Psychosocial Development—Infancy and Toddlerhood
Foundations of Maternal and Child Health
HSC 4579

Outline
- Emotions and Temperament
- Developmental Issues in Infancy
- Developmental Issues in Toddlerhood
- Gender Differences
- Interactions and Sociability
- Children of working parents

Emotions
- **Emotions**: Subjective reactions to experiences that are associated with physiological and behavioral changes
- Crying is a powerful and sometimes the only way infants can communicate their needs
  - **Hunger cry**: rhythmic
  - **Angry cry**: variation in rhythmic with excess air forced through the vocal cords
  - **Frustration cry**: 2-3 drawn out cries with no prolonged breathing
  - **Pain cry**: sudden onset of loud crying sometimes followed by holding breath
**Emotions**

- **Smiling and Laughing**
  - *Social smiling*, when a newborn smiles with active, positive participation, does not develop until the 2nd month of life.
  - *Laughter* becomes more common between 4-12 months and may signify intense positive emotion.
  - *Anticipatory smiling*—infant smiles at an object then gazes at an adult with continuing to smile.
    - It becomes more apparent between 8-10 months.
    - This can be the first type of communication in which the infant refers to an object or experience.

**Temperament**

- **Temperament**: is a characteristic, disposition or style of approaching and reacting to situations
  - "how people go about doing things"
    - It is relatively consistent and enduring
    - When referring to temperament
      - Easy child
      - Difficult child
      - Slow-to-warm-up
  - **Goodness-to-fit** can be the key to healthy adjustment. It is the math between a child’s temperament and the environmental demands and constraints the child must deal with.

**Developmental Issues in Infancy**

- **Developing Trust**
  - Babies develop a sense of reliability of the people and objects in their world

- **Developing Attachment**
  - **Attachment** is a reciprocal, enduring, emotional tie between an infant and a caregiver, each of whom contributes to the quality of the relationships.
  - **Secure attachment**—baby might cry or protest when a caregiver leaves but is able to obtain the comfort he/she needs demonstrating flexibility and resilience
Developmental Issues in Infancy

- **Avoidant attachment**: baby is unaffected by a caregiver leaving or returning
- **Ambivalent (resistant) attachment**: baby becomes anxious even before a caregiver leaves and becomes increasingly upset when he or she departs. Baby both seeks and resists contact on caregiver’s return
- **Disorganized/disoriented attachment**: after separation from caregiver, baby shows contradictory behaviors on his or her return. Often confused and afraid.

*Researchers measure attachment more by what happens when the caregiver returns than by how many tears when he/she leaves*

---

Developmental Issues in Infancy

- **Stranger anxiety**: wariness of strange people and places, shown by some infants from age 6–12 months
- **Separation anxiety**: distress shown by the infant when a familiar caregiver leaves

---

Developmental Issues in Toddlerhood

- **Self-concept**: sense of self; descriptive and evaluative mental picture of one’s abilities and traits.
- 3 months– infants pay attention to mirror images
- 4–10 months– learn to grasp, reach and make things happen. Gain a sense of **personal agency**
### Developing autonomy

- **18 months – 3 years**: Children begin to seek independence and freedom, known as **autonomy**
  - “No, I do it” “I do it by myself”
  - “Terrible Twos” are a normal sign of autonomy where toddlers test their control and power
  - Dealing with the “terrible twos”

### Moral Development

- **Socialization**: Development of habits, skills, values, and motives shared by responsible, productive members of a society
  - Compliance with parental expectations
  - Time out or rewards
- **Internalization**: During socialization, process by which children accept societal standards of conducts as their own.
  - No longer need punishments or rewards
- **Self-regulation**: A person’s independent control of behavior to conform to understood social expectations.

### Gender Differences in Infants and Toddlers

- Not many measureable gender differences
- Beginning prenatally boys are more active than girls, girls are less reactive to stress and more likely to survive infancy.
- Behavioral differences: preference for toys and boy tend to play more aggressively
- Biological and societal
  - Parents and others shape gender differences
  - **Gender-typing**: socialization process by which children, at an early age, learn “appropriate” gender roles
Contac with other children

- **New baby**
  - Bid for attention
  - May take on "big kid" role
- **Sibling interactions**
  - Sibling conflicts can be a vehicle for understanding social relationships
- **Sociability with non-siblings**
  - Infants and toddlers are very interested in others especially other children their size
  - Imitate one another (Follow the leader)
  - Some children are more sociable than others
    - Readiness to accept new people
    - Ability to adapt and change

---

**Children of Working Parents**

- **Effects of maternal employment**
- **Early child care**
  - Impact depends on the type, amount, quality and stability of care
- **The NICHD Study: Isolating Child Care Effects**
  - Longitudinal study of 1,364 children and families
  - Showed that the amount and quality of care children received as well as the type of stability of care influenced specific aspects of development.
    - Length in care
    - Number of caregivers