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UNIT 1 Conception to Birth

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1. **Prenatal Origins of Neurological Development: A Critical Period for Fetus and Mother**, Laura M. Glynn and Curt A. Sandman, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 2011

This cutting-edge article explains how during **prenatal development** not only is the fetus's brain being shaped but so is the mother's. The **prenatal environment and maternal hormones affect the fetus's central nervous system and brain** development but also the mother's brain structure and function, changes that can have lifelong impact.

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2. **Genes in Context: Gene–Environment Interplay and the Origins of Individual Differences in Behavior**, Frances A. Champagne and Rahia Mashoodh, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, June 2009

The old-fashioned **nature–nurture debate** is giving way to more sophisticated approaches, such as **epigenetics**, to unravel how genes and experience interact to shape development. Environment can determine which **genes** can “turn on” or stay silent.

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3. **Effects of Prenatal Social Stress on Offspring Development: Pathology or Adaptation?**, Sylvia Kaiser and Norbert Sachser, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, April 2009

This article describes how **prenatal stress** can affect development in humans and animals. Social instability and stress can cause **hormonal changes** for the fetus that may lead to **masculinized effects** in daughters and decreased masculinization in sons.

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UNIT 2 Cognition, Language, and Learning

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Part A. Early Cognition and Physical Development

4. **How Do Infants Become Experts at Native-Speech Perception?**, Janet F. Werker, H. Henny Yeung, and Katherine A. Yoshida, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, August 2012

Infants are capable of learning any language but soon become specialized in understanding their own native tongue. This article describes the process of **distributional learning**, which **helps infants perceive different sounds or phonemes in their early language development**.

20

5. **The Other-Race Effect Develops during Infancy: Evidence of Perceptual Narrowing**, David J. Kelly et al., *Psychological Science*, December 2007

Additional support for **environmental influences** on **face processing** is presented in this article. **Infants** learn to discriminate faces in their own race from other races by 9 months of age, a form of **“perceptual narrowing”** that may facilitate the development of the **other-race effect** seen in adults.

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The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide.

6. **New Advances in Understanding Sensitive Periods in Brain Development**, Michael S. C. Thomas and Mark H. Johnson, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, January 2008
The human brain is marked by **plasticity** early in life but also is susceptible to the power of experiences at different ages. **Sensitive periods** occur when the brain seems optimally prepared to learn certain skills and knowledge, such as **imprinting** and **attachment** and even **second languages**. 31
7. **Contributions of Neuroscience to Our Understanding of Cognitive Development**, Adele Diamond and Dima Amso, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, February 2008
Neuroscience has shown that **biology is not destiny**—that experience affects the growing brain. Authors Diamond and Amso describe recent neuroscience research in several areas, including **infant imitation and mirror neurons, neurotransmitters, maternal touch and infant stress**, and the **intergenerational transmission of biological and behavioral characteristics**. 35
8. **Infant Feeding and Cognition: Integrating a Developmental Perspective**, Elizabeth Soliday, *Child Development Perspectives*, vol. 1, no.1, 2007
It is widely assumed that **breast-feeding** is good for **babies' health and cognitive growth**. However, this article argues that optimistic conclusions may be premature. More precise research is needed on **infant feeding practices, cognitive development, and individual differences** before coming to a more certain answer on breastfeeding. 40
9. **Do Babies Learn from Baby Media?**, Judy S. DeLoache et al., *Psychological Science*, 2010 vol. 21, no.11
Parents are gobbling up **educational videos** assuming that they will help their babies learn. However, this hope seems misplaced, as this article shows that **toddlers' vocabulary** did not improve due to baby videos, though it did thanks to old-fashioned **mother-child interaction**. 46
10. **Social Cognitive Development: A New Look**, Kristina R. Olson and Carol S. Dweck, *Child Development Perspectives*, April 2009
The field of **social cognitive development** uses methods to study how children's thinking about other people and social relationships develops. This research is illuminating **how children think about people's good and bad actions** and **understand people who are similar or different**. 51
11. **Running on Empty? How Folk Science Gets By With Less**, Frank C. Keil, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 21(5), 2012.
An important part of children's **cognitive growth** is to often ask adults "how" or "why" questions to learn about **mechanistic processes**—what causes things to happen? Children's understanding of many causal processes are erroneous, as they often rely on **implicit knowledge** that is mistaken. Yet children show the ability to seek out adults who can provide relevant information. 56
- Part B. Learning in School**
12. **Children's Reading Comprehension Difficulties: Nature, Causes, and Treatments**, Charles Hulme and Margaret J. Snowling, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 2011
Many children are able to **read accurately but have difficulty understanding what they read**. This problem often goes unnoticed in classrooms and is related to various **oral-language difficulties**. These problems can be helped by **school-based interventions**. 61
13. **Recess—It's Indispensable!**, NAEYC, *Young Children*, September 2009
Recess used to be a staple of school, as much a part of a normal day as reading, writing, and lunch. But recess is now under attack, as **school districts are cutting recess for more instructional time**. This article criticizes this recent change and argues that children have a **"right" to recess** and that it promotes **physical, cognitive, and social development**. 65

14. **Social Awareness + Emotional Skills = Successful Kids**, Tori DeAngelis, *Monitor on Psychology*, April 2010
Although schools have emphasized academic intelligence, evidence is mounting to show that **emotional intelligence** matters, too. This article reviews research confirming that children who complete a social and emotional learning program score significantly higher on **achievement tests** and appear **healthier on depression and anxiety scales**. 68
15. **Kindergartners Explore Spirituality**, Ben Mardell and Mona M. Abo-Zena, *Young Children*, July 2010
Beginning at very young ages, children ask **philosophical and spiritual questions**. This article describes a creative kindergarten project—the Beliefs Project—that emphasized children’s **dramatic play, writing, and art** to explore spirituality. Through it all they learned about themselves, about others, and about differences, and even their **teachers and parents** grew in the process. 70



UNIT 3 Social and Emotional Development

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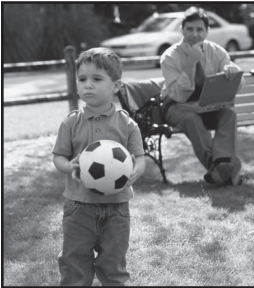
Part A. *The Child’s Feelings: Emotional Development*

16. **Young Children Enforce Social Norms**, Marco F. H. Schmidt and Michael Tomasello, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, vol. 21(5), 2012.
Social development involves learning rules to get along with others. This article describe an **evolutionary approach** to behavioral norms. Many rules are handed down to children from **parents and teachers**, but research shows that even young children are capable of understanding **rules as group-minded shared intentionality** that members of a culture or group must share to get along. 77
17. **Don’t!: The Secret of Self-Control**, Jonah Lehrer, *The New Yorker*, May 18, 2009
Learning how to **control one’s emotions, desires, and actions** is a crucial task of early childhood. The article describes fascinating research that tests when such skills develop, how they are related to **children’s behavior and brain maturity**, and how self-control matters for **long-term development**. 81
18. **The Moral Life of Babies**, Paul Bloom, *The New York Times Magazine*, May 3, 2010
Can babies be moral? Despite theorists’ claims of infants’ immaturity, many fascinating new studies reveal that babies seem to possess **a rudimentary moral sense, a naïve morality**. Bloom’s article describes numerous **experiments** that use ingenious methods to measure infants’ understanding of good and bad in the first year of life. 87

Part B. *Entry into the Social World: Peers, Play, and Popularity*

19. **Same Place, Different Experiences: Bringing Individual Differences to Research in Child Care**, Deborah A. Phillips, Nathan A. Fox, and Megan R. Gunnar, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2011, vol. 5, no. 1
Research on children’s development has often overlooked the role of **individual differences** among children. The authors describe how children’s **temperament** and **reactivity to stress** are key aspects of early personality that influence how children are affected by early environments. 93
20. **The Role of Neurobiological Deficits in Childhood Antisocial Behavior**, Stephanie H. M. van Goozen, Graeme Fairchild, and Gordon T. Harold, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, March 2008
Some children early in childhood engage in antisocial behavior. There are biological and social influences on these problem behaviors. This article describes the interplay between children’s adverse early environments and certain neurobiological deficits that lead to antisocial behavior later in childhood. 99

21. **Is Your Child Gay?**, Jesse Bering, *Scientific American Mind*, July 2012
Is it possible to know what children will grow up to be gay adults? The author discusses several studies that suggest what he calls **prehomosexual children** do often show **gender nonconforming** behavior as children. 104
22. **Caring about Caring: What Adults Can Do to Promote Young Children's Prosocial Skills**, Marilou Hyson and Jackie L. Taylor, *Young Children*, July 2011
Learning to be **prosocial**, to be helpful and kind to others voluntarily, is an important part of becoming a competent child who can interact well with **peers**. The authors review recent research on how prosocial skills develop and particularly **what adults and teachers can do to promote these abilities**. 106
23. **Culture, Peer Interaction, and Socioemotional Development**, Xinyin Chen, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2012, vol. 6, no 1
This article asserts that how children play together and **peer interaction is a key context that mediates the links between children's culture and their own socioemotional development**. Cultural norms shape how children interact with and evaluate each other. Children play an **active role** in their own understanding of culture and socialization. 115

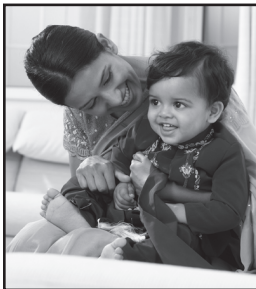


UNIT 4 Parenting and Family Issues

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24. **Why Fathers Really Matter**, Judith Shulevitz, *The New York Times*, September 8, 2012
We often think of mothers as being crucial in children's development, but this article describes biological and genetic research showing how **fathers have powerful genetic influences on their children's development**. Fathers' **reproductive vitality** are affected by factors like stress and age that cause epigenetic changes in the fathers' genes, which can contribute to problems in children like **autism and stress**. 125
25. **Children of Lesbian and Gay Parents**, Charlotte J. Patterson, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, October 2006
Does **parental sexual orientation** affect child development? After years of research, it has been determined that there is **little difference** between the children of heterosexual and homosexual parents. In fact, the **quality of relationships** in the family seems to matter more than the parents' sexual orientation. 128
26. **Evidence of Infants' Internal Working Models of Attachment**, Susan C. Johnson, Carol S. Dweck, and Frances S. Chen, *Psychological Science*, June 2007
Internal working models of attachment underlie the **instinctual behaviors** children display in their attachment relationships. The authors use an ingenious visual **habituation technique** to measure infants' internal working models of attachment, showing that infants' **personal attachment experiences** are reflected in their **abstract mental representations** of social interactions. 132
27. **Parental Divorce and Children's Adjustment**, Jennifer E. Lansford, *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, February 2009
This article reviews the research evidence on how **divorce affects children's short- and long-term development** in areas such as **academics, social relationships, and internalizing and externalizing symptoms**. Other potential mitigating factors are considered, such as **family income, child well-being** prior to divorce, and the timing of divorce. 134

28. **The Role of Parental Control in Children’s Development in Western and East Asian Countries**, Eva M. Pomerantz and Qian Wang, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, October 2009
Parental control over children is a crucial dimension of parenting and **discipline**, yet too much control can have negative effects on children. This article examines how parental control is situated in **different cultures** and may affect children differently in the United States and East Asian countries. 148
29. **The Case Against Spanking: Physical discipline is slowly declining as some studies reveal lasting harms for children**, Brendan L. Smith, *Monitor on Psychology*, April 2012
Disciplining children is one of the most challenging dimensions of **parenting**, and many parents use **spanking**. The author reviews recent research on the spanking debate, with evidence pointing to **risks associated with spanking**, though the effects of spanking are often hard to determine. 153
30. **Sibling Experiences in Diverse Family Contexts**, Shirley McGuire and Lilly Shanahan, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2010, vol. 4, no. 2
Siblings are a key influence in children’s lives, but this article argues that we need better understanding of the embedded layers of **social context**. Siblings live in a family, which has an **ethnicity and culture**, and these factors influence the sibling relationship. The authors review research on **European-, African-, and Mexican-American families**, as well as **adoptive** and **lesbian and gay families**, to illuminate these complex dynamics between culture, family, and siblings. 155
31. **The Effects of Parental Undocumented Status on the Developmental Contexts of Young Children in Immigrant Families**, Hirokazu Yoshikawa and Ariel Kalil, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2011, vol. 5, no. 4
Millions of children in the United States have **parents who are not legal** in this country, even though almost all of their children are United States citizens. What is **the impact of this family and parental status on the children’s development**, especially in **early childhood**? Different social contexts may influence these children, including **legal and public policies and housing quality and parents’ economic and work conditions**. 163
32. **Is Technology Ruining Our Kids?**, Tori DeAngelis, *Monitor on Psychology*, vol. 42, no. 9, October 2011
Many children have cell phones, are regularly on-line, and have MySpace or Facebook accounts, leading parents to worry about problems like **sexting and virtual bullying**. However, this article provides evidence that **parents’ worries** may be overblown, and that **technology** doesn’t have nearly the negative impact that many might think. 170



UNIT 5 Cultural and Societal Influences

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Part A. Social and Cultural Issues

33. **Independence and Interdependence in Children’s Developmental Experiences**, Catherine Raeff, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2010, vol. 4, no. 1
Culture surrounds children’s lives and exerts direct and indirect influences on their development. This article describes how cultures vary in their value on **independence and interdependence**, though it is dangerous to simply categorize a culture as one or the other exclusively. Children’s behavior, from where they **sleep** to **conflict resolution**, is affected by these values. 175

Part B. Special Challenges

34. **More Support Needed for Trauma Interventions**, Beth Azar, *Monitor on Psychology*, April 2012
Millions of children are **neglected or abused** each year. This maltreatment is linked to **post-traumatic stress and attachment disorders**. Abused children need **treatment**, and the author describes several forms that may help. 180

35. **ADHD among Preschoolers**, Brendan L. Smith, *Monitor on Psychology*, July/August 2011
 There is debate about **how common ADHD is among preschoolers** as well as controversy over prescribing **medications** for young children that were designed for adults. **Behavioral therapies** could involve **parents and schools**. 182
36. **The Positives of Caregiving: Mothers' Experiences Caregiving for a Child with Autism**, Michael K. Corman, *Families in Society*, vol. 90, no. 4, 2009
 Although much research on autism focuses on stress and coping, the study reported in this article addresses **resilience exhibited by mothers providing care** to an autistic child. Mothers identify experiences that are appraised in a positive, even joyous, light. Practical implications are included. 184
37. **Caring for Chronically Ill Kids**, Elizabeth Leis-Newman, *Monitor on Psychology*, March 2011
 Many families with a **chronically ill child** are challenged with managing their child's proper **medical care**. Many families fail to adhere to the necessary drug treatment, sometimes because of **poor communication between physicians and parents**. Some parents **struggle emotionally to cope** with their child's illness, and when the ill child is a **teenager**, desire for **autonomy and freedom** can disrupt regular adherence to medication. 192
38. **The Human Child's Nature Orientation**, Patrick C. Lee, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2012, vol. 6, no. 2
 This intriguing paper argues that children have a basic and **developmentally important orientation to nature and animals**. This view is consistent with many **sociocultural theories** of development. Relevant research has explored **child-pet relationships** and children's attitudes toward nature. 195
- Test-Your-Knowledge Form** 201