

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONS

CONTEXT, RESEARCH, AND APPLICATION

FOURTH EDITION



 Pearson

PHYLLIS HEATH

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONS

Context, Research, and Application

FOURTH EDITION

Phyllis Heath

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To my children, Ken, Todd, and Kelly

About the Author



Phyllis Heath is Professor Emerita in the Department of Human Environment Studies at Central Michigan University. She also has taught courses for Michigan State University in Okinawa, Japan. She was educated at the University of North Carolina at Asheville (where she earned a BA in Psychology), the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (where she earned an MA in Human Development and Learning), and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (where she earned a PhD in Child Development and Family Relations). Her research has focused on the ways in which parent-child relationships affect the development of children and adolescents. This research has included the influence of parenting patterns on children's social competence, factors affecting parenting patterns (such as gender role ideology and locus of control), and the links between parenting patterns and adolescent depression. She also has researched parenting patterns of indigenous people in Oaxaca, Mexico, and South Africa.

Preface

This book was written to acquaint undergraduate students with the study of parent–child relations in the following major areas:

- The history of childrearing in the United States and philosophical and theoretical perspectives that have guided child socialization practices in this country.
- Variations in childrearing patterns, including the childrearing practices of ethnic majority and ethnic minority parents in the United States and childrearing practices in other countries.
- Child socialization strategies for guiding children to become increasingly more competent and to have higher self-esteem and parenting skills for preventing and responding to problem behaviors and for resolving parent–child conflict.
- Coverage of parent–child relations at each of the following developmental stages: infancy and toddlerhood, preschool and middle childhood, early to late adolescence, and early to late adulthood.
- The changes that occur in the lives of parents who have children with exceptionalities or chronic illnesses who require specialized care and recommendations for helping parents to meet these challenges.
- Parent–child interactions in families in which a parent has an exceptionality or a disability that requires specialized care.
- The lives of children who are maltreated and/or exposed to parental violence or parental alcoholism and suggestions for interventions for these parents and children.
- The challenge faced by parents and children who are dealing with the untimely death of a family member and recommendations for helping children and parents throughout the grieving process.
- The grief of adults and children associated with the death of an older parent or grandparent, including alterations that occur in family interaction patterns following the death of an older parent.

New to This Edition: The Pearson eText

- **In the Pearson eText, embedded short answer questions called Test Your Knowledge, as well as written feedback, have been added to the end of each chapter.** This allows students to check their understanding of the material they have read. These additions provide guidance for focusing on the main points in the chapter and provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding of the content.
- **Also in the Pearson eText, several relevant videos have been added to each chapter** to allow students to hear from parents and children in various family contexts throughout society.
- **A New Digital Glossary of Terms.** Definitions of unfamiliar terms have been added as a feature to each chapter so students can quickly determine the meaning of unfamiliar concepts by clicking on the term in the eText to reveal the definition. This feature is designed to enhance student understanding of the material.

New Content to This Edition

Since the publication of the third edition, much new research has focused on families. There have also been a number of changes in public policy and laws that influence U.S. families as well as families throughout the world. In response to these changes, this new edition includes the following:

- **A discussion related to preparation for parenthood,** which includes important decisions that prospective parents must make in anticipation of becoming parents through pregnancy or adoption.
- **An increased emphasis on the various contexts of parenting,** which reviewers and colleagues have cited as a primary strength of this book. For example, this edition includes more information about parents and children in military families, parents and children in immigrant families, parents and children in LGBT families, the lives of adolescent parents and their children, and information related to transracial and intercountry adoption.
- **More emphasis on the role of gender in parent–child relationships.** This includes research showing the influence of parent and child gender on parenting roles and practices, an expanded coverage of fathers, a greater emphasis on coparenting, the ways in which gender influences the roles of grandparents rearing grandchildren, the role of daughters and daughters-in-law in caring for aging parents, and the differing experiences of aging mothers and fathers.
- **Additional personal anecdotes from parents and children in various family circumstances.** This addition is in response to feedback from college students who said that they thought these examples personalized the material for them.
- **Updated information regarding the influence of technology on parenting and grandparenting** has been interwoven throughout all of the chapters. This addition emphasizes the value of technology in the lives of family members as well as the challenges parents face in monitoring their children’s use of technology.

- **Updated research featuring the latest findings on the role of parents in promoting their children’s brain development**, such as early literacy, and limiting screen time during infancy and early childhood.
- **Increased coverage on the influence of low socioeconomic status and poverty** on the lives of children, their parents, and their grandparents.
- **The Double ABCX Model of Family Stress and Adaptation** has been added to the theories chapter and is used throughout the book to help students understand family interactions when experiencing high levels of stress.
- **A greater integration of theory, research, and application throughout the textbook** to remind students of how theory and research play out in actual behaviors of family members in various circumstances.
- **The latest changes in laws and policies** affecting the lives of parents and children such as new directions in improving the quality of child care for infants and toddlers and changes in the law that allow for same-sex marriage in all states in the United States.
- **“Spotlight on” special issues features** have been added throughout the textbook to highlight the ways in which poverty, diversity, and technology impact the lives of parents and children.
- **More than 20% of new research coverage has been included in this edition** and includes research from scholars within the United States and around the world.

Contextual Approach to Parenting

The contextual approach to parenting, which is a distinctive feature of this book, is emphasized by the inclusion of both historical and cultural approaches to understanding parent–child relations. I examine how these relationships have changed during the past century and the ways in which early and contemporary psychological theorists and early childhood educators have shaped these changes. I also emphasize how recent changes in the family (such as the rising rates of grandparent primary caregivers and teenage parents) have altered caregiver–child relationships. Explorations of parent–child relationships in various ethnic groups within and outside the United States also are integral parts of this textbook. Theory and research in human development and family relations have been interwoven with presentations of cultural and structural variations in the family; this focus is the basis for all of the chapters in the text.

A discussion drawing attention to how cultural beliefs affect parent–child relations is presented early in the text. Because the cultural approach is a central theme of this book, it is essential to understand that there are important differences and similarities in parent–child relationships across cultures. A discussion of the variations in families as a result of marital status, sexual orientation, and care of children by adults other than parents is presented early in the text as well. The purpose of addressing the similarities and differences in various family arrangements is to heighten understanding of the commitment to the care of children that exists in families regardless of the conditions that have brought them together. The early presentations of cultural and structural variations in families are not meant to stand alone but rather to set the

stage for discussions throughout the text that focus on parents and children in the various settings in which their development occurs. This approach allows students to see how culture and family variations and age and gender are related to parent–child interactions at each stage of life.

A Life-Span Approach

This textbook examines parent–child relationships from conception to death and focuses not only on the influence of parents on children but also on the influence of children on parents. Those reciprocal influences continue to be examined as both children and parents age. The life-span approach emphasizes the ways in which parent–child relationships influence the development of individuals, not only throughout childhood and adolescence but also across the life span. For example, Chapter 9 focuses on the relationships of young adults to their parents and to their children, including how those relationships affect young adult development. Similarly, Chapter 10 focuses on the ways in which middle-age parenthood and grandparenthood influence the ongoing development of persons as they age.

Parenting Strategies

Another distinctive feature of this textbook is the in-depth coverage of parenting strategies. An overview of contemporary parenting strategies includes a variety of techniques. Sufficient examples are provided to help explain each technique and enhance students' understanding of how to use each of them. The coverage of these strategies early in the book sets the stage for the upcoming chapters that focus on parenting of children at different stages of development and with different developmental needs. The parenting strategies presented in this textbook provide guidance for professionals working with children and their parents or other caregivers. The first part of Chapter 4 includes strategies designed to prevent misbehavior, promote the child's self-esteem, and enhance effective parent–child communication. The second part of that chapter focuses on methods used for providing consequences for behavior and resolving parent–child conflict. The presentation of various childrearing strategies early in the book helps lay the groundwork for the upcoming chapters. Chapter 4 together with the previous chapters prepares students to integrate theory, research, and technique while working with children and parents in various family contexts.

Critical Thinking Questions

Each chapter includes a variety of *critical thinking questions* that allow students to pause in their reading to consider how the chapter relates to their own life experiences or how they might use this material in working with parents and children in various contexts. Responses from my students and the students of my colleagues who also use this textbook have been that they like the critical thinking questions because they help students better understand the material. I also have used these critical thinking questions as the basis of an assigned classroom journal in which students

choose several questions from each chapter and write their responses to the questions in a weekly journal and then share them in small classroom groups.

Implications for Parents and Professionals

Each chapter includes brief *Implications for Parents and Professionals* sections that include guidelines designed to help students pause from their reading and consider ways in which the information provided might be used in working with parents and children in their future professions.

Supplements to the Textbook

This text is accompanied by PowerPoint® slides, an Instructor's Resource Manual, and a Test Bank. The Instructor's Resource Manual prepared by the author includes chapter-by-chapter learning objectives, chapter summaries, suggested classroom activities, and special assignments. The fourth edition Test Bank contains a variety of test items in multiple-choice and essay formats. The supplements can be found in the Instructor's Resource Center at pearsonhighered.com/educator.

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1

Historical and Theoretical Influences of Childrearing



LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to

- Summarize the influences of the early tradition of autocratic childrearing.
- Show knowledge of the theories that emphasized parental understanding of children's motivation and behavior and those that focused on respecting children's enthusiasm for learning.
- Describe the theories that show the influence of different contexts on childrearing practices and help us appreciate how family members' behaviors affect one another's lives.
- Discuss how the parental role changes over time, various persons in the parenting role, and how Feminist Theory challenged roles in the gender-constructed family.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how parents' perception of community resources influences childrearing.
- Analyze how the lives of parents and children have been impacted by the technology of the 21st century.

The picture of parents and children enjoying themselves at a 3-D movie, as seen in the beginning of this chapter, reflects one aspect of the varied ways in which the lives of parents and children in the 21st are intertwined with increasingly sophisticated technology. We will be focusing on the interface between families and technology later in this chapter and throughout this textbook. First, however, we will examine over 100 years of influences on parenting roles, societal views of the child, and childrearing behaviors.

From the beginning of the 20th century to the present, American parents' relationships with their children have undergone considerable modification (see Figure 1.1). The way in which parents view children has changed dramatically, and the parental role has undergone considerable redefinition. Child socialization practices of American parents have been scrutinized, criticized, and discussed in writings that have gained increasing public attention. Recommendations for better ways to rear children have been offered by varied sources, including psychologists, educators, and other well-known authorities. In that climate, scientists began to study the interaction patterns between children and their parents and between children and other caregivers. The findings of these studies have been widely disseminated and, based on these publications, public policy related to the care and protection of children has changed significantly. All these alterations in the ways American parents interact with their children, and in how they perceive their roles as parents, have not changed overnight. Furthermore, the changes in American childrearing practices have not been uniform.

AUTOCRATIC PARENTING: A TRADITION OF HARSH, STRICT CHILDREARING

At the beginning of the 20th century, the **autocratic parenting** approach was the prevailing belief guiding early American childrearing. Children were told what to do

19th and Early 20th Centuries	Late 1920s–1940s	1950s–1960s	1970s–1980s	1990s	21st Century
<p>Early 19th Century</p> <p>Autocratic parenting was firmly in place. It was supported by Thomas Hobbes's view of the willful child and the Puritans' belief in the sinful child.</p> <p>Parents were encouraged to break the will of their children, and children's play was considered mischievous.</p> <p>Children were regularly beaten based on the "spare the rod and spoil the child" belief.</p> <p>Children were viewed as small adults and were to be seen and not heard.</p>	<p>1920s</p> <p>John Watson discouraged responsive parenting. He warned against spoiling children and recommended scheduled feedings of children.</p> <p>1930s</p> <p>Sigmund Freud said parents should respect children's natural instincts. He called for less harsh and more relaxed approach to childrearing.</p> <p>1940s</p> <p>Benjamin Spock questioned lenient and unresponsive parenting. He recommended setting limits within an atmosphere of warmth.</p> <p>Attachment Theory (John Bowlby/Mary Ainsworth) seriously challenged John Watson's views of unresponsive parenting.</p> <p>Caroline Pratt (early childhood educator) said childhood's work is learning, and in play children get their work done.</p> <p>B. F. Skinner developed Operant Conditioning. He recommended the use of behavioral consequences as a disciplinary approach.</p>	<p>1950s</p> <p>René Spitz's films of institutionalized children showed that responsiveness to children is crucial to their well-being.</p> <p>Jean Piaget contradicted the view of children as passive learners. He viewed children as active participants in their own cognitive development.</p> <p>Family Systems Theory said that members affect and are affected by one another and that families are characterized by stability, change, and the continuous adaptation of family members.</p> <p>1960s</p> <p>Erik Erikson theorized that the quality of the parent-child relationship affects the person's ability to resolve psychosocial crises that arise at each stage of life.</p> <p>Social learning theorists showed that children learn through modeling and imitation.</p> <p>Rudolf Dreikurs advocated democratic parent-child relationships and started the Parent Education Movement in the United States.</p>	<p>1970s</p> <p>Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model showed multiple influences on parental childrearing behaviors and children's development.</p> <p>Michael Lamb questioned mother-centered assumptions of attachment theory and showed that babies become attached to both mothers and fathers.</p> <p>1980s</p> <p>Ellen Galinsky called attention to the development of the role of the parent and suggested that the parental role challenges parents to continually develop new skills and capabilities.</p> <p>Family Development theorists showed that families move through successive stages over time and that within each of these stages are important tasks for family members to complete.</p> <p>McCubbin and Patterson developed The Double ABCX Model of Family Stress and Adaptation, which showed the interplay among life stressors, family members' resources, and adaptation to stress factors.</p>	<p>Systemic Family Development Model focused on multigenerational experiences and family interactional complexity.</p> <p>NICHD large-scale study of child care's effects showed both maternal and alternate caregiver sensitivity as predictors of positive outcomes for children.</p> <p>Family scholars informed by Feminist Theory challenged the gender-structured family.</p> <p>Parents' cultural beliefs systems as sources of parenting began to be studied.</p> <p>Research focused on multiple caregivers showed kinship help contributes to maternal sensitivity and enhanced child well-being.</p> <p>Barry Hewlett's (1991) groundbreaking observations of Aka foragers in Central Africa showed the highest level of father-infant contact reported anywhere in the world. Aka fathers were found to be within arm's reach of their young infants more than 50% of any 24-hour period.</p>	<p>Dual-earner families are common. Parents negotiate various child care choices while juggling home and work responsibilities.</p> <p>Parents collaborate with various community agencies that affect the lives of their families.</p> <p>Communities responsive to the needs of families enhance the well-being of parents and children.</p> <p>Technology is quickly changing and is a part of children's daily lives. It is important that parents understand the role of technology in their children's lives and to monitor their children's use of technology.</p>

FIGURE 1.1 Historical Overview of Parental Influences

Sources: Based on Aries, P. (1962). Centuries of childhood: A social history of family life (R. Baldick, Trans.). New York: Knopf. (Original work published 1960); Bandura, A., & Walters, R. (1963). Social learning and personality development. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston; Beevar, D. A., & Beevar, R. J. (1988). Family therapy: A systemic integration. Boston: Allyn & Bacon; Bowlby, J. (1969). Attachment and loss, Vol. 1: Attachment. New York: Basic Books; Britton, L. (1992). Montessori, play and learn: A parent's guide to purposeful play from two to six. New York: Crown; Galinsky, E. (1981). Between Generations: The Six Stages of Parenthood. New York: Berkeley; Galinsky, E. (1987). The six stages of parenthood. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley; McCubbin, H. I., and Patterson, J. M. 1982. Family adaptation to crisis, Pp. 26–47 in H. McCubbin, A. Cauble and J. Patterson (Eds.), Family Stress, Coping and Social Support. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas; McCubbin, A. Cauble and J. Patterson (1983). Family stress and adaptation to crises: a Double ABCX model of family behavior." Pp. 87–106 in D. H. Olson and B. C. Miller (Eds.), Family Studies Review Yearbook (Vol. 1). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications; Skinner, B. F. (1950). Are theories of learning necessary? Psychological Review, Vol 57(4), 193–216; Spock, B. (1946). The pocket book of baby and child care. New York: Pocket Books; Vygotsky, L. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Watson, J. B., & Watson, R. (1928). The psychological care of the infant and child. New York: Norton.

and were expected to respond accordingly without expressing their opinions regarding parental demands. The autocratic approach to child socialization was influenced by two primary sources: the Hobbesian perspective of childrearing that prevailed throughout Europe for many centuries (Aries, 1962) and Calvinist doctrine that swayed the childrearing beliefs of early Puritans in the United States (Kagan, 1978).

The Hobbesian View: The Willful Child

Thomas Hobbes, who expressed the view that the child's will needs to be tamed, proposed that parental authority (when strictly applied) upholds both a religious mandate and a cultural tradition. It is from Hobbes that we obtained the view of the home as "a man's castle," based on his belief that the family is a miniature monarchy and that the rights and consequences of the paternal (he did not mention maternal) and the despotic domains are the same. Hobbes equated the status of children with that of household servants, both of whom were expected to have unquestioned obedience to the "master of the house" (Hobbes, 1688/1994). Even Rousseau, who (in the 1700s) romanticized the child and recommended that parents consider the nature of the child in their socialization goals, argued in favor of despotic rule in the family (Baumrind, 1966). Few questioned the justification for this type of parental authority until the 20th century.

Puritan Beliefs: The Sinful Child

Autocratic parenting views based on Hobbes' idea of the willful child found easy acceptance among early American Puritans whose religious beliefs were shaped by the doctrines of John Calvin. Because Calvinist doctrine emphasized the inherent sinfulness of the child, early American parents believed that to be the cause of children's willfulness. Firm discipline that included a strong belief in corporal punishment, rather than parental affection, was thought to be necessary for children's development (Kagan, 1978). Parents, therefore, expected strict obedience and submission from their children, not independence or assertiveness. Children who were considered to be disobedient received "correction," which often took the form of a brutal beating (Cleverley & Phillips, 1986).

Thinking Critically

As we begin the study of ways in which to raise children, take a moment to consider your own views regarding the essential nature of the child. In what ways do you think the two views discussed previously influence the childrearing approaches that some parents use in bringing up their children today?

The Questioning of Autocratic Parenting

The autocratic approach to child socialization was first questioned in the late 1800s by G. Stanley Hall and continued to be examined early in the 20th century as the

views of early childhood educators and psychologists began to influence childrearing practices in the United States and Europe. Autocratic child socialization was challenged from a variety of perspectives, and these challenges altered Americans' view of the nature of children, the role of parents, and the appropriate way to bring up children.

The Legacy of G. Stanley Hall: The Child Study Movement

The first of the psychological theorists who influenced American childrearing patterns was G. Stanley Hall, who received the first Ph.D. in psychology in the United States, and who began the Child Study Movement in the late 1800s. The goal of the Child Study Movement, according to Hall, was to develop a science of psychology and education that respected the true nature and needs of the child. Hall believed that Americans were slowly awakening to a recognition that "children are not like adults, with all the faculties of maturity on a reduced scale, but unique and very different creatures" (Strickland & Burgess, 1965, p. 88). Hall believed that "the child's senses, instincts, views of truth, credulity, emotions, and feelings towards objects have very little in common with ours" (p. 89).

Watson: The Dangers of Parental Affection

During the late 1920s, another American psychologist, John Watson, the father of American Behaviorism, began to influence American childrearing. Emphasizing the role of the environment, he recommended that parents use a scientific approach to child socialization and strongly opposed parents' expressions of affection for their children. Interestingly, Watson's "scientific approach" to childrearing was not supported by scientific evidence. On the contrary, his childrearing advice was based on his fervent personal beliefs that parents should ignore their natural inclinations to be nurturing and responsive to their children. That recommendation was based on his belief that responsive parenting spoiled children. Based on that conviction, he suggested that parents should not respond to their crying infants and should feed them according to a strict schedule. That recommendation, though not supported by research evidence, found widespread acceptance in American culture at a time when the new psychological theorizing was highly valued.

Watson's Use of the Media. As a uniquely American theory, Watson's scientific approach to the rearing of children gained acceptance among American academics and Americans at large. The ways in which his ideas came to affect so many American parents can be traced to the methods he used to disseminate his controversial views. Throughout 1926 and 1927, he addressed teachers' groups and medical groups on his theories. Then in 1928, he organized his ideas more formally for a set of six articles that appeared in *McCall's* magazine that later came out in a book under the title *The Psychological Care of the Infant and Child* (Watson & Watson, 1928). In magazine articles published in *Ladies' Home Journal* and *McCall's*, Watson consistently reminded mothers to put their babies on a strict feeding schedule and not spoil

them by being responsive to their cries. Parents of all education levels were exposed to Watson's ideas in the popular press. In his articles in popular magazines and in his radio broadcasts (before television was available), he emphasized that parenthood is a science and that parents should treat childrearing as an experiment. Given the newfound allegiance to science during that historical period, the linking of parenthood with science was a persuasive message to American parents (Cohen, 1979).

CONFLICTING THEORIES ABOUT CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR AND MOTIVATIONS

Although John Watson's views held center stage in American childrearing beliefs throughout the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, other theories that were developed during that period and the next couple of decades contributed to alternative perspectives regarding the appropriate way to rear children.

Theories that Emphasized Parental Understanding of Children

Sigmund Freud suggested that the rearing of children should include an acceptance of their basic instincts. The development of Attachment Theory by John Bowlby (Bowlby, 1958, 1969) and studies of infant attachment by Bowlby's colleague Mary Ainsworth (Ainsworth, 1973) seriously challenged Watson's recommendations that parents should not express affection toward their children. The theories of Jean Piaget (Elkind, 1976) and Lev Vygotsky (1978) contradicted the view of children as passive learners. In addition to theory development that increased awareness of the need for parents to incorporate an understanding of children into their childrearing patterns, a number of early childhood educators spoke out in support of better childrearing practices. During the second half of the 20th century, theorists such as Erik Erikson (1963, 1968) continued to emphasize the importance of parental respect for children's feelings and the growth-producing effect of parental support for children.

Sigmund Freud: A Focus on Children's Natural Instincts

Beginning in the 1930s, both European and American childrearing beliefs were influenced by Sigmund Freud, the Austrian-born founder of psychoanalysis. Freud's view of the nature of the child reflected the perspective of the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau—that children are basically good and that under optimal conditions their innate talents would emerge (Synott, 1988). Reflections of Rousseau's philosophy can be seen in Freud's emphasis on children's innate drives and in his view of the mother as the prototype for all future relationships (Freud, 1931/1961). The beliefs of G. Stanley Hall that children are different from adults and have their own instincts also are reflected in Freudian theory. Freud developed the Theory of Psychosexual Development to explain the ways in which the

focus of children's sexual energy corresponds to their stage of development (Brill, 1938). Based on that theory, Freud was the first 20th-century theorist to propose that parental acceptance of the child's natural instincts should accompany parental attempts to socialize the child to societal norms. Freud's views of childrearing arose in direct opposition to the prevailing overly strict and harsh childrearing approach, and followers of Freud portrayed the child as psychologically fragile and in danger of being made chronically anxious by parental restrictions and demands (Baumrind, 1966). The lenient parenting pattern that developed as a result of Freud's influence reflected his belief that (a) early influences are very important for children's development and (b) harsh parenting methods are detrimental to children's well-being (Freud 1931/1961).

Although the study of family socialization during the 1930s and 1940s reflected Freud's view of lenient parenting, this child socialization pattern was never widespread in the United States because it did not address the issue of limits, boundaries, and guidelines. Since American parents with their Hobbesian-Calvinist legacy still understood discipline from the perspective of autocracy and punishment, not being harsh with children was interpreted as not interfering with children's natural willful inclinations, thereby not providing limits and guidelines for them. Consequently, most American parents were not persuaded by Freudian views of childrearing because of the concern that they were being asked to relinquish control of their children. Those parents who believed that Freud's advice was a better approach than familiar autocratic parenting practices tended to develop a lenient childrearing pattern whereby they did not provide sufficient guidelines for their children (Baumrind, 1996).



The tender warmth this mother is expressing toward her contented baby is an excellent example of parental responsiveness.

Attachment Theory: A Focus on Parental Responsiveness

Respect for the natural instincts of children served as the foundation for Attachment Theory, which was developed by the British psychiatrist John Bowlby in the early 1940s (Bowlby, 1958, 1969). Later studies of interactions between mothers and infants by Bowlby's colleague Mary Ainsworth in Uganda led her to conclude that (a) socialization begins with parental attachment; (b) the infant is born helpless, requiring care; and (c) parents should respond to the feelings evoked by the child (Elkin & Handel, 1989). Based on her studies of infants' responses to stress when their mothers left a playroom and then returned after a few minutes, Ainsworth determined that virtually all infants develop distinctive patterns of attachment to their caregivers. She defined *attachment* as the "affectional tie that one person forms with another specific person, binding them together in space and enduring over time" (Ainsworth, 1973, p. 33). In addition to specifying the pattern of secure attachment, Ainsworth identified three other distinctive patterns of attachment that develop among children whose mothers are not consistently responsive to their needs: (a) insecure-avoidant attachment, (b) insecure-resistant/ambivalent attachment, and (c) disorganized attachment. Ainsworth and her colleagues also documented the following: (a) infants whose caregivers are emotionally and physically available to them develop secure attachment; (b) having a secure attachment to a parent promotes the infant's exploration of the environment; (c) the sensitive responsiveness of the caregiver in stressful situations provides reassurance, comfort, and confidence for the infant; and (d) the sensitive responsiveness of the caregiver provides for the child an internalized working model of parental availability (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978).



Watch the following video showing interactions between mothers and their young children. What is the link between the different patterns of attachment and parental sensitivity and availability?

www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3oKwCk5k3w

Fatherhood and Infant Attachment. Studies of infant attachment during the 1940s awakened the scientific community to how essential parental responsiveness is for the healthy development of infants. Ainsworth's observations of the links between varying levels of caregiver responsiveness and different patterns of infant attachment were later confirmed by hundreds of researchers in many other nations and cultures (e.g., Grossman, Grossman, & Waters, 2005; Miller & Commons, 2007). Research findings based on Attachment Theory will be used throughout this textbook to demonstrate the ways in which the affectionate ties between parents and children contribute to positive developmental outcomes.

René Spitz: The Harmful Effects of Unresponsive Caregivers. Scholars in the area of developmental psychology were beginning to see the significance of parental responsiveness to infants in the mid-1940s based on Ainsworth's attachment studies. Then, in the early 1950s, the French psychologist René Spitz provided further strong

evidence of the crucial importance of parental responsiveness. In his studies of institutionalized infants and children in Europe, Spitz provided indisputable data demonstrating that the responsiveness of the caregiver to infants' cries and other gestures of communication are crucial to infant development. In dramatic film footage that shocked the world, Spitz revealed that infants and children in orphanages who were provided scheduled rather than responsive care showed pained expressions of grief and over time became listless and apathetic. Many of them lost weight and became ill, and some of them died (Spitz, 1954). Concern for the development of children growing up in orphanages led to the appointment by the World Health Organization of other researchers to study orphaned children in countries around the world. These social scientists reported findings similar to those of Spitz and his colleagues and concluded that children who receive minimal maternal responsiveness exhibit delayed development in many areas (Bowlby, 1951).

The Change in U.S. Public Policy from Orphanages to Foster Care. Although the views of Watson (that parents should not be responsive to their children) were still basic to American parenting styles during the 1950s, the studies of Bowlby, Ainsworth, and Spitz and findings from other researchers around the world brought about a change in public policy regarding the institutionalization of children in the United States. Prior to the publication of these studies, American children placed for adoption were typically kept in orphanages until they were around 3 months of age so prospective parents could be assured of adopting a "normal, healthy child." After evidence that scheduled rather than responsive care puts normal children at risk for incurring developmental delays was confirmed, a significant change in adoption placement policy occurred in the United States during the 1950s. That change resulted in infants and children being placed in foster care, rather than orphanages, until they could be adopted so that they might receive responsive rather than scheduled care (Jones, 1993).

Benjamin Spock: Limits Within the Context of Warmth and Affection

As previously discussed, both Freud and attachment theorists challenged harsh, unresponsive parenting. Freud emphasized the importance of parental understanding of children's natural instincts, and researchers using Attachment Theory provided strong evidence refuting the use of scheduled care and demonstrating the importance of responsive care for children's development. It was only after Benjamin Spock's views related to childrearing became well known, however, that autocratic and unresponsive parenting approaches were challenged in the American public domain. Not only did Spock question harsh childrearing approaches but also he challenged the lenient approach to parenting adopted by those parents who were influenced by the views of Freud. Similar to the ways that Watson's beliefs regarding child socialization became well known via the popular media, Spock's message regarding childrearing reached large numbers of American mothers who sought childrearing advice from popular magazines and other readily available reading