understanding child DEVELOPMENT 10e

ROSALIND CHARLESWORTH

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Understanding Child Development, Tenth Edition
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Cover Image Credit: Children: ShutterStock 237914230/257336311, Beach ball: ShutterStock 259858607
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WCN: 02-200-202

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2015935621

Student Edition:

ISBN: 978-1-305-50103-4

Loose-leaf Edition:

ISBN: 978-1-305-63957-7

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20 Channel Center Street
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Printed in the United States of America
Print Number: 01 Print Year: 2015

To Edith M. Dowley, Ruth Updegraff, Shirley G. Moore,
Willard W. Hartup and Ada D. Stephens
who nurtured my professional development,
and to my daughter Kate,
granddaughter Summer, and grandson Aiden
who have provided a rich source of developmental
information and inspiration.

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Preface

Understanding Child Development is designed for teachers in training and in service whose major interest is prekindergarten, kindergarten, and primary grade children. It is also a valuable tool for social service professionals, special educators, parents, home visitors, and others who require a practical understanding of young children. For students, it introduces the uniqueness of the young child (as distinguished from the older child) and shows how to work with young children in a way that corresponds to their developmental level. For in-service teachers, this text offers an opportunity to evaluate their views of the young child and compare them to the views presented here. For all adults who work with young children, this book presents a picture of the child in the context of family, school, and culture.

Organization of the Text

Working with young children is challenging. Those who work with young children agree that development and education are inseparable influences on their growth. In this text, developmental concepts are placed in practical perspective. Theory, research, and practice are related to everyday interactions with children. In each section, there is also consideration of the roles of adults—from teachers to family members—as they support the development of young children.

Understanding Child Development is divided into six sections, with a total of fifteen chapters. The first section briefly describes the young child, theories of child development, and methods of studying young children. The second section focuses on the elements of learning that apply from birth through eight years old. The subsequent sections follow the child from the prenatal period to infancy to preschool and kindergarten through the primary grades, focusing on physical/motor and health, cognitive, and affective development. Each section focuses on these topics in sequence and looks at critical social and cultural factors related to young children's development. Issues relevant to working with children with special needs are integrated throughout the text.

What's New in the Tenth Edition?

The practical application of theory and research are the foundation of this book, and in this edition, I've simultaneously streamlined the text while strengthening its foundation by providing new and updated research on the following topics related to child development:

- Updated statistics and demographic information throughout the text
- Authentic assessment (Chapter 1)
- An update on technology use in early childhood (Chapter 2)
- Electronic media in the family (Chapter 3)
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) parenting (Chapter 3)

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- The use of Surfaxin® in premature infants (Chapter 4)
- Brain development (Chapter 4)
- Temperament (Chapter 4)
- Special education (Chapter 5)
- The father's role in child care (Chapter 5)
- Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) (Chapter 5)
- Speech and language, including nonverbal communication (Chapter 6)
- Cross-cultural parenting (Chapter 6)
- The impact of parental drug abuse (Chapter 7)
- A description of guidance (Chapter 7)
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Chapter 7)
- Food insecurity (Chapter 8)
- Writing and drawing (Chapter 8)
- Self-regulation (Chapter 8)
- Intelligence, giftedness, and creativity (Chapter 9)
- The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation and its effects (Chapter 10)
- The characteristics of multilingual children (Chapter 10)
- Reading in kindergarten (Chapter 10)
- Reflective teaching (Chapter 11)
- E-books (Chapter 11)
- Children's social–emotional behavior and characteristics (Chapter 12)
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) children (Chapter 12)
- Instructive discipline (Chapter 13)
- Bullying (Chapter 13)
- Spring testing stress (Chapter 14)
- Play in the primary grades (Chapter 14)
- Pre-K to primary continuity (Chapter 14)
- Readiness (Chapter 14)
- Cyberbullying (Chapter 15)
- Mental health (Chapter 15)
- Vaccinations (Chapter 15)
- Anti-bullying programs (Chapter 15)
- Update on school lunch program guidelines (Chapter 15)
- Zero tolerance (Chapter 15)

Organizational Changes

The primary organizational change in this edition is significant: the 31 units that appeared in the ninth edition have been combined into fifteen cohesive chapters. We listened to the many reviewers who told us that this would be a helpful way to make the text more closely aligned with semester schedules. It also allows us to make this book more compatible with MindTap, which is discussed on pages xxi–xxii.

Chapter Resources

- At the beginning of each chapter are Learning Objectives and a list of the NAEYC Program Standards and Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Guidelines that relate to each chapter.

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- Material related to Learning Objectives is highlighted with each objective's number.
- Boxed features include "Time to Reflect," "Technology in Early Childhood Education," "Brain Development," and "Child Development in the Real World."
- Glossary terms are provided in the margins for easy reference.
- End-of-chapter summaries correlate with the Learning Objectives at the beginning of the chapter.
- A Standards Correlation Grid on the inside front and back covers allows you to quickly locate coverage of the standards guidelines in each chapter.

Teaching and Learning Supplements

MindTap: The Personal Learning Experience

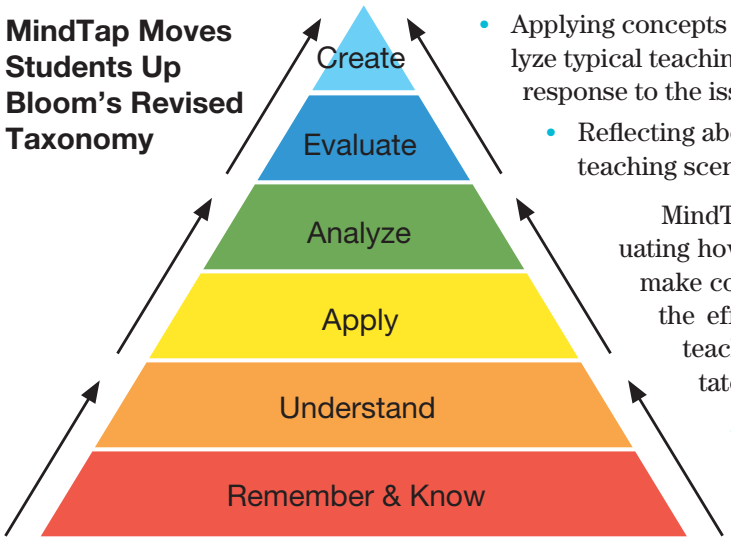
MindTap™ for *Understanding Child Development*, Tenth Edition, represents a new approach to teaching and learning. A highly personalized, fully customizable learning platform with an integrated e-portfolio, MindTap helps students to elevate their thinking by guiding them to do the following:

- Know, remember, and understand concepts critical to becoming a great teacher
- Apply concepts, create curricula 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

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 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 automatically graded for instant feedback

MindTap Moves Students Up Bloom's Revised Taxonomy



- Applying concepts through mini-case scenarios in which students analyze typical teaching and learning situations and then create a reasoned response to the issues presented in the scenario
- Reflecting about and justifying the choices they made within the teaching scenario

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 that students and instructors always have access to current standings in the class

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- 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

For this book, MindTap helps instructors easily plan their course since it integrates into the existing Learning Management System (LMS) and saves instructors time by allowing them to fully customize any aspect of the Learning Path. Instructors can change the order of the student learning activities, hide activities they don't want to use, and—most important—create custom assessments and add any standards, outcomes, or content they do want (e.g., YouTube videos or 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 taken directly from the textbook.

Cognero

Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero is a flexible online system that allows you to write, edit, and manage test-bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions; create multiple test versions in an instant; and deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to express her appreciation to the following individuals and early childhood education and development centers:

- The following students at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, the University of Houston at Clear Lake City, and Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, who provided many examples from their projects and contributions to class discussion: Donna Jolly, Zheng Zhang He, Stacie Ducote, Rhonda Balzamo, Denee Babin, Lisa Kirk, Pattie Guidry, Gay Koenig, Jill Ochlenschlager, Jill Evans, Donna Wendt, Tammy Overmeyer, Jill Flaugher, Kathleen Roberts, Sue Heestand, Beth Leatherman, Elizabeth M. Schumm, Nancy Miller, K. Weber, Adrienne Rossoni, Susan Rollins, Carol Roach, Kristine Reed, Kathy Kayle Bede Hurley, Linda Boone, Ruthie Johnson, and Carolyn Nattress.
- The following Weber State University students kindly gave permission for anecdotes they collected to be included in this text: Christi Allan, Britnee Allred,

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Jodie Bennett, Jennifer Benshoof, Rebecca Burt, Elizabeth Cook, Sherrae Flanders, Misty Francis, Marianne Gill, Melissa Ginter, Amy Goodwin, Brenda Hagen, Stacy Hair, Andrea Halls, Faith Hedges, Jill Hess, Rebecca Hansen, Susan Houston, Carole Lane, Alicia Madsen, Kimberly Morgan, Brooke Murdock, Jennifer North, Annie Peterson, Brooke Peterson, Stacy Roubinet, Cynthia Sheffield, Stephanie Scholes, Amy Simpson, Mary Stokes, Crystal VanArle, Jaclyn Wintle, and Cindy Winward.

- The following Louisiana teachers whose students provided writing and drawing samples: Joan Benedict, Cleator Moore, Robyn Planchard, and Lois Rector.

In addition, thanks to Mrs. Gibson at Polk Elementary School and her kindergarten students, and Mrs. Tate at St. Joseph's Elementary School and her second graders, with whom I spent many volunteer hours learning more about young children. Thanks to Nancy Lindeman, director, and to Kacee Weaver and her assistant, Kathleen Lowe, at the Maria Montessori Academy in North Ogden, who welcomed us into a primary class to obtain photos. Also, thanks to teachers Cami Bearden, Stephanie Holmes, and Sherrie West at the Weber State University Children's School for allowing us to take photos in their prekindergarten classrooms.. Danielle Taylor, Kate Charlesworth, and Rosalind Charlesworth also provided photos.

Thanks to the following individuals who served as reviewers of the prior edition in preparation for the tenth edition:

Maria Abercrombie, *Chattahoochee Technical College*
Jennifer Briffa, *Merritt College*
Jerry Brinegar, *Athens Technical College*
Beverly Browne, *Central Carolina Community College*
Evia L. Davis, *Langston University*
Jennifer Defrance, *Three Rivers Community College*
Elizabeth Elliott, *Florida Gulf Coast University*
April Grace, *Madisonville Community College*
Traci Johnston, *Pulaski Technical College*
Sonya Jordan-Tapper, *Pearl River Community College*
Carol Kessler, *Cabrini College*
Bridget Murray, *Henderson Community College*
Sandra Owen, *Cincinnati State University*
Hollie Queen, *Chattahoochee Technical College*
Pamela Shue, *University of North Carolina at Charlotte*
Lisa White, *Athens Technical College*
LouAnn Williamson, *Minnesota West Community & Technical College*

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About the Author

Rosalind Charlesworth, Ph.D., is professor emerita and former chair of the Department of Child and Family Studies in the Vickie and Jerry Moyes College of Education at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, where she taught child development and early childhood education courses. She has also taught developmental courses to students in family and consumer sciences, education, and behavioral sciences. Her career has included teaching both typical and atypical young children in university laboratory schools, public school, and child care settings, and doing research in social and cognitive development, developmentally appropriate practice (DAP), and teachers' beliefs and practices. Originally, this text grew out of several years of experience teaching child development courses for adults who planned to work with preschool children without the benefit of an appropriate textbook. It has expanded along with her experience teaching both preservice and graduate-level students who work with young children from birth to age eight.

Dr. Charlesworth is also the author of the popular Cengage Learning textbook, *Math and Science for Young Children*, has published many articles in professional journals, and has given many presentations at professional meetings. She has provided service to the field through active involvement in professional organizations. She was a member of the Early Childhood Teacher Education Panel of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a consulting editor for the *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, and a member of the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Public Policy and Long-Range Planning Committees. She served two terms on the NAECTE board as regional representative and one as vice president for membership. She was twice elected treasurer and also elected newsletter editor of the Early Childhood/Child Development Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association, served as president of the Louisiana Early Childhood Association, and was a member of the editorial board of the Southern Early Childhood Association journal *Dimensions*. She is currently on the editorial board of the *Early Childhood Education Journal*. In 1995, she was named the Outstanding Graduate of the University of Toledo College of Education and Allied Professions. In 1999, she was corecipient of the NAECTE/Allyn and Bacon Outstanding Early Childhood Teacher Educator award. In 2014, the Department of Child and Family Studies at Weber State University awarded her the Department Legacy Award in recognition of her contributions to the field of early childhood education (ECE).

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PART I
Overview of the Young Child: Birth Through Age Eight

chapter 1

Studying the Young Child

Standards Covered in This Chapter

NAEYC Program Standards

1a: Knowing and understanding young children's characteristics and needs from birth through age eight
1b: Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning from birth through age eight
3a: Understanding goals, benefits, and uses of assessment
3b: Knowing and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches
3c: Understanding and practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child
6b: Knowing and upholding ethical standards and other professional guidelines

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Guidelines

1: Creating a caring community of learners
2: Teachers use developmentally appropriate teaching practices
3C 2: Developmental paths are considered in planning
4A1: Assessment of development and learning is essential for teachers to plan, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of the classroom experience

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

1-1 Describe young children and their settings.
1-2 Compare typical and atypical infants; toddlers; three-, four-, and five-year-olds; and six- through eight-year-olds.
1-3 Identify the essential adult role with young children.
1-4 Describe the history of child development theory, define the term *theory*, and identify types of theories and how they might be applied.
1-5 Discuss precautions that should be taken when applying theories to the lower-socioeconomic-level and/or minority-group child.
1-6 Summarize important historical events in child study.
1-7 Describe methods of child study and explain authentic assessment.
1-8 Explain the need for a professional code of ethics.

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1-1 Young Children and Their Settings

NAEYC
National Association for the Education of Young Children.

young children
Children from birth through eight years of age.

Who is the young child? According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children **(NAEYC)**, children from birth through eight years of age are considered to be **young children** (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; NAEYC, 2008). They are usually grouped into approximate age categories:

Infants	Birth to 1 year
Toddlers	1 year to 3 years
Preschoolers	3 years to 5 years
Kindergartners	5 years to 6 years
Primary	6 years through 8 years

infants
Children from birth to approximately one year of age.

toddlers
Children from age one to age three.

preschoolers
Three-, four-, and some five-year-olds who have not yet entered elementary school.

The young child is a small person who is complex and at times puzzling. Jerry Tello (1995) describes how children come into the classroom as reflections of their diverse family backgrounds. Some are not prepared to take full advantage of what the classroom has to offer. Some children may "speak an entirely different language, practice different customs, expect different kinds of nurturing, embrace different values, be surrounded by people who look different, or have a variety of special needs" (Tello, 1995). This chapter defines the early childhood age span and presents diverse examples of young children's behavior.

What does the young child do? The newborn is interested in personal comfort: being warm, being well fed, and having a dry diaper. Very quickly, the newborn learns to expect attention and cuddling from the caring others in his or her environment. Soon the **infant** becomes aware of his or her own body and of things in the environment that he or she can control (Photo 1-1). By age one, the infant moves into the **toddler** period, and from age one to age three, the toddler is most interested in moving about and exploring everything (Photo 1-2). By the time the child is a preschooler, paint, clay, balls, games, dolls, trucks, and books all serve as raw materials for play. By age three, the child accomplishes many routine tasks, such as eating, sleeping, bathing, using the toilet, and dressing. Young boys and girls can walk, run, climb, yell, speak conversationally, and whisper. They can express their feelings—happiness, sadness, contentment, anger, and irritability—clearly.

Three- and four-year-olds are usually called **preschoolers**, meaning they have not yet entered elementary school, although many

Photo 1-1 The crawling infant is engrossed in reaching objects in the environment.

Photo 1-2 Young children enjoy dressing up as adults.

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Photo 1-3 Four-year-olds like the companionship of other children and are more independent of adults than three-year-olds.

five-year-olds have not yet entered kindergarten and are still preschoolers (Photo 1-3). Five-year-olds are usually labeled as **kindergartners** even though kindergartners may be four, five, or six, depending on their birth dates and when they entered school. Children ages six through eight, or in grades first through third, are in the **primary period** (Photo 1.4). These age labels are rather arbitrary and do not necessarily tell us where a child is developmentally. Therefore, the following descriptions are examples; not every child is exactly like the ones described.

Infants are, as already mentioned, very dependent. Between ages one and three, the young child moves toward increased independence. Preschoolers are ready to strike out on their own, beyond the safe confines of home and parents. Many children spend extended periods away from home before age three—in a child-care home, at a relative's home, in a center-based infant or toddler playgroup, or in a full-day child care group. By age three, however, children have skills that enable them to function well without the almost constant adult attention they need in the infant and toddler years.

For the adult who works with young children in full-time child care, part-time preschool programs, elementary schools, medical settings, social service centers, or the home, questions constantly arise regarding these small people and the best educational and care practices for them. This chapter develops an initial picture of young children by describing their characteristics and actions and by presenting the essentials of the adult's role when working with them.

kindergartners
Children enrolled in kindergarten classrooms, usually between the ages of four-and-a-half and six years.

primary period
Children ages six through eight or in first through third grade.

1-2 Typical and Atypical Young Children

The children described on the following pages come from diverse backgrounds and have a variety of capabilities and needs. The following descriptions include young children at different age levels (from birth to primary grades), children with typical and atypical development, and children from various cultures.

Photo 1-4 First graders are more independent than preschoolers.

1-2a The Infant

Maria (three months old) is on the floor, happily sitting in her car seat. Dad is kneeling on the floor talking with her at eye level. Dad begins making one-syllable sounds of various pitches. Maria smiles at him, raises her fists, and kicks her feet as she mimics the sounds he makes.

Andy (nine months old) is in his stroller with the back propped up so that he can sit up more easily. The family is at a fast-food restaurant, seated at a table in the corner. His stroller is facing his mom so that she can feed him. She is facing the play area so that she can keep an eye on her two older children. She sets out the two older children's food and her own and gets out crackers for Andy. Andy is happily babbling and looking at his mom. His arms wave around, and he wiggles animatedly in his stroller. He sees the food and seems excited to begin eating. Mom gives him a cracker to munch on, but he will not accept it. He clamps his mouth shut, turns his head away, and furrows his brow. His arms begin to wave even more, and he begins to whine. He appears to want to eat what everyone else is eating. Mom breaks off a soft piece of French fry and offers it to him. He opens his mouth. He looks surprised at the taste and texture. He gums the piece down and eagerly accepts another fry.

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In the daycare center's infant room, Ann (nine months) is crawling into a little cubbyhole. She sits there for a moment and then crawls back out. She picks up a toy and then drops it, and then picks it up again. She repeats these actions several times. Next, she crawls over to six-month-old Susie and yanks on her hair. Susie starts crying, and the teacher tries to soothe her. Ann looks at Susie and the teacher and also starts to cry.

1-2b The Toddler

Summer is 17½ months old. She's sitting on the floor looking at books. Her dad tells Wolf, their German shepherd, to get a toy. Summer jumps up, goes to Wolf's toy basket, picks up Wolf's favorite toy, and takes it to him. Then she gets him another toy. Wolf wags his tail and chews on one of the toys, obviously delighted.

Donna positions Haniya, a toddler with cerebral palsy, in her special seat on the countertop so that Haniya can hold her hands under the faucet. Jonathan comes in from the adjoining play area to wash his hands before snack time. Donna says to Jonathan, "Please turn on the faucet for Haniya." Jonathan does. Haniya glances at him and puts on a faint smile. She sticks her hands under the faucet of running water, seeming to enjoy the cool feeling on her hands. Jonathan sticks his hands under the water as well, and they splash the water together (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 65).

1-2c The Three-Year-Old

Miami Herald columnist Dave Barry wrote the following about his three-year-old daughter, Sophie (Barry, 2003):

> Sophie has a mermaid doll named Ariel. She has beautiful hair! She gets married a lot. She also takes a bath with Sophie every night. Ariel's hair gets very wet. But Sophie wants to sleep with her. So Daddy has to blow-dry Ariel's hair. And brush it out. Every night! Imagine how Daddy feels styling a mermaid's hair, while the other daddies are watching *Sports Center*.

Josh was a three-year-old boy with lively brown eyes, a ready smile, and dark, curly hair. … Pat, his teacher, was concerned about Josh. She had noticed that he walked and ran awkwardly, stumbling often. He didn't talk much and was difficult to understand. He frequently drooled. He had not yet mastered simple puzzles that were done with ease by the other children in the class (Chandler, 1994, p. 4).

Tamika (age three), her sweet face framed by golden ringlets of hair, sits silently in a wicker chair watching her 34-year-old mother prepare for her daily sustenance… Her mother's friend, Dorene McDonald, picks several rocks of cocaine out of her belly button, then positions a milky white pebble in a pipe. As the women alternately take hits off the small glass tube, crack smoke envelops Tamika, who blinks sleepily in her mother's arms (Nazario, 1997).

1-2d The Four-Year-Old

Four-year-old Jorge and three-year-old Hamako are on the playground in a fort. The fort is an enclosed area with windows. Inside, it contains steering wheels on two sides and a slide on another side. Jorge is pretending that the fort is a ship, and he is the captain. As Jorge steers the ship, Hamako imitates him using the other wheel. Jorge tires of the ship game and sits down on top of the slide. He tells Hamako to slide with him. She sits down behind him. Together, they form a train and go down the slide.

Four-year-old Mindy was a bright and inquisitive girl who chatted readily with the teachers and other children when she and her mother visited the preschool during

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enrollment week. Mindy had spina bifida and had no feeling below her waist. As a result, she needed to be catheterized several times a day to prevent urinary tract infections. She wore braces on her legs and used a walker. … Mindy wanted to be independent. She refused assistance in negotiating the environment and in caring for herself. … She didn't want special attention and took pride in doing things for herself (Chandler, 1994, p. 34).

Four-year-old Cedric came into teacher Cathy Main's room one day, anxious to tell a story. The night before, he told his classmates at Circle Time, his dad took him riding in the car. His dad's friend was in the front seat, Cedric and his mom in back. Cedric's dad and his friend were drinking and smoking reefers. The cops started chasing them, so his dad got on the expressway and drove really fast. His mom was yelling, "Stop! Stop!" Finally the cops pulled them over. They yanked his father out of the car and threw him onto the hood. Then they cuffed him and dragged him to the police car. [This incident became the focus of dramatic play for several days. Cedric and his classmates acted out all the parts.] (Teaching Tolerance Project, 1997, p. 173).

Time to Reflect

Think about the special needs of the children in the descriptions just mentioned. Describe your reactions and interpretations. Do you think there is a "typical" child at any age? What are some factors that put some of the children described at-risk?

1-2e The Five-Year-Old

Charlie is putting together a puzzle with two other boys in his kindergarten class. The puzzle is a picture of a box of crayons. The boys open the lid and begin to take out the pieces. Charlie suggests they begin with all the pieces that have straight edges. While putting the puzzle together, Charlie says, "Green, green, I need green." He then comments, "This thing is too easy." He is finally stumped on a part and says to Taylor, "Let me see the lid!" When the puzzle is finished, Charlie puts his hands on the puzzle and smiles. Kofi says, "Let's do another one!" Charlie replies, "Kofi, you have to help us clean up this one first."

Mrs. Johnston explains Kwanzaa to her daughter's kindergarten class. … Mrs. Johnston puts both arms around her daughter and sings out: "Kwanzaa is the time to celebrate. The fruits of our labor, ain't it great! Celebrate Kwanzaa, Kwanzaa!" By the second repetition, many people in the class are singing also while the teacakes are passed around (Paley, 1995, p. 8).

Photo 1-5 Primary grade children enjoy large group activities.

1-2f The Six-, Seven-, and Eight-Year-Old

The children in the primary years seem to be in a stage of developmental integration. They can take care of their own personal needs. They observe family rules about mealtimes, television, and needs for privacy. They can also be trusted to run errands and carry out simple responsibilities at home and at school. In other words, these children are in control of themselves and their immediate world … they enjoy being challenged and completing tasks. They also like to make recognizable products and to join in organized activities (Marotz & Allen, 2013, pp. 160, 162) (Photo 1-5).

In the primary class, the students are painting self-portraits with People Colors multicultural paints. Each child is asked to select the paint color that matches his or her skin tone.

"I'm gingerbread," says Rodrigo.

"I'm melon and terra cotta," boasts Millie.

"Raise your hand," Debra says, "if your color is close to Millie's."

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April volunteers.

"April's a little darker than Millie," someone comments (Teaching Tolerance Project, 1997, p. 12).

In these brief descriptions of child growth from birth to age eight, an increase in independence and self-confidence is evident. At the same time, there seems to be a cycle marked by calmness at three, to increased activity at four, to calmness again as the child reaches five. The adult who works with young children must be aware that these changes are typical. Also exemplified are the diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and special needs that is evident in young children's lives.

1-3 The Essential Adult Role

Photo 1-6 Reading enriches both mental and emotional development.

Relationships with adults are critical to young children's healthy growth and development. Pediatrician T. Berry Brazelton (Hallmich, 2013) has promoted the need for nurturance to begin at birth. Brazelton uses a newborn assessment scale to find out the baby's temperament and responses. He shows parents how to interpret their baby's behavior so they can interact positively. Young children need to be nurtured and stimulated by adults (Photo 1-6). Organizations such as NAEYC, Zero to Three, and the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) promote positive adult/child relationships. Throughout the text, adult roles are described relative to ages, stages, and settings.

Early childhood is receiving more attention in the area of policy. Shonkoff (2010) designed a framework for guiding the future of early childhood policy. He bases his plan on our increased knowledge of early development based on research in genetics, brain development, early experience in the family and community, and the interactions among these factors. He concludes that policy makers must attend to providing programs that give young children a strong foundation for life success.

The population of the United States has changed greatly over time. The typical citizen can no longer be defined as being of white, European descent. The non-European American population is growing rapidly and includes six main groups: Latinos, African Americans, Pacific Islanders, Asian Americans, Caribbean Islanders, and Middle Easterners. In addition to these main groups are Native Americans. It is important to keep in mind that these major groups are not homogeneous. Within each group, cultural variations exist. Adults who work with young children and their families must recognize that one of the core areas of **developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)** is knowing about the social and cultural contexts in which children live (NAEYC, 2008). Okagaki and Diamond (2003) caution early childhood educators regarding the importance of developing sensitivity to parents' beliefs and practices. They explain that adults should not make assumptions about any family's child-rearing practices but should make the effort to learn what each family's needs and expectations are. Throughout the text, sociocultural factors are related to child development.

developmentally appropriate practices (DAP)
Instructional practices that are age, individually, and culturally appropriate as defined by NAEYC.

Brain Development

Brain development and activity constitute an increasing focus in the field of child development. In the past, most neuroscience research was conducted on animals such as rats and monkeys. Today, scientists have found methods for studying the human brain. Currently, more information is being obtained on the development and functioning of the human brain, but the picture is still incomplete. Care must be taken in formulating conclusions. Brain Development boxes in other chapters will look more specifically at what scientists are learning about the development of the young child's brain.

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1-4 Child Development Theory

The study of children has been a subject of great interest during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Scholars have gathered information about and from children and have used this information to formulate ideas about how children grow and develop. Most scholars are researchers who mainly gather information. However, some scholars create broad ideas that attempt to explain how children learn and grow. These ideas are called **theories**. A theory is designed to show one plan or set of rules that explains, describes, or predicts what happens when children grow and learn. Several popular theories are described in this chapter.

theories
Ideas designed to show one plan or set of rules that explains, describes, or predicts what happens and what will happen as children grow and learn.

Child development theories have conventionally been the foundation of educational and child-rearing practices. The guidelines for practice in early childhood education published by the NAEYC are called Guidelines for DAP (Bredekamp, 1987; Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). DAP is age appropriate and individually and culturally appropriate. In the past, the cultural relevance of these theories has been questioned by some developmental psychologists (i.e., Greenfield & Cocking, 1994; Goodnow, Miller, & Kessel, 1995; Coll et al., 1996). DAP has been expanded by those concerned with the care and education of minority and lower-socioeconomic-level children (i.e., Mallory & New, 1994; Lubeck, 1998a). The basis for this expansion is that the theories were adopted by European Americans from a European American point of view. Therefore, some early childhood educators believe the theories do not necessarily apply to other cultures, ethnic groups, and races such as Asian, African, Latino, and Native American, both in the United States and in their native countries. Thus, theorists have moved toward applying a strong sociocultural theoretical foundation to early education and development. For example, Hyun and Marshall (1997) proposed a model that combines DAP and a multicultural perspective, which they called **developmentally and culturally appropriate practice (DCAP)**. After describing the major developmental and **learning** theories and the views of those who propose a stronger cultural basis for child development theories, this unit concludes with cautions about applying the conventional child development perspectives to early development and education.

developmentally and culturally appropriate practice (DCAP)
An elaboration of DAP that focuses more strongly on cultural appropriateness.

learning
A behavior change that results from experience.

1-4a Types of Theories of Child Development and Learning

Some theorists identified with a child development focus on **growth**, some on how learning takes place, and others on both. The term *growth* usually refers to a sequence of changes or stages that takes place on the way to adulthood and that is controlled, for the most part, by an inherited timetable. For example, a child's head reaches full growth before his or her trunk. Learning refers to behavioral changes caused by environmental influences. A child in the United States might learn English or Spanish as a first language, whereas a child in Germany learns German. **Developmental theories** usually explain changes in the child that result from interactions between growth and learning. Every child develops in a similar manner. For example, infants explore objects by sight, taste, touch, sound, and smell before they learn that these objects still exist when out of their sight. Theories emphasizing change that originates in the environment through learning are called **behaviorist theories**. For example, if children hear language, imitate it, and are rewarded for making sounds, they will learn to talk. Behaviorist theories explain how the child learns regardless of his or her age or stage. Some learning-oriented theories explain what is happening in the mind. Others look only at behavior that can be seen. To sum up, behaviorists focus strongly on external environmental factors as they affect learning and development.

growth
A series of steps or stages that a child goes through on the way to becoming an adult.

developmental theories
Ideas that explain changes in a child due to interaction between growth and learning.

behaviorist theories
Ideas emphasizing changes that originate in the environment through learning.

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Developmentalists focus on the interaction between internal genetic factors and environmental factors as children learn new concepts and skills that enable them to transition from one developmental stage to the next.

normative/maturational view
A way of looking at development that stresses certain norms.

norms
Behaviors that most children perform at a certain age.

The **normative/maturational view** is another way of looking at development. **Norms** define what most children do at a certain age. The normative maturational view stresses certain norms, such as the time when most children can sit up, crawl, walk, talk, count to 10, or play cooperatively with other children. Other norms define the average size, shape, weight, or height of a child at a specific age. Furthermore, norms can suggest typical behavioral characteristics, such as the fact that toddlers are naturally negative because they are trying so hard to be independent. Theories and norms are related in that theories try to explain why norms occur as they do.

1-4b Influential Theorists

Child development theorists attempt to describe basic processes that explain how children learn and when they are more likely to learn specific concepts and skills. Some theorists believe that people learn in much the same way, whatever their age. Others believe that learning is done in a different way as each person progresses through different stages. It is important for teachers of young children to be familiar with a variety of theoretical approaches in order to understand, explain, and respond to young children's behavior.

Some theorists whose ideas have been very influential are Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Sigmund Freud, Erik Erikson, B. F. Skinner, Albert Bandura, Carl Rogers, and Abraham Maslow. The normative/maturational view of Arnold Gesell has also added a great deal to our knowledge of child development. Table 1-1 outlines the areas that these theorists attempt to explain through theory development and research.

As illustrated in Table 1-1, each theorist, with the exception of Skinner, is interested mainly in one area of development or learning. Skinner's theory offers an explanation for any learned behavior, whether cognitive, affective, physical, or motor (as defined later in the chapter). Skinner, a behaviorist, believed that by providing positive reinforcement, observable behaviors could be strengthened or shaped (Miller, 2011). Positive reinforcers include food, smiles, compliments, and other responses that increase the chances that a behavior will be repeated. If unwanted or undesirable behaviors are ignored, they will lessen in their frequency or possibly disappear or become extinguished. Skinner's principles are especially applicable to young children, particularly toddlers and preschool and kindergarten-age children (Newman & Newman, 2007). They can also be helpful in guiding older children. These principles are also frequently applied in the field of special education, where specific behaviors must be modified in small increments.

Bandura, also a behaviorist, is known for his work on social learning. Bandura noted that much learning takes place through observation or vicariously. That is, learning takes place that is not determined by forces outside the learner but that depends on the learner's attention to someone else's behavior. The people being observed are models, and the learning process is called *modeling* (Newman & Newman, 2007). (See the examples in Table 1-1.)

Table 1-1 also shows that Piaget, Vygotsky, Freud, Erikson, Maslow, Rogers, and Gesell focused on the interaction between growth and the environment. Piaget and Vygotsky are referred to as *cognitive developmentalists* because they linked mind and environment. Piaget is known for his work on the development of logical thought and sociomoral knowledge and behavior. His work also focused on concept development. As children interact with the environment, they construct knowledge. In Piaget's view, knowledge construction is more effective for learning than direct instruction. Piaget believed that children's motivation to learn comes from their

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Table 1-1 Theories of Child Development and Learning

On the left side are the three major areas of development. The headings across the top indicate the two types of theories: developmental and behaviorist.

	Type of Theory	
Tries to Explain Changes in:	**Developmental: Growth and Learning Interact**	**Behaviorist: Learning Is the Main Determiner of Behavior**
Cognitive Area: Language Concepts Problem solving Intellectual needs	Cognitive-Developmental: Development leads (Piaget) Language/Communication: Learning leads (Vygotsky) Normative/Maturational (Gesell) Self-Actualization (Maslow): Example: A supportive adult and a rich environment with freedom for exploration will allow learning and intellectual growth.	Behaviorist (Skinner): Examples: Learning to speak. Learning that red, blue, and yellow are colors. Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura): Example: The child observes the language users of his or her culture and imitates what he or she sees and hears.
Affective Area: Aggression Dependency Cooperation Fears Self-concept Affective needs Motivation	Psychosexual (Freud) Psychosocial (Erikson) Self-Concept (Rogers) Self-Actualization (Maslow) Sociocultural (Vygotsky) Sociomoral (Piaget): Examples: Through play, the young child learns the benefits of cooperation. Dependency must develop first for the child to become independent later.	Behaviorist (Skinner): Examples: Learning to hug and not to hit. Learning to help others. Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura): Example: The child observes another child being praised for helping to set the table. The child imitates what he or she has seen and heard.
Physical and Motor Areas: Body size and growth rate motor skills (e.g., creeping, walking, grasping)	Normative/Maturational (Gesell): Example: The head, and thus the brain, have the fastest growth rate during early childhood; therefore, neurological growth is rapid and determines cognitive and motor growth.	Behaviorist (Skinner): Examples: Complex skills, such as riding a bicycle or skating, and physically related behavior, such as eating nutritious food. Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura): Example: The child is told to watch while the coach kicks the soccer ball and then is asked to try to kick it the same way.

natural curiosity about the world (Mooney, 2000). Perspective taking, or seeing another's point of view, is also an important element of Piaget's theory (Newman & Newman, 2007). Vygotsky also contributed to our view of how children learn to think and speak and of the importance of adult, peer, and community social interaction to the young child's learning (Miller, 2011). For Vygotsky, the key to learning for young children comes from the support of adults and advanced peers. Imaginative play is a critical element for young children (Mooney, 2000). For Vygotsky, word meaning links speech and thought, and thus language is the key to learning. Private, or inner, speech is critical to "self-regulation, self-directed goal attainment, and practical problem solving" (Newman & Newman, 2007, p. 249). Learning and development are linked in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD; described in Chapter 3).

Freud and Erikson are known for their theories of social and personality development. Freud focused on sexual and aggressive drives as motivators, whereas Erikson (a student of Freud's daughter Anna, also a noted psychiatrist) was more interested in social motivators. Freud's concepts of the id, ego, and superego are useful for looking at how we develop self-regulation and make moral decisions. Erikson's psychosocial theory is very popular with early childhood educators. Erikson focused on the interaction between the individual and the social environment. At each stage of life, the

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