Infants & Toddlers

Caregiving and Responsive Curriculum Development

NINTH EDITION

Terri Jo Swim

Infants and Toddlers

CAREGIVING AND RESPONSIVE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Ninth Edition

Terri Jo Swim

Indiana University–Purdue University

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Ninth Edition
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Preface

This revised, expanded, and updated edition was developed with the intention of guiding the reader through the acquisition of skills necessary to provide high-quality care for infants and toddlers in any educational setting. Information based on current theories and research, as well as standards for infant-toddler teacher preparation, is reflected throughout the book. The ninth edition's new subtitle, *Caregiving and Responsive Curriculum Development*, better reflects the book's goal of providing appropriate caregiving and educational techniques, along with curriculum ideas, for groups of very young children and for individual children within those groups. Early childhood educators, administrators, advocates, and parents will find practical information that can be put to immediate use to promote the highest quality care and education possible for all children, birth to age 3.

Major Revisions in the Ninth Edition

As with previous editions, *Infants and Toddlers: Caregiving and Responsive Curriculum Development*, Ninth Edition, strives to bridge the gap between theory and practice. As scholar-practitioners, teachers need to use theory to inform their practice and in turn use their practice to inform theoretical understanding. Building from the strong foundation of previous editions, the text has been updated and thoroughly revised. Although notable differences set this edition apart from the previous edition, points of continuity remain. For example, in this ninth edition, the child continues to be at the center of care and education. Defining infants and toddlers as engaging, decision-making forces within their environments sets a tone of excitement and enthusiasm. No longer can we afford to agree with the description of toddlerhood as the "terrible twos." Rather, we need to embrace the image of the child as capable, competent, and creative. Doing so opens a number of educational options that were unavailable previously.

Results of research on brain structures, functions, and development as well as social and emotional development have been expanded as foundations for this edition. For example, links among cortisol levels, parenting behaviors, and memory skills for very young children are investigated. In addition, incorporating key components of the high-quality infant-toddler and preschool programs in Reggio Emilia, Italy, has improved our understanding of what developmentally appropriate practice looks like in action. Respecting children; designing effective physical, social, and intellectual environments; building partnerships with families; and planning individually appropriate curricula are discussed throughout this edition.

Major content revisions in this edition also include the following:

- **NEW Chapter 10, Early Intervention.** This chapter takes an in-depth look at early intervention. It was created based on reviewer feedback

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that indicated a need for a clearer focus on the care of and interventions for infants and toddlers with special rights. Chapter 10 now highlights the importance of collaboration among family members, caregivers, and intervention specialists.

- **NEW Chapter 14, Developmentally Appropriate Content.** Given the national preoccupation with school readiness, a new chapter, Developmentally Appropriate Content (Chapter 14), is now available. Older toddlers are ready to explore and experience fine arts, science, mathematics, literacy, and social studies. However, much guidance is provided on how to do this in a way that complements and heightens young children's curiosity. In other words, these content areas must be taught through engaging, integrated projects, rather than in terms of isolated facts.
- **NEW combined chapters.** In response to reviewer feedback, the chapters that discuss infant and toddler development have been combined to eliminate repetition of content. So Chapters 10, 11, and 12 in the eighth edition, which spanned birth to 12 months, are now covered in Chapter 11, Teaching Children Birth to Twelve Months. The content in Chapters 13 and 14 in the eighth edition, which covered children from 12 to 24 months, now appears in the ninth edition's Chapter 12, Teaching Children Twelve to Twenty-Four Months. Finally, the eighth edition content in Chapters 15 and 16 now appears in Chapter 13, Teaching Children Twenty-Four to Thirty-Six Months, in the ninth edition.
- **NEW research results.** Results of new research and scholarly articles have been incorporated into each chapter. For example, new research on social and emotional development can be found in Chapter 3, Social and Emotional Development; current thoughts about how aggression may be normative behavior for toddlers is in Chapter 6, Building Relationships and Guiding Behaviors; and new information on compliance for supporting health and safety guidelines can be found in Chapter 8, The Indoor and Outdoor Learning Environments.
- **NEW concept coverage.** Chapter 3 has a new Spotlight on Research box that focuses on Effortful Control, a newer concept being investigated by researchers.

New Instructional Features

To help aid the student's comprehension and understanding of infant-toddler development and learning, several new instructional features have been created for the ninth edition.

- **A Lesson Plan** now appears at the end of each chapter and can be digitally downloaded. (They are called Professional Resource Downloads.) The goal of this feature is to provide examples of lesson plans that are grounded in observations of a young child and are respectful and engaging through the use of responsive strategies.
- **Learning Objectives and Standards Addressed** are now listed at the beginning of each chapter. The learning objectives correlate directly with major sections in the chapter, as well as with the Summary at the end of each chapter.

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In each chapter, the list of Standards Addressed includes the related 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs, NAEYC's Developmentally Appropriate Practices, and the NAEYC standards specific to infant and toddler care.

- **Family and Community Connection** boxed feature, which is now included in every chapter, is intended to assist the readers in applying strategies for engaging family and community agencies in the care and education of young children. Each box contains a number of questions to spark thinking about important concepts.

Enduring Instructional Features

- **A focus on professional standards** with a Standards Correlation Chart on the book's inside front cover, which offers an at-a-glance view of where discussions related to NAEYC's Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation and Developmentally Appropriate Practice guidelines can be found. In addition, the DAP icon focuses readers on principles of developmentally appropriate practice throughout the text.
- **Spotlight boxed feature** highlights key research topics, professional child care organizations, the personal experiences of child care professionals to enhance the book's real-world perspective.
- In **Spotlight on Practice** "Voices from the Field," found in Chapters 11–14, practicing teachers apply and reflect on concepts discussed in the chapter. For example, in Chapter 14, a teacher discusses how she incorporates literacy in her room by using local community resources, and she reflects on how a specific child reacted to her selection of books.
- **Reading Checkpoints** included throughout each chapter help to improve comprehension by asking students to pause and consider what they have just read.
- Revised **Case Studies** present real-life examples of the concepts and principles discussed. The content of those cases, such as diversity or special rights, is now highlighted in the title of the Case Study.
- Updated references can be found at the end of the text.
- A list of developmental milestones for children from birth to 36 months is provided in Appendix A for the four major areas of development, which assists caregivers in recording observations and assessing each child's current level of development.
- Appendices C and D have been updated to provide a current list of board and picture books that are appropriate to use with infants and toddlers.
- The text is current and comprehensive so that caregivers can acquire the skills necessary to function at nationally accepted standards of quality.
- The level of the language used is easy to follow and offers practical examples for self-study by caregivers-in-training.

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Text Organization

Part I Understanding the Foundations of Professional Education

This section prepares the reader as a professional educator who possesses the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to meet effectively the developmental and learning needs of infants and toddlers. An overview of the theories and research in the fields of child development and early childhood education, including new information on brain development and attachment, helps lay that foundation.

- **Chapter 1** highlights the importance of taking a developmental perspective when working with infants and toddlers as well as an overview of trends in education and development that influence learning environments for very young children.
- **Chapter 2** creates a framework for understanding the growth and development of physical and cognitive/language areas from birth to 36 months.
- **Chapter 3** focuses on growth and development in the emotional and social areas from birth to 36 months. In both Chapters 2 and 3, sections are devoted to expanding the readers' information on brain development.
- **Chapter 4** presents the master tools of caregiving—Attention, Approval, and Attunement—as a model of conscious caregiving, combining practical principles and techniques from current theories and research in the field.
- **Chapter 5** describes specific knowledge bases that professional educators acquire through informal and formal educational opportunities. One such knowledge base involves the appropriate assessment of children. This chapter, then, focuses on various observational tools for tracking development and learning, and how to use the data as the groundwork for other aspects of the caregiver's work.

Part 2 Establishing a Positive Learning Environment

Four chapters provide the reader with details about how to create appropriate environments for very young children. Learning environments include consciously building the physical, social, and intellectual elements of the classroom. No longer can professional educators attend to the physical arrangement and placement of equipment and materials to the exclusion of the socioemotional and intellectual climates created among adults and children.

- **Chapter 6** uses key components of educational philosophy found in the schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy, as the foundation for creating a caring community of learners. Respectful and effective communication and guidance strategies are outlined.
- **Chapter 7** is devoted to appropriate communication strategies to use when creating reciprocal relationships with family members and colleagues. Family situations that may require additional support from the caregiver, the program, or community agencies are presented.

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- **Chapter 8** covers components of high-quality and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor learning environments from the teachers', children's, and society's perspectives and presents common health and safety issues for children.
- **Chapter 9** presents practical techniques for designing the intellectual environment. Curriculum—both routine care times and planned learning experiences—must be specially designed to enhance the development and learning of *each* child. Emphasis is placed on engaging in project work with infants and toddlers.

Part 3 Developing Responsive Curriculum

This part explores strategies for designing curriculum that reflects current levels of development and learning. Two new chapters have been added to this section, and the other three have been significantly reorganized.

- **Chapter 10**, a new chapter, covers early intervention for infants, toddlers, and families. It explores not only how we should approach early intervention from a strengths perspective but also common characteristics of children with special rights.
- **Chapters 11–13** explore tasks, materials, and specific learning experiences to enhance development for children from birth to thirty-six months. Now, each of these chapters focuses on working with children in a one-year age range. This practical section provides specific techniques, teaching strategies, and solutions to many of the common problems confronted when addressing the rapid growth and development of infants and toddlers.
- **Chapter 14**, which is also new, builds on information provided throughout the text as it investigates strategies for supporting content area learning for infants and toddlers. Central concepts for emergent literacy, mathematics, fine arts, social studies, and science are provided.

Supplements

MindTap™: The Personal Learning Experience

MindTap for Swim, *Infants and Toddlers: Caregiving and Responsive Curriculum Development*, Ninth Edition, represents a new approach to teaching and learning. A highly personalized, fully customizable learning platform with an integrated e-portfolio, MindTap helps students to elevate thinking by guiding them to do the following:

- Know, remember, and understand concepts critical to becoming a great teacher.
- Apply concepts, create curriculum and tools, and demonstrate performance and competency in key areas in the course, including national and state education standards.
- Prepare artifacts for the portfolio and eventual state licensure to launch a successful teaching career.
- Develop the habits to become a reflective practitioner.

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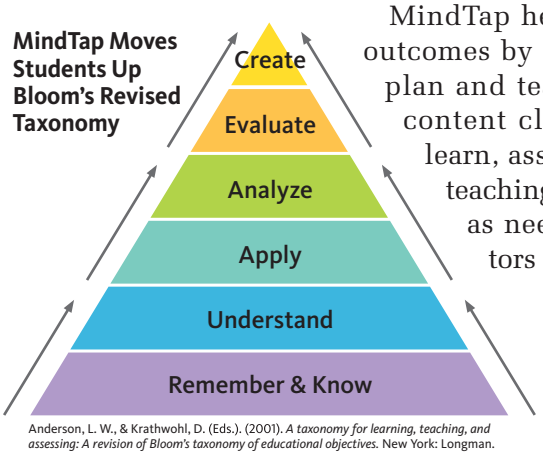
As students move through each chapter's Learning Path, they engage in a scaffolded learning experience, designed to move them up Bloom's Taxonomy, from lower- to higher-order thinking skills. The Learning Path enables preservice students to develop these skills and gain confidence by:

- Engaging them with chapter topics and activating their prior knowledge by watching and answering questions about authentic videos of teachers teaching and children learning in real classrooms
- Checking their comprehension and understanding through Did You Get It? assessments, with varied question types that are autograded for instant feedback
- Applying concepts through mini-case studies—students analyze typical teaching and learning situations, and then create a reasoned response to the issue(s) presented in the scenario
- Reflecting about and justifying the choices they made within the teaching scenario problem



Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. (Eds.). (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives.* New York: Longman.

MindTap helps instructors facilitate better outcomes by evaluating how future teachers plan and teach lessons in ways that make content clear and help diverse students learn, assessing the effectiveness of their teaching practice, and adjusting teaching as needed. MindTap enables instructors to facilitate better outcomes by:

- Making grades visible in real time through the Student Progress App so students and instructors always have access to current standings in the class
- Using the Outcome Library to embed national education standards and align them to student learning activities, and also allowing instructors to add their state's standards or any other desired outcome
- Allowing instructors to generate reports on students' performance with the click of a mouse against any standards or outcomes that are in their MindTap course
- Giving instructors the ability to assess students on state standards or other local outcomes by editing existing or creating their own MindTap activities, and then by aligning those activities to any state or other outcomes that the instructor has added to the MindTap Outcome Library

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importantly—create custom assessments and add any standards, outcomes, or content they do want (e.g., YouTube videos, Google docs). Learn more at www.cengage.com/mindtap.

Online Instructor's Manual with Test Bank

An online Instructor's Manual accompanies this book. It contains information to assist the instructor in designing the course, including sample syllabi, discussion questions, teaching and learning activities, field experiences, learning objectives, and additional online resources. For assessment support, the updated test bank includes true/false, multiple-choice, matching, short-answer, and essay questions for each chapter.

PowerPoint Lecture Slides

These vibrant Microsoft PowerPoint lecture slides for each chapter assist you with your lecture by providing concept coverage using images, figures, and tables directly from the textbook.

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About the Author

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Questions or discussions on any topics covered in the book can be sent to her at the e-mail address below.

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1 Taking a Developmental Perspective

CHAPTER

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

1-1 Determine how the four major developmental areas for assessment differ from one another.

1-2 Explain the theories of child development.

1-3 Justify how the use of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory explains current trends in development and education.

1-4 Recognize the impact of each individual child's culture on classroom interactions and curriculum.

Standards Addressed in This Chapter

NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation

1 Promoting Child Development and Learning

Developmentally Appropriate Practice Guidelines

1 Creating a Caring Community of Learners

In addition, the NAEYC standards for developmentally appropriate practice are divided into six areas particularly important to infant/toddler care. The following areas are addressed in this chapter: *Relationship between Caregiver and Child,* and *Policies.*

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Never before in our history do we know so much about the importance of the infant and toddler years. New brain scan technologies allow us to unobtrusively peak into the developing brain to understand how very young children's brains are being wired. The results show us amazing rates and patterns of development in response to the type and amount of caregiving received, the nutrition provided, and the environmental factors such as exposure to trauma, violence, or maternal depression. The role of early childhood educators is more significant than ever. As a result, educators need to learn more theories, principles, and skills to keep pace with the demands of their profession.

Child care settings are powerful contexts for influencing the development and learning of very young children. High standards require that teachers learn to take good care of both themselves and the children, and to be aware of the interests, abilities, and desires of the child, family, community, and society as a whole. Part 1 provides current trends in caring for infants and toddlers, theories and principles of child development, and a structure for caregiving that helps prepare the caregiver for the challenging and rewarding profession of early childhood education.

This edition continues to emphasize science and new discoveries by researchers (e.g., on brain development and attachment) as well as the influences these findings have on caregiver behavior when working with very young children. By closely observing and recording the behaviors of children, the child care specialist will create a powerful framework to use in caring for and educating infants and toddlers.

When you finish Part 1 of this book, you'll have the knowledge and principles necessary to care for children effectively and enhance the development of each child through your direct, intentional interactions. Parts 2 and 3 build on this base of knowledge to give you all the specific skills, techniques, strategies, and activities needed to function confidently as a professional.

Even though your work is vital within your classroom and educational program, it can't stop there. Early childhood educators need to use the information gained from this text to advocate for collective responsibility and commitment to all children from birth to age 3. The next generations deserve nothing less from us.

What do people who work with young children need to know, and what do they need to be able to do? Early childhood educators* have long debated these questions. For almost a century, people from all areas of the field and all corners of the world have worked to answer these two key questions as well. Current research has helped early childhood specialists clearly define a core body of knowledge, as well as standards for quality in both teacher preparation and in programming for young children. Scholarly research has validated what early childhood professionals have always known intuitively: the quality of young children's experience in early care and education settings is directly related to the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the adults caring for them.

Today's theories and philosophies regarding child development and learning have evolved over time and have been influenced by both

*In this book, the terms *early childhood educator, teacher, caregiver,* and *primary caregiver* will be used interchangeably to describe adults who care for and educate infants and toddlers. Other terms, such as early childhood specialist, educarer, practitioner, staff, child care teacher, head teacher, assistant teacher, or family child care provider, might also be familiar. The use of these four terms is not intended to narrow the focus of professionals discussed in this book or to minimize a particular title, rather the purpose is to provide some consistency in language.

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ancient and modern society and thought. They are the direct result of early childhood professionals and scientists building on previous theories and research to better understand children today.

How teachers use and apply the developmental theories depends not only on their understanding of those theories and associated research but also on their personal beliefs and dispositions. Because we are unable to attend to every aspect of an interaction, our mind filters and categorizes information at astonishing speeds. Our beliefs impact not only how our brain does this work but also how we make sense of the information after it is available. Matusov, DePalma, and Drye (2007) suggest that adults' responses constantly and actively impact the trajectory of development of children. Thus, teachers participate in "… co-constructing the observed phenomenon of development" (p. 410) such that "development defines an observer no less than the observed" (p. 419). In other words, what we observe and what we think the observations mean are as much a reflection of us (our beliefs and knowledge bases) as it is a reflection of the child we observed. This is illustrated in conversations between two adults after observing the same event. They each describe the actions, behaviors, and implications of the phenomenon differently. Thus, recognizing how teachers shape the development of children must subsequently result in the opening of dialogue and communication.

These points are made so that you'll take an active role in reflecting on your own beliefs and how they are changing as you read this book and interact with infants and toddlers. Developing the "habit of mind" for careful professional and personal analysis will assist you in thinking about your role as an educator.

1-1 Developmental Areas

The structure of this book allows for the philosophy that the author believes is most helpful in child care settings. The major contributions of early childhood theorists are presented within this structure. This philosophy, which follows a *Developmental Perspective*, states that teachers and other adults must be consciously aware of how a child is progressing in each area to create environments that facilitate her ideal development. Unlike the tabula rasa theory of the past, which claimed that children are molded to parental or societal specifications, current research indicates that each child's genetic code engages in a complex interaction with environmental factors to result in the realization (or not) of her full potential.

A child born with a physical disability such as spina bifida may not realize as much potential in certain areas as a child born neurologically intact, and a child whose ancestry dictates adult height less than five feet will most likely not realize the potential to play professional basketball. However, within these limiting genetic and environmental factors, every child has the potential for a fulfilling and productive life, depending on how well his or her abilities are satisfied and challenged, and to what extent the skills necessary to become a happy and successful adult are fostered by family members and caregivers.

As you can see, from the moment of birth, the child and the people around the child affect each other. This dynamic interaction is sometimes deliberate and controlled and sometimes unconscious behavior. Caregivers working with infants and toddlers plan many experiences for children.

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Simultaneous with these planned experiences are the thousands of actions that are spontaneous, that stimulate new actions and reactions, and that challenge both the child and the caregiver. Teachers must learn to be mindful in all of their interactions.

Magda Gerber (Gerber & Weaver, 1998) has established an approach and structure for child care that emphasizes mindful interaction between child and caregiver. This approach is illustrated through her "10 principles of caregiving."

1. Involve children in activities and things that concern them.
2. Invest in quality time with each child.
3. Learn the unique ways each child communicates with you and teach him or her the ways you communicate.
4. Invest the time and energy necessary with each child to build a total person.
5. Respect infants and toddlers as worthy people.
6. Model specific behaviors before you teach them.
7. Always be honest with children about your feelings.
8. View problems as learning opportunities and allow children to solve their own problems where possible.
9. Build security with children by teaching trust.
10. Be concerned about the quality of development each child has at each stage.

Interactions that reflect these principles focus on the development of the whole child; that is, attention to cognitive development is not at the expense of social or physical development. When teachers who are new to the profession are required to think about all of the areas of development at once, they can become overwhelmed. Child development knowledge, in this situation, can be divided into distinct, yet interrelated, areas for easy understanding. It is important to note that no area of development functions in isolation from another. This division is arbitrary and is done for the ease of the learner, you. For children, the areas of development come together and operate as a whole, producing an entirely unique individual. Table 1–1 lists the four developmental domains that will be used in this book. Coming to understand the four individual areas well is necessary for you to promote optimal development for each child in your care.

A major goal of this book is to help caregivers understand normal sequences and patterns of development and to become familiar with learning

TABLE 1–1 ◗ Developmental Domains

AREA I	**Physical:** height, weight, general motor coordination, brain development, and so on
AREA II	**Emotional:** feelings, self-perception, confidence, security, and so on
AREA III	**Social:** interactions with peers, elders, and youngsters, both one-on-one and in a group, social perspective-taking, and so on
AREA IV	**Cognitive/Language:** reasoning, problem solving, concept formation, verbal communication, and so on

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tools that enhance development in the four major developmental areas. After you understand the normative patterns or **milestones**, you can more easily recognize and honor the unique patterns that each child demonstrates. Throughout this book, you'll learn to evaluate the development of an individual child by comparing milestone behaviors with the larger group that was used to establish normative behavior for that age. Therefore, necessary aspects of preparing to be an infant/toddler teacher are learning to observe children carefully, record those observations, and analyze that data. After individual parts are understood, early childhood educators can apply the knowledge to care for the whole, constantly changing child in a competent manner.

milestones Specific behaviors common to an entire population that are used to track development and are observed when they are first or consistently manifested.

1-2 Theories of Child Development

Before the Reformation in sixteenth-century Europe, little importance was placed on children; they were considered little adults. With the Reformation and the Puritan belief in *original sin* came harsh, restrictive child-rearing practices and the belief that it was the "duty of the responsible adult to control the child's willfulness and stifle acting-out urges with stern, powerful, and consistent discipline" (Lally, 2006, p. 10).

The seventeenth-century Enlightenment brought new theories of human dignity and respect. Young children were viewed much more humanely. For example, John Locke, a British philosopher, advanced the theory that a child is a *tabula rasa*, or blank slate. According to his theory, children were not basically evil but were completely molded and formed by their early experiences with the adults around them (Locke, 1690/1892).

An important philosopher of the eighteenth century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, viewed young children as *noble savages* who are naturally born with a sense of right and wrong and an innate ability for orderly, healthy growth (1762/1955). His theory, the first child-centered approach, advanced an important concept still accepted today: the idea of **stages** of child development.

stages Normal patterns of development that most people go through in maturation, first described by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

During the late 1800s, Charles Darwin's theories of *natural selection* and *survival of the fittest* strongly influenced ideas on child development and care (1859/1936). Darwin's research on many animal species led him to hypothesize that all animals were descendants of a few common ancestors. Darwin's careful observations of child behaviors resulted in the birth of the science of child study.

At the turn of the twentieth century, G. Stanley Hall was inspired by Darwin. Hall worked with one of Darwin's students, Arnold Gesell, to advance the *maturational perspective* that child development is genetically determined and unfolds automatically—leading to universal characteristics or events during particular time periods (Gesell, 1928). Thus, Hall and Gesell are considered founders of the child study movement because of their **normative approach** of observing large numbers of children to establish average or normal expectations (Berk, 2012). At the same time, in France, Alfred Binet was establishing the first operational definition of intelligence by using the normative approach to standardize his intelligence test.

normative approach Observing large numbers of children to establish average or normal expectations of when a particular skill or ability is present.

Erik Erikson created the **psychosocial theory** of child development. Erikson's (1950) theory, which is still used in child care today, predicted

psychosocial theory Erikson's stage theory of development, including trust, autonomy, identity, and intimacy.

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several stages of development, including the development of trust, autonomy, identity, and intimacy. How these stages are dealt with by family members and teachers determines an individual's capacity to contribute to society and experience a happy, successful life.

behaviorism School of psychology that studies stimuli, responses, and rewards that influence behavior.

While Erikson greatly influenced the fields of child development and care, a parallel approach was being studied, called **behaviorism**. John Watson, the father of behaviorism, in a historic experiment, taught an 11-month-old named Albert to fear a neutral stimulus (a soft white rat) by presenting the rat several times accompanied by loud noises. Watson and his followers used experiments in *classical conditioning* to promote the idea that the environment is the primary factor determining the growth and development of children. Skinner and Belmont (1993) expanded Watson's theories of classical conditioning to demonstrate that child behaviors can be increased or decreased by applying *positive reinforcers* (rewards), such as praise, and *negative reinforcers* (punishment), such as criticism and withdrawal of attention.

social learning theories A body of theory that adds social influences to behaviorism to explain development.

During the 1950s, **social learning theories** became popular. Proponents of these theories, led by Albert Bandura, accepted the principles of behaviorism and enlarged on conditioning to include social influences such as *modeling, imitation,* and *observational learning* to explain how children develop (Grusec, 1992).

cognitive developmental theory Piaget's theory that children construct knowledge and awareness through manipulation and exploration of their environment.

Jean Piaget is one theorist who has influenced the modern fields of child development and care more than any other. **Cognitive developmental theory** predicts that children construct knowledge and awareness through manipulation and exploration of the environment, and that cognitive development occurs through observable stages (Beilin, 1992). Piaget's stages of cognitive development have stimulated a significant body of research on children, and his influences have helped teachers view young children as active participants in their own growth and development. Piaget's contributions have many practical applications for teachers.

attachment theory A theory that infants are born needing an emotional attachment to their primary caregiver.

Attachment theory was developed on the premise that infants need a strong emotional attachment to their primary caregiver. This theory examines how early care, especially relationships between adults and children, impacts later development. Bowlby (1969/2000), after observing children between the ages of one and four years in post–World War II hospitals and institutions who had been separated from their families, concluded that "the infant and young child should experience a warm and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment" to grow up mentally healthy (p. 13). Relying heavily on *ethological* concepts, he proposed that a baby's attachment behaviors (e.g., smiling, crying, clinging) are innate and that they mature at various times during the first two years of life (Bowlby, 1958). The ethological purpose of these behaviors is to keep the infant close to the mother, who keeps the child out of harm's way (Honig, 2002). However, the quality of attachment is not just determined by the infant's behavior. The caregiver's responses to the attachment behaviors serve to create a foundation for their relationship to develop (see Oppenheim & Koren-Karie, 2002). Attachment history has been associated with emotional, social, and learning outcomes later in life (see Copple, 2012) and has been very influential on classroom practices.

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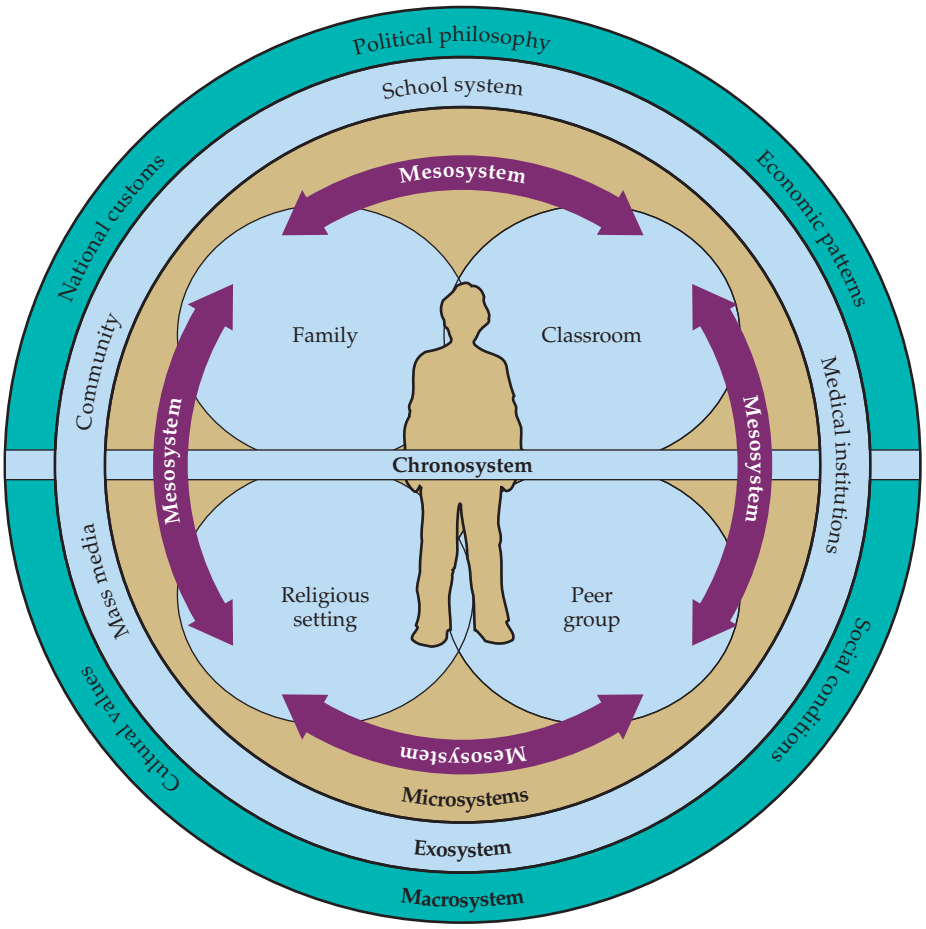
Over the past one to two decades, technologies, such as innovations in noninvasive neuroscience imaging techniques, have begun to significantly impact our understanding of brain development. It was once believed that nature, or the basic genetic makeup of a child, played a dominant role in determining both short- and long-term cognitive developmental outcomes. Newer technologies allow for close examination of nurture, or environmental impacts, on the same outcomes. Scientists have found that harmful, stressful, or neglectful behaviors early in life can affect the development of the brain, potentially leading to lifelong difficulties (Carlson, Hostinar, Mliner, & Gunnar, 2014; Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2011; Nelson, Bos, Gunnar, & Sonuga-Barke, 2011). The quality and consistency of early care will affect how a child develops, learns, copes with, and handles life. The more quality interactions you have with the children in your care, the more opportunities you create for positive development.

Another theory of child development is the **ecological systems theory** developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, an American psychologist. Bronfenbrenner (1995) expanded the view of influences on young children by hypothesizing four nested structures that affect development (see Figure 1–1).

ecological systems theory Bronfenbrenner's theory of nested environmental systems that influence the development and behavior of people.

FIGURE 1–1 ◗ Model of Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory



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Spotlight on Research

ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS FOR INFANTS

Ellen Galinsky outlines in her book, *Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs* (2010), what parents, educators, and community members must know to help children grow and develop optimally. She expertly weaves together research on brain development, social development, emotional development, and environmental influences on those processes to draw her conclusions. As the title indicates, there are seven essential life skills that must be developed for young children:

- Focus and controlling oneself
- Perspective taking
- Communicating
- Making connections
- Critical thinking
- Taking on challenges
- Self-directed, engaged learning

One overarching theme of this book is recognizing and building on the competencies of very young children. Research continues to illuminate how children have remarkable skills long before they can articulate what they are thinking. For example, infants and toddlers are capable of demonstrating brain functions that manage attention, emotions, and behaviors in pursuit of goals (i.e., executive functions) (p. 39); 18-month-old children can take the perspective of an adult (p. 81); infants can read adults' emotional cues to differentiate a range of emotions (p. 113); 6-month-old babies have number sense and can distinguish an array of 8 versus 16 dots (p. 169); and 6- and 10-month-old infants demonstrate people sense when they indicate a preference for the character in a play that helped another (rather than the character who hindered another; pp. 212–213).

A significant contribution of this book is Galinsky's description of the seven essential life skills as being "social-emotional-intellectual (SEI) skills" (p. 71). In other words, current research has elucidated how these essential life skills reflect the multifaceted interplay between those three areas of development. Parents, teachers, and community members can no longer continue to treat these complex skills in simplistic and isolated ways; we must recognize how each area of development works with other areas to result in complex understanding and behaviors.

This book not only blends data generated from rigorous research with interviews of those researchers but also provides practical suggestions that parents and teachers can use to promote brain development via these seven essential skills. For example, Chapter 1 provides 19 suggestions to promote the development of focus and self-control such as encouraging pretend play because it promotes the development of the working memory and playing sorting games with changing rules because they support cognitive flexibility. Critical thinking (Chapter 5) can be supported by promoting curiosity, learning from "experts," evaluating information from others, and being a critical viewer of television and other media.

The last essential skill (self-directed, engaged learning) is of particular importance for teachers of infants and toddlers. Galinsky makes the case that research supports seven principles that help "children unleash their passionate desire to learn" (p. 300). Following are some of those principles:

- Establish a trustworthy relationship with each child.
- Help children set and work toward their own goals.
- Involve children socially, emotionally, and intellectually in learning.
- Elaborate and extend their learning.
- Help children become increasingly accountable for their own learning.

When teachers act intentionally to support children's learning about their passions (e.g., cars for one child, cats for another), they open up new worlds of understanding in areas such as mathematics, history, literacy, and science that will serve them for a lifetime.

microsystem Bronfenbrenner's term for the innermost level of influence found in the immediate surroundings of the child, such as parents or an early childhood educator.

At the innermost level is the **microsystem**, which comprises patterns of interactions within the immediate surroundings of the child. This system includes families, early childhood educators, direct influences on the child, and the child's influence on the immediate environment. The **mesosystem** is the next level of influence and includes interactions among the various microsystems. For example, family and teacher interactions in the child care setting represent connections between

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home and school that impact the child's development. The **exosystem** includes influences with which the child is not directly involved that affect development and care, such as parent education, parent workplace, and the quality and availability of health and social services. The **macrosystem** consists of the values, laws, resources, and customs of the general culture in which a child is raised. This theory has wide applications in understanding and categorizing the factors that affect child care.

The final developmental theory to be discussed here is **sociocultural theory**. A Russian psychologist, Lev Semenovich Vygotsky, hypothesized that culture, meaning the values, beliefs, and customs of a social group, is passed on to the next generation through social interactions between children and their elders (1934/1986). Those social interactions must be at the appropriate level for learning to occur. Adults must observe and assess each child's individual levels of performance as well as her assisted levels of performance on a given task to judge what supports (also known as scaffolding) are necessary for promoting learning (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Bodrova & Leong, 2007), social or emotional development (Morcom, 2014), and play (Leong & Bodrova, 2012). Cross-cultural research has supported this theory through findings that young children from various cultures develop unique skills and abilities that are not present in other cultures (Berk, 2012).

mesosystem Bronfenbrenner's term for the second level of influence for the child that involves interactions among microsystems, such as a teacher in a child care center and family members.

exosystem Bronfenbrenner's term for the influences that are not a direct part of a child's experience but influence development, such as parent education.

macrosystem Bronfenbrenner's term for influences on development from the general culture, including laws and customs.

sociocultural theory Vygotsky's theory on development that predicts how cultural values, beliefs, and concepts are passed from one generation to the next.

1-2a Unique Patterns of Development

These theories differ in their view of various controversies in development (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2013). For the purposes of this chapter, the focus will be placed on the controversy of universal versus unique patterns of development. Theories on the universal end of the continuum (see Figure 1–2) state that development stages or accomplishments are common to all children. As you can tell from the preceding descriptions, some theorists such as Piaget and Gesell describe development as occurring in set patterns for all children. In other words, there are universal trends in cognitive reasoning and physical development. From these perspectives, if you know a child's age, you can predict with some degree of confidence how that child might think or act.

On the other end of the controversy, theories espousing a unique view of development suggest that patterns of development cannot be determined or predicted because environmental factors impact each child differently. Ecological systems and sociocultural theories are both examples on this end of the continuum. These theorists did not believe that teachers could predict a child's behaviors or abilities by knowing a child's age

FIGURE 1–2 ◗ Continuum for the Controversy of Universal versus Unique Development

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