Human Development

Developmental psychology - a field which examines physical, cognitive and socioemotional change

Physical development - the body maturing in an universal, recognizable pattern

Cognitive development - child's brain development to adulthood

Socioemotional development - social behaviours and emotions

Biopsychosocial perspective - recognizing how all of above interact

Issues in Developmental Psychology
- Nature and Nurture
- Stages and Continuality — do they progress gradually or in stages
- Stability and Change — as we age, how do we stay the same/change

Research Designs

	Advantages	Disadvantages	
Cross-sectional design	• Allows comparison between age groups • Completed quickly	• Cohort effect	Different ages at single point in time
Longitudinal design	• Avoid cohort effect	• Practice effects • High attrition rates • Costly, many participants	Single group at different points in time
Cross-sequential design	• Avoid cohort effect • Shows changes within individuals		Different ages, different points in time

Infancy and Childhood

Newborn -
Rooting and sucking reflexes - unlearned patterns of behaviour
- necessary for survival
- some fade, many resurface as voluntary movement

reflex

Turning their face and open their mouth upon physical contact. Reflex for food

Rooting ~ disappears at 4 months
Sucking ~ undoesn't mature until 3 years old

Senses - prefers human faces
- prefers mother's voice
- prefers mother's milk
- sweet tastes than sour
- react to touch
- react to pain
- blurred vision for first couple of months
- startle reflex

Brain Development

In Womb - starts with neural tube
then forebrain - outer cortex
midbrain - pain perception
hindbrain - primitive, breathing, heartrate
About 100 billion neurons

In Infants - brain stem, limbic system, motor and sensory strips
Childhood - association areas, attention, control, thinking, memory and language
↓ Synaptic pruning - getting rid of weak/unused connections to allow productive ones become stronger
Adulthood

Motor development, universally
- 6 months - sit unsupported
- 8/9 months - crawling
- 12 months - beginning to walk
- 15 months - walk independantly

Behaviourist ↓

Language acquisition - learnt by positive acquisition + observation

Problem is - errors (grammatical) non-sensical stringing of words
- novel utterances
- learn too quickly

Evidence against this theory

Language acquisition device - universal innate mechanism for learning language
- compare language they hear in their environment to an already hard-wired framework

Evidence

Sequence - 1) Cooing
2) Babbling
3) Telegraphic speech (2 word phrases)

By 5/6 years old, fluent in native language
Amount of language in home correlates with socioeconomical status

Critical periods - Specific time frame where an organism is sensitive to environmental factors and certain behaviours and abilities are shaped or altered

Attachment - degree of emotion connection between infant and care giver
- Secure - upset when gone, calm upon return
- Avoidant - nothing when gone or return
- Ambivant - upset when gone, still upset upon return

Cognitive Development

Jean Piaget, children experience in cognitive development differently

recognises a dog

1) Schema - a collection of ideas that represent basic understanding

sees a cat. thinks cat is dog correction

2) Assimilation - use existing information to understand new information

cat now in seperate category from dog

3) Accommodation - restructuring of old schema for new schema

Stage 1 - Sensorimotor
0-2 years old
- Experience world through senses and actions
- Begin to understand object permanence

Stage 2 - Preoperational
2-7 years old
- Represent objects with words and images
- Engage in pretend play
- Develop theory of mind
  - Before theory of mind, is Egocentrism.
- Doesn't understand conservation

cannot understand other people's perspective

test with "False belief test"

Have a brother?
Yes, called Jim.
Does Jim have a brother?
No.

Stage 3 - Concrete operational
7-11 years old
- Think more logically
- Use analogies
- Develop maths
- Understand conserve conservation

Stage 4 - Formal operational
11+ years
Develop abstract reasoning

Moral Development

Kohlberg believes there is 6 stages to classify moral behavior

Ages

Preconventional:
- 2-4 **1** (Obedience. What is punished or not)
- 4-7 **2** (What is recieved / rewarded)

Conventional:
- 7-10 **3** (Determined by approval of others) (Good boy/bad boy)
- 10-12 **4** (Law)

Post-conventional:
- Teen **5** (Adapting the law to what is deemed fair by you)
- Adult **6** (Universal justice and equality for everyone)

Critics - women not represented
- moral behavior is defined, not explained
- applicable to western, collectivest cultures