



Introduction to Human Development; Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development

Health Psychology (CMED2006)
LKS Faculty of Medicine
University of Hong Kong



Learning Objectives

At the end of the lecture, student should be able to

- Differentiate between growth and development
- Outline the nature versus nurture debate in developmental psychology
- Outline the continuous versus staged debate in developmental psychology
- Outline the eight stages of Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory of development
- Based on Erikson's theory, describe how conflict can lead to virtue through specific developmental tasks
- Suggest ways to enhance people's development through supporting one's developmental tasks



Part 1

Why Study Development



Introduction

Throughout this course, we have examined different factors, concepts, and theories that can help us to explain behaviours

In this second half of the course, we will consider the factor of age & development



Scenario 1

Alan was involved in a traffic accident that seriously injured his legs. He is now staying in the hospital and is suffering from pain and loneliness. He is also stressed about the possibility of not fully recovering his ability to use his legs. Suggest one way the hospital or its staff can help Alan to cope.



Scenario 1: Extra piece of information

Alan is 8 years old, loves to run around & play football

(or)

Alan is 38 years old, working in PR and about to get married

(or)

Alan is 68 years old, retired and enjoys travelling & hiking



Scenario 2

Barry just came to your clinic to do his annual body check. He is mildly overweight but otherwise completely healthy. However, you think he should consume more vegetables.



Scenario 2: Extra piece of information

Barry is 5 years old, attending kindergarten

(or)

Barry is 40 years old, working full-time

(or)

Barry is 80 years old, retired and living with his 75 years old
spouse



Factors that Affect Mind & Behaviour

Include cognition (thoughts about specific things); Learning (past experience); motivation; stress, emotion & pain, etc.

But also age & development as determinants of the above, and as factors themselves

In particular, different abilities and different wants



Development-related topics

Different Abilities – physical & cognitive development; understanding of others/mind/society; moral reasoning

Different Wants, Different Struggles – personal relationship; identity & identity crisis; ageing & the end of life

How (Early) Life affect Later Life



Part 2

Growth versus Development



Looking at Ourselves

Can we name a few things about yourself that changed when you grew up?

Can you name a few things that you expect will continue to change when you grow older?



Same or Different

Biological & physiological changes, Psychological changes,
Social / society-related changes

People of different age would have different characteristics

But, people of the same age might also be different because of
their past development



Growth versus Development

Growth is the increase in physical size

Development is the progressive acquisition of skills and the capacity to function (i.e. ability)



Physical Growth

Weight, length, height, head size, etc

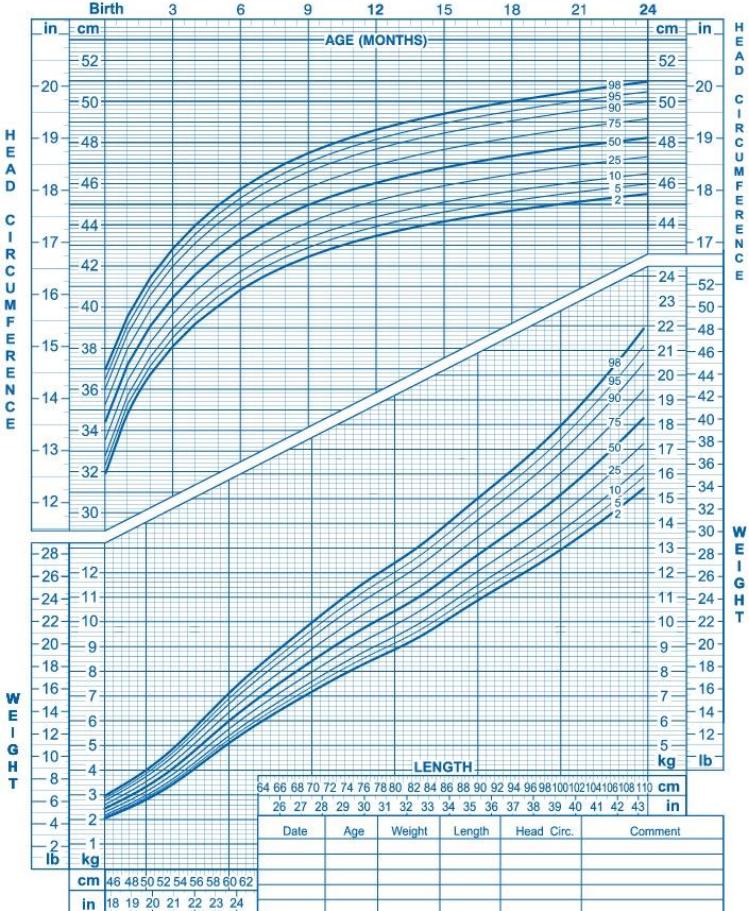
Muscle growth, increase in brain size, enlargement of sexual organs, etc.

Deterioration of fitness, muscles, and bone density, etc.

Birth to 24 months: Boys

Head circumference-for-age and Weight-for-length percentiles

NAME _____
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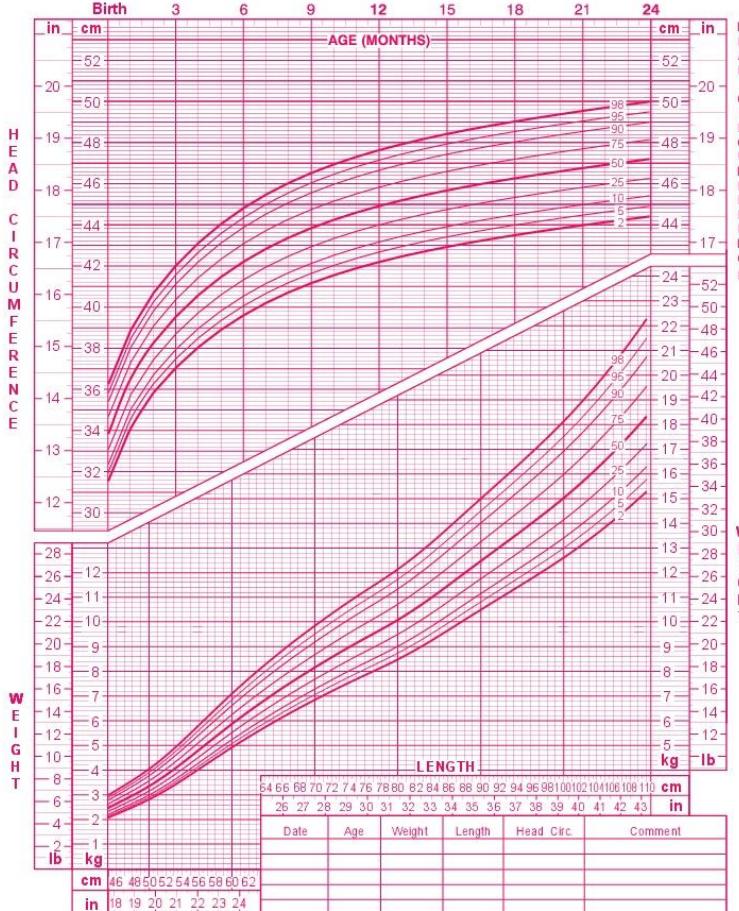


Published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, November 1, 2009
SOURCE: WHO Child Growth Standards (<http://www.who.int/childgrowth/en>)



Birth to 24 months: Girls
Head circumference-for-age and
Weight-for-length percentiles

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Development of Motor Abilities

Developmental of gross (arms & legs) and fine motor (hands & fingers) skills in infants (e.g. Ulnar grasp, pincer grasp, transfer of object from hand to hand)

Crawl, walk, jump, kick, climb, swim, ski, pull-up, play the drums, etc.



LEARN THE SIGNS. ACT EARLY.

Your child's early development is a journey.



MY PERSONAL HEALTH RECORD contains more information on the milestones. Share your child's progress and any concerns with your child and family health nurse or general practitioner at every visit. Don't wait. Acting early can make a real difference! To find your local Child and Family Health Centre go to www.health.nsw.gov.au/child-family-health-services.

For more ideas on spending time with your child, go to Love, talk, sing, read, play.
<http://itsrp.resourcingparents.nsw.gov.au/>



Development of Sensory Abilities

Newborns can react and look towards sound

Sensitive to the sounds and structure of their own language and detect meaningful speech units between 6 & 12 months

Rapid development between 0-7 months due to increased distances between the cornea and retina, increased pupil dimensions, and strengthened cones and rods

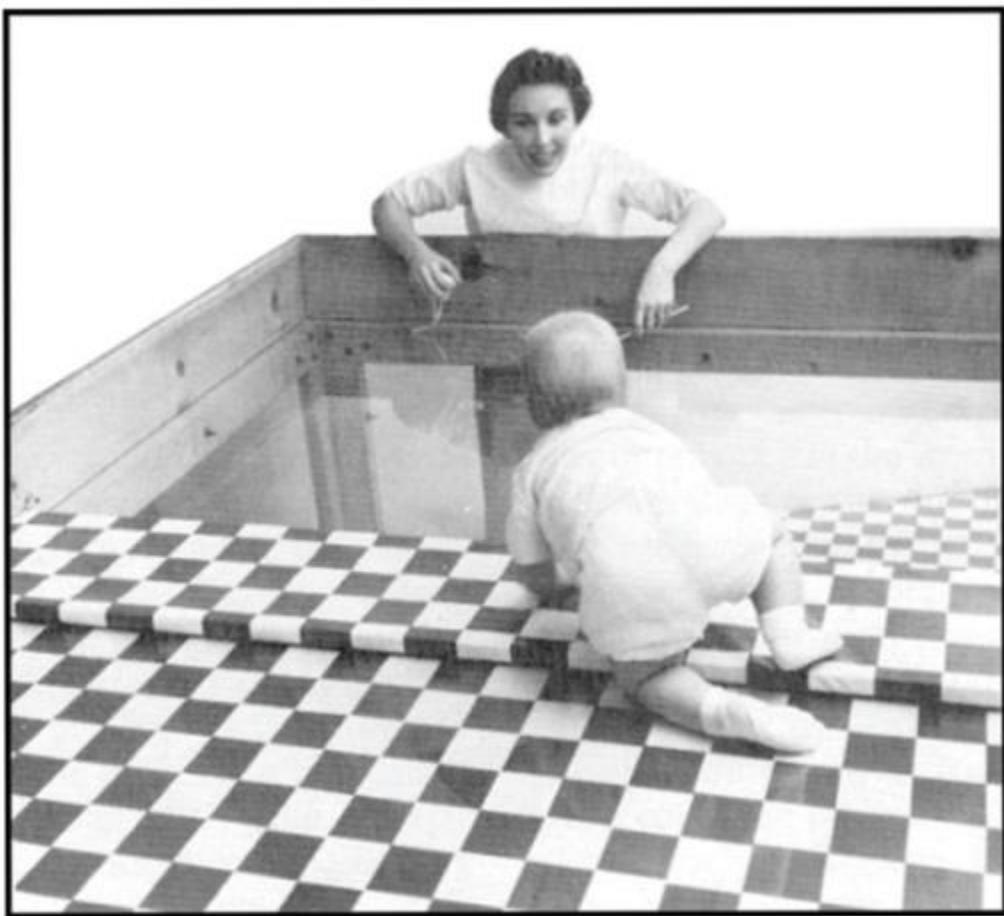


Activity: Visual Cliff Experiment

Can you explain what happened here?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6cqNhHrMJA>

In particular, what thought process are there behind the babies' behaviour, and what abilities are required for the babies to behave in the way they behaved?



Ability to crawl

Ability to perceive depth

Ability to recognize
mother

Ability to interpret
mother's facial
expression

Ability to decide
whether to cross or not



Tool 58: Sensori-motor Functions of Person

A person's behaviour (or lack thereof) can be explained by what they can or cannot physically do

Newborns have limited physical abilities; and our abilities might again start to deteriorate when we get old or diseased



Physical Development in Adolescence

At the peak physical status (gradual decline around age 30
which may not be noticeable)

Lifestyle is a major factor that affects the achievement and
functioning of physical status



Physical Development in Middle Adulthood

Menopause and Andropause

Chronic illnesses become common

Increase in body fat; loss of lean body mass (muscle and bone);
decline in visual acuity and hearing



Physical Development in Old Age

Decline in bodily function but most are able to maintain active & independent lives

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs)



Part 3

Nature versus Nurture



Developmental Psychology

Developmental psychology is about studying how our mind and behaviour change throughout life

The central question of developmental psychology is: How do people become who they are?



Nature versus Nurture

An Age-Old Debate

Are genetic or environmental factors more important?



Nature versus Nurture

By nature we mean inborn biological givens – the hereditary information we receive from our parents at the moment of conception

By nurture we mean the complex forces of the physical and social world that influence our biological makeup and psychological experiences before and after birth



Considering the Following...

What are the nature and nurture aspects of these behaviours & characteristics?

Academic achievement; obesity; height; IQ score; diabetes;
depression; lung cancer



Unhealthy Obsession over Nature

If we think that something is totally due to nature, we might become helpless as nature might not be changed

Or, some people might turn to eugenics, which is an attempt to use nature to their advantage – but can be immoral



Unhealthy Obsession over Nurture

If we think that something is totally due to nurture, we might turn to meritocracy (even if “merit” is usually not well defined)

Also can lead to victim-blaming when the victim might not be at fault



Interaction between Nature and Nurture

In fact, most phenomenon (behaviours, characteristics of a person, disease, etc.) is a result of both nature and nurture factors (both genetic and environmental factors)

It can also be argued that most phenomenon is a result of the interaction between nature and nurture factors

Epigenetics; Enabling / disabling effect



Example of Height / Tallness

Height is largely affected by DNA (sex, race, parents); but also hormone (esp. growth hormone), diet (esp. calcium & protein), sleep, exercise, etc.

Some factors are more modifiable than others



Example of Diabetes Mellitus

High risk of DM for offspring of DM patients

Nature: genes for susceptibility & behaviour

Nurture: diet & physical activities in family setting & during upbringing



Implication for Intervention

What should one do to reduce your own risk of diabetes mellitus?

What should one do to maximize the chance that your children are tall?



Tool 59: Nature versus Nurture

People behaviours (and characteristics) can be explained by genetic or environmental factors – in fact, they are likely to be the result of both nature (genetic) and nurture (environmental) factors

Some factors are more modifiable than others, and form the basis for intervention



Part 4

Continuous versus Staged Development



Instruction

Name the definition of the following:

A child

An teenager

An adult

An elderly



Difference Between Stages?

Are the difference between one stage and the next quantitative, or qualitative?

Apart from just age, how else would you divide a human lifespan into different stages / categories?



Quantitative (Continuous) Change

A process of gradually augmenting the same types of skills that were there to begin with

Children respond to the world in much the same way as adults do – the difference between children and adults simply the amount or complexity



Qualitative (Staged) Change

A process in which new ways of understanding and responding to the world emerge at specific times

Children have unique ways of thinking, feeling and behaving, ones quite different from adults → distinct stages



Second Key Question in Development

Do we develop gradually and smoothly, or do we have distinct stages?

That is, do our [blank] improves / changes gradually, or do they jump noticeably within a short period of time?



How Else can we Stage a Life? (1)

Legally: Unborn → Child → Adult

Biology oriented: Infancy → Childhood → Puberty →
Adulthood → Menopause & Andropause → ??

Work-oriented: Newborn → Kindergarten → Primary School →
Secondary School → Higher Education → Work → Retired



How Else can we Stage a Life? (2)

Family-oriented: Born and lived with parents → move out → form one's own family → have children → children moving out → having grandchildren

Confucius: 「吾十有五而志於學，三十而立，四十而不惑，五十而知天命，六十而耳順，七十而從心所欲不逾矩。」（《論語·為政第二》）



Discussion

With time, we do naturally develop throughout our life

Our body (and our brain in particular) establish some constraints on what we can and cannot do at each stage of our lives

But there are also a lot of influence from the society – and it is the interaction between the two that results in our development



Tool 60: Continuous or Staged

The changes of people's behaviour can be the result of either a quantitative (continuous) or a qualitative (staged) change in their body and mind, especially mental abilities (e.g. thoughts, understanding, knowledge)



Part 5

Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development



Insights from Two Pioneer Psychologists

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) proposed that the behaviours and thoughts (and problems) of adults are hugely determined by their experience during childhood

Jean Piaget (1896-1980) proposed that children are not just smaller, less learned and less intelligent adults, but actually think differently than adults



A Lifespan Perspective of Development

Assuming that development is lifelong (not just stopped at a certain age); multidimensional and multidirectional (biological, social, psychological, etc.) and plastic (i.e can be changed)



Erik Erikson, an “ego psychologist”

Erikson's theory tracks how a person (an “ego”) develops through successful resolution of conflict in their lives

Each stage of human life has a developmental task that helps us resolve the conflict



Consequences of Conflict

If the conflict is resolved satisfactorily, the positive component is absorbed to the emerging ego

If the conflict persists or is resolved unsatisfactorily, the developing ego is damaged and the negative component is incorporated into the ego



Virtue

Favourable outcomes of each stage are sometimes known as "virtues"

Only when both extremes in a life-stage challenge are understood and accepted as both required and useful, can the optimal virtue for that stage surface



Name of Stage / Conflict (Age)	Virtue	Developmental task
<i>Trust vs Mistrust (0-1)</i>	<i>Hope</i>	<i>Develop close relationship with mother</i>
<i>Autonomy vs Shame & Doubt (1-3)</i>	<i>Will</i>	<i>Make one's own decision</i>
<i>Initiative vs Guilt (3-6)</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Imagine and try who one will be</i>
<i>Industry vs Inferiority (6-12)</i>	<i>Competency</i>	<i>Learn at school and develop a sense of competence</i>
<i>Identity vs Ego Diffusion (12-19)</i>	<i>Fidelity</i>	<i>Search for identity</i>
<i>Intimacy vs Isolation (20-40)</i>	<i>Love</i>	<i>Develop intimate Relationships</i>
<i>Generativity vs Stagnation (40-65)</i>	<i>Care</i>	<i>Concerns for welfare of next generation and society</i>
<i>Integrity vs Despair (65-death)</i>	<i>Wisdom</i>	<i>Look back at one's life and accept what one has achieved</i>



Tool 61: Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development

A person's behaviour (or general behavioural pattern) might be part of the developmental task of their psychosocial stage

It might be a result of an ongoing (age-appropriate or previously unresolved) conflict

It can also be the result of either a successful or unsuccessful resolution of the conflict



Tool 61a: Trust vs Mistrust

Developing close relationship with mother

Balancing between “Trusting people” and “Not trusting people”

Hopefully able to achieve the virtue of Hope



Tool 61b: Autonomy vs Shame & Doubt

Making one's own decision

Balancing between “Making decisions for oneself” and
“Dependent and not making one’s own decision”

Hopefully able to achieve the virtue of Will



Tool 61c: Initiative vs Guilt

Imagine and try who one will be

Balancing between “Trying things and be creative” and “Not trying new things; blaming oneself when bad things or mistakes happen”

Hopefully able to achieve the virtue of Purpose



Tool 61d: Industry vs Inferiority

Learning at school and develop a sense of competence

Balancing between “feeling capable and competent” and “feeling incapable and incompetent; lacking confidence”

Hopefully able to achieve the virtue of Competency



Tool 61e: Identity vs Ego Diffusion

Searching for identity

Balancing between “being sure about one’s nature and place in society” and “being unsure about one’s life and who one is”

Hopefully able to achieve the virtue of Fidelity



Tool 61f: Intimacy vs Isolation

Developing intimate Relationships

Balancing between “forming strong relationship” and “not forming strong relationship”

Hopefully able to achieve the virtue of Love



Tool 61g: Generativity vs Stagnation

Concerning for welfare of next generation and society

Balancing between “contributing to the world” and “not contributing to the world”

Hopefully able to achieve the virtue of Care



Tool 61h: Integrity vs Despair

Looking back at one's life and accept what one has achieved

Balancing between "being able to look back at one's life with a sense of contentment and face the end of life with a sense of wisdom and no regrets" and "having regrets and being unable to change the past nor face the present / future"

Hopefully able to achieve the virtue of Wisdom



A Virtuous Person?

Hope – trusting of other people but not gullible

Will – independent but not dismissive of others' suggestions

Purpose – willing to try things, but understand one's limitation

Competency – confidence (but not overly so) of one's ability

Fidelity – be true to one's nature, but understand our roles

Love – formed strong relationship, but not with everyone

Care – contributing to the world and to later generations

Wisdom – have a clear evaluation of one's life



Part 6

Behavioural Change



Case 14

You are organizing a health talk for primary school students on health living. The topics include balanced diet, regular physical exercise, and the avoidance of tobacco and alcohol.

You are wondering the tone that you want to adopt during this talk, as well as the kind of information (and facts) that are most useful to be presented to the students.



Case 14 Focus

Which stage (in Erikson's theory of psychosocial development) are most of your audience most likely to be in? How can your message fit in with their developmental task?

Which stages have your audience passed through already? What virtues do you expect them to have? Given that some of them might not have achieved to virtue, what should you do?



Part 7

Conclusion



Conclusion

Developmental psychology is about studying how our mind & behaviour change throughout life

This change can be growth or development, can be continuous or staged, and can be affected by both nature and nurture

Erikson's theory give us a lifespan perspective



Reading / References

- Boyd, DR & Bee, H (2019). Lifespan development (8th ed.). Chapter 1.1 An Introduction to Human Development
- Boyd, DR & Bee, H (2019). Lifespan development (8th ed.). Chapter 2 Theories of Development. Boston, MA: Pearson.



~ End of lecture ~