going to be obese also?
Neuroscience - study of the brain and nervous system

- PET and fMRI scans can show the most active parts of the brain as children read and speak.
- CT scans show 3D images of brain
Diversity and Multiculturalism

- Researchers are studying how diversity enriches children's lives.
- Research being done on children that come from:
  - Racial and ethnic minorities
  - Immigrant families
  - Bilingual families
  - Divorced/single parent families
  - Gay/lesbian families
  - Adoptive families
Positive development and resilience

- Most children experience positive growth and development
- **Positive psychology** - understanding when and how children develop in positive ways
- **Resilient children** - children who rise above adversity and develop in positive ways.
Theories of Child Development

- **Theory**: an organized set of ideas about how things work.
Importance of Theories

1. summarize the facts that are currently known
2. allow predictions of future behavior and events.
   Ex: theory on children and divorce.
3. provide guidance to parents and professionals
4. stimulate new research and discoveries
   Hypotheses: specific assumption drawn from theories; test hypotheses by collecting scientific observation.
5. act as filters for identifying relevant information, observations, and relationships.
Psychoanalytic Theories

- Structure of personality and how the conscious and unconscious parts of the self influence behavior and development.

- Best known theorists
  1. Sigmund Freud
  2. Erik Erikson
Sigmund Freud
1856-1939

The mind consists of three basic parts

• the *id* - primitive sexual and aggressive instincts inherited through evolution, completely unconscious
• the *ego* - rational thought, the self
• the *superego* - ethics, morals, conscience

constant state of conflict between the three components
Example of how id, ego, superego work when arguing with someone

**id** = hitting or pushing that person

**superego** = not polite to hit someone

**ego** = angry words and walk away
Freud’s 5 Stages of Psychosexual Development

• During these stages that a person develops their ego and superego in order to tame the id.
Oral Stage
Ages 0-2

- infant seeks gratification by sucking, biting, babbling
- pleasure comes from the mouth
Anal Stage
Ages 2-3

• child’s pleasure and conflict centers are in the anal area
Delayed gratification

• During anal & oral stage parents help children control oral & anal gratification
• Potty training balances anal gratification with society’s demands to be neat and clean
• Ex: waiting for food until you get home.
Erogenous Zones - pleasure sensitive zones (mouth and anus)

• receiving too much or too little stimulation can cause anxiety & fixation of child’s psychological energy to become stuck in that area.

Ex: baby being weaned off the breast in a harsh manner. The baby become anxious and focus on oral issues. Drinking too much or getting care from others.
Phallic
Ages 3-7

- unconscious sexual desires for opposite sex parent

  Oedipal complex
  - boy wants to kill his father and marry his mother.

  Electra complex
  - girl realizes that she lacks a penis and becomes attached to her father.
  - imagines that she will become pregnant by her father then becoming hostile towards mother.
  - “penis envy” leads to hostility towards mother b/c she realized she doesn’t have a penis and thinks the mom cut it off.
• **Identification**: child acquires *superego* of same sex parent
• **morals, ideals, values** become the conscious of the child
Latency
Ages 7-11

• morality makes child feel guilty of having feeling for opposite sex parent
• children’s sexual feelings are repressed
• Children play w/same sex peers
• engage in pursuits not sexually threatening
Genital
Ages 11 Adult

• Puberty awakens sexual urges
Current thinking on Freud

Freud’s theory generally viewed as too focused on unconscious and sexual impulses. Many concepts proposed by Freud are still popular.

- childhood as a stage of development
- id, ego, superego
- Oedipal complex
Erik Erikson
1902-1994

**Psycho-social** theory - a revision of Freud’s theory which focused more on personality development through a series of conflicts - resulting in increased good judgment and good behavior

- 8 stages that represent 8 major crises
- Positive and/or negative experiences in each stage carries on to the next stage.
Basic Trust vs. Mistrust
Ages 0-1

(Positive)
- responsive caregiving = develops trust with others
- develops self-confidence

(Negative)
- Unresponsive or neglect = mistrust in caregivers and other people
Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt
Ages 2-3

(Positive)
• gains independence by walking, talking, toilet training
• Feels proud to be independent
• “Me do it.”

(Negative)
• independence is stifled or punished
• develops sense of shame and doubt about abilities.
Initiative vs. Guilt
Ages 4-5

(Positive)
- Initiates activities
- Sets own goals
- Interacts w/ peers
- Designs projects

(Negative)
- Initiative is stifled
- Child can learn guilt
- Own desires conflict with his/her parents
Industry vs. Inferiority
Ages 6-12

(Positive)

• Comparison w/peers
• Confidence & sense of hard work emerge when comparisons are favorable

(Negative)

• Unfavorable comparisons= sense of inferiority
• Feel that work & abilities do not measure up
Identity vs. Role Confusion

Adolescence

(Positive)

- central identity emerges through sexual, emotional, educational, ethnic/cultural, and vocational exploration

(Negative)

- No core identity = confused sense of self
Behavioral & Social Learning Theories

- a response to unobservable and unmeasurable concepts proposed by psychoanalytic theories
- focus is on observable conditions and behaviors
- Best known theorists
  1. John Watson
  2. BF Skinner
  3. Albert Bandura
Ivan Pavlov
Classical Conditioning 1890s

- UCS - unconditioned stimulus (smell of food)
- UCR - unconditioned response (salivation)
- NS - neutral stimulus (bell ringing)
Ivan Pavlov

UCS ---- UCR

- UCS + NS ------------------ UCR

CS ------------------------ CR
John Watson

• Taught an 11 month old boy to fear a white rat.
• He would make aloud noise every time Albert reached for the rat.
• Parents should use power of classical conditioning to set children on positive paths!
BF Skinner (1904-1990)
Operant Conditioning

Learning comes through reinforcement and punishment

- **Reinforcement** - any element in the environment that increases the likelihood that a behavior will be repeated
- **Punishment** - any element in the environment that decreases the likelihood that a behavior will be repeated

Ex: girl cleans room
Father says, “What a clean room!”
- Child more likely to clean room
Albert Bandura
Social Learning

1925-

- Process where children learn by observing and imitating the behaviors of other people.

  Ex: Annie’s mom smiles at a visitor so does Annie
  Ex: Sam sees a superhero fighting a villain and goes to school and solves his problem by picking a fight.

**Social Cognition Theory:** how children think about the behaviors and actions that they observe.

- Reinforcements and punishments provide info. that can help the child decide which behavior to imitate.

  Ex: Teacher says, “Thank you for putting the blocks away.” to Brandon.
  Nathan starts putting blocks away as well.
Cognitive Developmental Theories

• How children adjust their own understanding as they explore and learn about the world.
• A response to simplistic views of behaviorism.
• Focus is on how children think and how their thinking impacts their actions.

Best Known Theorists
1. Jean Piaget
2. Lev Vygotsky
Jean Piaget (1896-1980)

Cognitive Developmentalism

• Children actively adjust their understanding about the world as they learn about it.

A. mental schemes: children’s cognitive structures
B. assimilation: process of bringing new objects or information into a scheme that already exists in the mind.
C. accommodation: process of adjusting a scheme so it better fits the new experience.
example

- Henry has the **scheme** of how to grasp a small ball. He holds it in one hand.
- We give him a bigger ball to hold on to so he has to **assimilate the larger ball into his grasping scheme**. Henry drops the ball.
- Henry need to **accommodate** in order to figure out how to hold the bigger ball. With trail and error figures out to use both hands.
- Henry understands to grasp small objects with one hand and large objects with both hands.
Piaget cont.

- As children continue to gain new experiences they adapt their cognitive schemes through a continual cycle of *assimilation* and *accommodation*.
- 4 major stages from infancy to adulthood.
Lev Vygotsky
(1896-1934)

children’s thinking is influenced by language and culture

children take in speech spoken around them - it becomes private speech (often spoken out loud) - and eventually becomes inner speech, or thought.
Biological Theories

Focus on biological explanations for behavior
Konrad Lorenz 1903-1989

• *Ethology*: examines the importance of certain behaviors for survival.

• Imprinting

Ex: baby goslings attaching themselves (imprinted) to the first guardian figure they observe after hatching from eggs
• Some researchers speculate that the first hours of birth are critical in developing a bond
• Others believe that the bond between mother and child develops over time.
Systems Theories

Focus on network of systems that operate in and around the child - family, school, neighborhood, government, culture, time

1. *Ecological* systems theory
2. *Dynamic* systems theory
Uri Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Theory
1917-2005

Ecological Systems

- systems and interrelationships that surround a child affect development
- Children live and grow within a context of family, society, and culture
- In order to understand the development of children, we need to understand how these systems operate in the child's life

Systems:

- **microsystem**
- **mesosystem**
- **exosystem**
- **Macrosystem**
- **chronosystem**
Ecosystems
Bronfenbrenner

**Microsystem**: direct relationship and interactions children have with people in their immediate environment

- Parents, siblings, peers, teachers

How will a warm and nurturing parent affect a child's development compared to a distant and cold parent?

What type of response can a child with a difficult temperament elicit from their parents?
Bronfenbrenner

**Mesosystem**: connections among home, neighborhood, school, day care and other elements in a larger social environment

- What type of effect will parental involvement in school have on the child's development and performance in school?
- Henry's classroom has 40 children and 1 teacher. How will this affect Henry's education?
**Bronfenbrenner**

**Exosystem**: larger social networks such as extended family, work, government, friendship networks

- Henry gets sick at school. Does his mom have vacation days to stay home from work and take care of Henry? How can this affect his social-emotional development?
- Anna is born in Sweden. Her parents can both take 480 days of maternity/paternity leave and still get paid 80% of their pay. How will this benefit the family?
Bronfenbrenner

**Macrosystem:** widest level that represents values, customs, laws, and resources of the culture at large

- **individualistic cultures** (U.S.) value independence and competition with peers
- **collectivist cultures** (Japanese & Chinese) value community and cooperation
- What are some of the positive & negative effects of both types of cultures on the development of children?
Bronfenbrenner

Chronosystem: how the effects of the systems and their inter-relationships among them change over time.

• Henry has twin baby sisters. Mom has to spend more time w/ the babies. How will this change affect Henry's social-emotional development?

• Annie’s family moves to another city b/c they loose their home. She has to go to a after school program b/c her grandparents are no longer close to take care of her. How will this experience affect Annie's development?
Dynamic Systems Theory

• complex interaction of many variables, both internal and external, influences development

• patterns of behavior emerge and change over time
Divorce

- Boy becomes more aggressive after parent’s divorce. Why?
- Result has to do with complex interactions both in and around the child.
Theories of Development

• All offer important insights into development

• No single theory explains all development

• New theories continue to emerge through research
Research in Child Development

Scientific Method
- data gathered through observations
- hypotheses formed and tested
- conclusions drawn
Applications of Research

Parenting
Social policy
Education
Counseling
Descriptive Methods

try to describe behavior - under what conditions it occurs

Example - do children prefer blocks or books?

• Naturalistic observation
• Structured observation
• Interviews
• Questionnaires
• Case Studies

Often a good starting point for understanding development
Correlational Methods

• attempt to determine the strength of a relationship between two or more conditions or behaviors
• Ex: do children whose parents read to them prefer blocks or books?
• correlations are relationships/connection not causes.
Experimental Methods

- Researchers begin by randomly assigning subjects to either
  
  A. Experimental group: group that receives the treatment
  B. Control group: group that does not receive treatment

- Groups are as much alike in every way as possible except for the treatment.
- Not always ethical or practical to conduct experimental research
Ethics in Research with Children

- potential benefits must outweigh any known risks
- no physical or psychological harm to child
- obtain fully informed consent from both parents and minor children
- correct any negative consequence that occurs
- inform parents about any information collected that may affect child’s well being
- keep all information confidential
- consider implications (importance) of the research