

MODULE III: CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Note Taking Guide

At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Identify the three primary social and emotional developmental tasks of young children
- Describe what is meant by brain plasticity
- Identify factors that can enhance child development and promote well-being

Individual Development

Core Concepts of development addressed:

- Development is shaped by both nature (biology) and nurture (experience)
- Development is influenced by the interplay between sources of vulnerability and sources of resilience
- Culture influences every aspect of development
- There is a broad range of individual differences within “typical” development
- The development of a child unfolds along an individual pathway



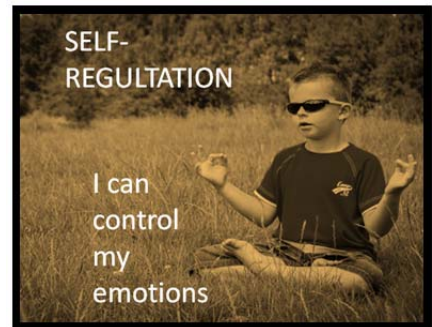
Attachment

- Core Concepts of development addressed:
 - Relationships are the building blocks of healthy development
- The primary social and emotional tasks of young children are attachment, self-regulation, and initiative.
- Meeting a child's needs consistently helps them form attachment. They develop trust and see the world as safe and predictable.



Self-Regulation and Initiative

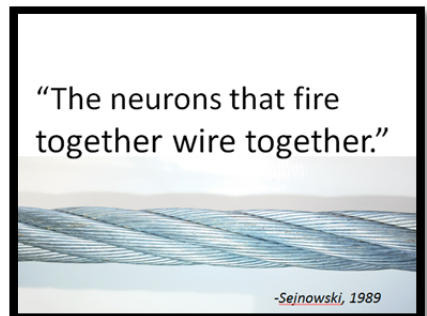
- Core Concepts of development addressed:
 - Self-regulation is a fundamental part of early childhood development
 - Children are active participants of their own development
- Self-regulation means the child can control his emotions and behaviors.
- Initiative means the child feels capable of meeting his needs.





Brain Development

- All Core Concepts of development addressed.
- Brain plasticity means the brain can change based on a person’s experiences.
- There are three main areas of the brain: The brain stem (survival), the limbic system (emotions), and the cortex (logic).



Protective Factors

- Core Concepts of development addressed:
 - A person remains vulnerable to risk and open to protective influences throughout the early years of life and into adulthood
 - The course of development can be altered by effective interventions that change the balance between risk and protection
- Internal protective factors include attachment, self-regulation, and initiative.
- External protective factors include resilience, strong social connections, knowledge about parenting and child development, and access to concrete supports.
- Children develop protective factors when they can have typical, age-appropriate experiences.
- Caregivers use a Prudent Parent Standard to make decisions about what activities to allow.



Recommended Child Development Websites

- American Academy of Pediatrics: <http://www.healthychildren.org>
- Child development Institute: www.childdevelopmentinfo.com
- American Psychological Association: www.apa.org
- Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative: www.jimcaseyyouth.org
- Zero to Three: <http://www.zerotothree.org/>
- Ohio Help Me Grow: <http://www.helpmegrow.ohio.gov/>
- Child Development Interactive Application: <http://calswec.berkeley.edu/mobile-learning>
- Bright Futures (activity book for kids, 1-2 minute videos on a variety of topics, screening tools, etc.): http://brightfutures.aap.org/Family_Resources.html
- Ages and Stages Questionnaires
 - Developmental Screening Toolkit: <http://archive.brookespublishing.com/documents/ASQ-screening-toolkit.pdf>
 - Developmental Milestones Screening: http://es.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntlc10_mffc_homepageasq

Recommended Well-Being Websites

Search Institute

- Developmental Assets
In 1990, Search Institute released a framework of 40 Developmental Assets, which identifies a set of skills, experiences, relationships, and behaviors that enable young people to develop into successful and contributing adults. <http://www.search-institute.org/research/developmental-assets>
- Developmental Relationships
Search Institute's newest research-to-practice initiative will focus on studying and strengthening the developmental relationships that help young people succeed. A developmental relationship helps young people attain the psychological and social skills that are essential for success in education and in life <http://www.search-institute.org/what-we-study/developmental-relationships>

Center for the Study of Social Policy

- Strengthening Families
Five protective factors are the foundation of the Strengthening Families Approach: parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional competence of children. Research shows these protective factors are also "promotive" factors that build family strengths and a family environment that promotes optimal child and youth development. <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/the-basics/protective-factors>
- Youth Thrive
This initiative has examined the research knowledge-base to identify protective and promotive factors that build healthy development and well-being for youth as they move through adolescence into adulthood. <http://www.cssp.org/reform/child-welfare/youth-thrive>

Devereux Center for Resilient Children

DCRC's Mission is to promote social and emotional development, foster resilience and build skills for school and life success in children birth through school-age, as well as to promote the resilience of the adults who care for them.

<http://www.centerforresilientchildren.org/home/about-resilience/>

List three ways you will use the information from this training.

1.

2.

3.

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Social and Emotional Developmental Tasks

Step 1: For your assigned developmental task, identify the stage when the task typically occurs.

Developmental Task	Stage
Can distinguish between fantasy and reality.	Infant (0-18 months)
Child begins to sense if caregiver is angry or sad and can be affected by this.	Toddler/Preschooler (18 months -5 years)
Capacity for caring and sharing and a desire for more intimate relationships.	School age (5 years – 13 years)
Capacity to control emotions, for example, child ask for help rather than tantrum.	Teenager (13 years – 18 years)

Step 2: Try to reach agreement within your group on a specific age within the stage that the developmental task occurs.

Step 3: Consider the following:

- What information did you draw on to select your stage and age?
- If you had differing opinions in your group, how did diversity play a role in the variety of thoughts?

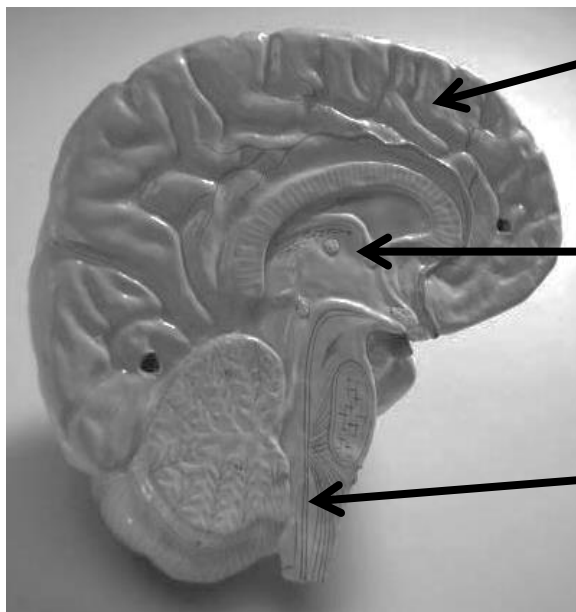
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Brain Development

As you watch *Brain Architecture*, fill in the missing words in the blanks below.

1. _____ provide the blueprint, but _____ shape the process.
2. Billions of brain cells called _____ send electrical signals to communicate with each other.
3. Connections that are used more grow stronger and are more _____.
4. Connections used less fade away through a process called _____.
5. The circuits of the brain are _____. You can't have one type of skill without the others to support it.

This ability for the brain to develop and strengthen pathways and prune unused pathways is called *plasticity*. The plasticity of the brain gives us both potential, because it is adaptable, but also risk because it is vulnerable to unwanted changes.



The **cortex** is the last area of the brain to develop. This part of the brain controls executive functioning such as goal formation, decision making, reasoning, empathy and planning.

The **limbic system** is considered the emotional center of the brain and controls attachment. This area of the brain also controls the body's involuntary, subconscious responses to emotions, including perceived threat.

The brain develops from the bottom up starting with basic survival controlled by the **brainstem**. This includes things like blood pressure, body temperature, and heart rate and breathing.

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Key Points

Fill in the blanks using the words below.

1. Development is shaped by both _____ and _____.
2. Developmental influencers can present both _____ and _____.
3. There is a broad range of _____ within “typical” development.
4. Rather than consider a child delayed, delays should be considered in terms of _____.
5. _____, _____ and _____ are the fundamental building blocks of early childhood development.
6. When a caregiver is _____ to a child’s needs, the child learns to trust the caregiver and views the world as _____.
7. _____ is the term for the “use-dependent” feature of the brain, meaning the brain can change based on experience.
8. Three key areas of the brain are the _____ (survival), the _____ (emotions) and the _____ (executive functions).
9. The course of development can be altered by _____ that change the balance between risk and protection.
10. In young children, the protective factors that enhance development and well-being can be categorized as _____ (attachment, self-regulation, initiative) and _____ (caregivers who are resilient, have strong social connections, are knowledgeable about parenting and child development, and have access to concrete support in times of need).

Key Words:

Attachment	External
Attuned	Individual differences
Biology	Initiative
Brain plasticity	Internal
Brainstem	Limbic system
Cortex	Potential
Domains	Risk
Effective interventions	Safe
Experience	Self-regulation

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Individual Reflection

Please take a few minutes to reflect on what you have learned in the Preservice training and how it applies to you. Give this sheet to the agency worker who is completing your homestudy.

1. What lessons in relationship-building did you learn from your parent(s) that you can use when you become a caregiver or adoptive parent?

2. How will you use the information you learned about brain development in parenting?

3. Which protective factor do you think is your biggest strength?

- Resiliency
- Social connections
- Knowledge about parenting and child development
- Concrete supports

Explain your answer.
