

Chapter 2 – Child Development and Guidance

OVERVIEW

Chapter Two explores child development theories of the last 70 years and discusses the relation of each to guidance principles. The developmental theories are those of Piaget, Vygotsky, Erikson, Gardner, and Goleman. An overview of important findings from brain research and attachment theory, and the implications for guidance of each is provided. The section on Cultural Responsiveness explores how guidance relates to healthy development in a diverse society. The concluding section on Family Partnerships examines how the teacher creates a climate for partnerships with families.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1. How do Piaget's ideas provide a foundation for the study of child development?*
- 2. How do Vygotsky's ideas describe the adult's role in guiding development?*
- 3. Why is Erikson's work a link between child development and guidance in the classroom?*
- 4. How does Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences support the guidance approach?*
- 5. How does the concept of emotional intelligence define the central guidance issue?*
- 6. What are the implications of brain development for guiding personal development?*
- 7. Cultural Responsiveness: Why is guidance important for healthy development in a diverse society?*
- 8. Family Partnerships: How does the teacher create a climate for partnerships with families?*

Key Concepts

- Attachment theory
- Brain elasticity
- Brain neural architecture
- Cognitive dissonance
- Conditional acceptance
- Developmental egocentrism
- Disequilibrium
- Emotional intelligence (EI)
- Equilibrium
- Executive function
- Microculture
- Multiage classrooms
- Multiple intelligences (MI)
- Neuroscience
- Peer scaffolding
- Personal development
- Private speech
- Prosocial acts
- Scaffolding
- Separation anxiety
- Zone of proximal development

NAEYC STANDARDS

- Standard 1. Promoting Child Development and Learning
- Standard 2. Building Family and Community Relationships
- Standard 4. Using Developmentally Effective Approaches

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *How do Piaget's ideas provide a foundation for the study of child development and guidance?*

The writings of Piaget document that children interpret experiences differently over time and that their interpretations conform to the stage of development they are in. For teaching to be effective, it must accommodate the child's developmental level, base of experience, active learning nature, limited social perspective, and developmental egotism. For Piaget autonomy, or

ethical and intelligent decision making, is the purpose of education. Guidance in the encouraging classroom is the teaching approach that leads children to develop autonomy.

2. ***How do Vygotsky's ideas describe the adult's role in guiding development?***

Vygotsky studied the learning process of the child and concluded that the role of others is central to it. In any act of learning, the child has a zone of proximal development, which is the psychological difference between what the child can learn on her own and what she can learn with the help of a more capable other. Scaffolding, or sensitive interaction, guides the child through the zone. The child uses private speech, later internalized as conscious thought, to solve learning problems and self-regulate behavior. An interpretation of Vygotsky's work is that guidance is the scaffolding process by which children learn the skills of social and emotional problem solving.

3. ***Why is Erikson's work a link between child development and guidance in the classroom?***

Erikson theorized that all humans go through critical periods, or stages, in each of which they face a central life conflict. Young children pass through four: During the first critical period of trust versus mistrust, the infant tries to develop feelings of basic trust in her world. During the second, autonomy versus shame and doubt, the toddler begins to develop a sense of identity—hopefully with the encouragement of reliable adult relationships. During the third period of initiative and belonging versus guilt and alienation, preschoolers need support in creative activities and social interactions, through which they can positively define themselves. During the primary years, the critical issue is industry versus inferiority. Through each of the critical periods, the approach that encourages both productive learning and positive feelings about oneself as a learner is guidance.

4. ***How does Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences support the guidance approach?***

Gardner is among a growing number of psychologists who have debunked the idea that intelligence is a single entity, determined by heredity and fixed for life. Gardner's concept of eight multiple intelligences are intended to change how we look at child development, education, and social policies regarding mental abilities. To respond to the eight intelligences in the classroom, curriculum, teaching practices, and assessment methods need to be opened up and

made developmentally appropriate. To assist children to develop their intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences, teachers must model these intelligences and teach to them.

5. *How does the concept of emotional intelligence define the central guidance issue?*

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) was delineated by Mayer and Salovey and popularized by Goleman. In Goleman's construct, EI has four components: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Research relating to the concept has concluded that young children who lack understanding of and the ability to manage their emotions are vulnerable for educational failure. Whatever combination of factors put young children at risk, caring adults can teach the skills of EI that increase the likelihood of school success. The caring adults should not only be family members but also can be other caregivers or teachers.

6. *What are the implications of brain development for guiding personal development?*

The emerging neuroscience tells us that intelligence is not fixed at birth and that the brain changes physiologically in response to the environment, especially during the early years. The enemy of healthy brain development is stress, which at high ("toxic") levels impedes development of executive functioning and hyperstimulates survival (flight or fight) responses. Nurturing environments lower stress levels, build trusting adult-child relationships, and support learning. Guidance sustains the encouraging classroom for each child, in which brain development can flourish.

7. *Cultural Responsiveness: Why is guidance important for healthy development in a diverse society?*

Going beyond the generalities associated with ethnic groups, each family has its own microculture comprised of the family's particular traditions, values, religious practices, work-orientations, social expectations, and inter-personal dynamics. Teachers who use guidance recognize that the child is the extension of the family unit and build partnerships with families to bridge cultural differences between home and classroom. Children who see evidence of their family's microcultures in the educational program and perceive harmony in relations between family and the teacher see the world as a trustworthy place and are more able to learn democratic life skills.

8. Family Partnerships: How does the teacher create a climate for partnerships with families?

Before and during the first days of school, the teacher does much to create a climate for partnerships with family members through the use of notes, telephone calls, home visits, and greeting meetings. Initiating partnerships eases the transition of the child from home to school. If parents know the teacher is working to build positive relations with both the child and themselves, they are more likely to become involved. Teachers cannot expect to feel positively toward every family member, but by remaining friendly and accessible, most family members will respond. Family involvement in the education program can make a lifelong difference to the child and the family.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Note: An element of being a professional teacher is to respect the children, parents, and educators you are working with by maintaining confidentiality . . . that is, keeping identities private. In completing follow-up activities, please respect the privacy of all concerned.

Discussion Activity

The discussion activity encourages students to interrelate their own thoughts and experiences with specific ideas from the chapter.

Think about an academic subject that you personally are quite comfortable with or feel quite uncomfortable about. Trace your memories about that subject back to your teacher(s) and try to pinpoint experiences that led to your present feelings. Analyze your thoughts, feelings, and experiences regarding the subject area in relation to the developmental ideas of one of the following: Vygotsky, Gardner, Goleman, or LeDoux's ideas about emotions and brain development.

APPLICATION ACTIVITIES

Application activities allow students to inter-relate material from the text with real-life situations. The observations imply access to practicum experiences; the interviews, access to teachers or parents. To inter-relate theory and experience, students compare or contrast observations and interviews with referenced ideas from the chapter.

- 1. Piaget's foundation for the study of child development.**

a. Observe two small groups of children in situations where they have to share materials with others: one group ages three or “young” four; the other group ages five or six. Record the age in years and months of each child. Write down a sample conversation from each observation. What similarities and differences do you observe in the two groups in their actions and words? How much of what you observe can you attribute to developmental differences? to personality differences? Compare your findings to text material regarding Piaget’s ideas.

b. Interview an experienced teacher about the differences in what three- and four-year-olds versus five- and six-year-olds understand about cooperating with others. Ask how the teacher would accommodate the understanding level of each group. What are the similarities and differences in the strategies the teacher would use? Compare your findings to text material regarding Piaget’s ideas.

2. **Vygotsky describes the adult’s role in guiding development.**

a. Closely observe a teacher using scaffolding with a young child. Record the age of the child in years and months. Write down as much actual dialogue from the interaction as you can. Hypothesize about both the child’s and the adult’s comfort levels during the experience. Did the scaffolding result in the learning that the adult expected? Why or why not? Compare your findings with text material regarding Vygotsky’s ideas.

b. Interview a teacher about the use of scaffolding with young children. Does the teacher use similar or different techniques with children of different ages? Why or why not? How does the teacher know when the scaffolding has been successful or unsuccessful? Compare your findings from the interview with text material regarding Vygotsky’s ideas.

3. **Erikson: A link between child development and guidance.**

a. Observe a child who seems to you to be clearly at one of the four of Erikson’s childhood stages. Record actions and words in a fairly typical activity or situation for that child. Using the text material as a reference, analyze why you believe the child is at the stage you identify. Based on your observation, hypothesize about the child’s apparent progress in dealing with the life conflict at that stage. Compare your findings with text material regarding Erikson’s stage theory.

b. Interview a teacher about two children, one the teacher believes is progressing in terms of healthy personal development, and one who is having difficulties in making progress. Assuring

that privacy will be protected, learn as much as you can about each child from the teacher. Apply the findings from your interview to Erikson's ideas in the text about personal development at the stage you believe each child to be in.

4. Gardner's construct of multiple intelligences (MI) contributes to the guidance approach.

a. Observe at least an hour in a classroom in which the children seem fully engaged in a variety of activities. Apply Gardner's construct of MI to your observation. How many of the different intelligences could you document that individual children seemed to be using/developing? Write a sentence or two of documentation for each intelligence you observed. Compare your observations to Figure 2–3 in the chapter titled "Educational Practices That Foster Multiple Intelligences."

b. Interview a teacher about how he or she teaches to encourage development in any three of the "nonacademic" intelligences. (The teacher may refer to them as "skills areas" or "competency areas.") Compare the teacher's comments to Figure 2–3 in the chapter titled "Educational Practices That Foster Multiple Intelligences."

5. The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) defines the central guidance issue.

a. Observe a child who strikes you as having a high level of self-understanding and/or understanding of the feelings and needs of others. Record actions and words in a typical social situation for that child. Based on your observation, hypothesize about the child's use of EI. Relate your findings to EI ideas discussed in the text.

b. Interview a teacher about the idea of EI as separate from the traditional notion of "cognitive intelligence." Protecting identity, ask the teacher to discuss a child who seems to consistently make emotionally intelligent decisions. What seems to be "special" about the child in terms of personality, learning style, and home situation? Putting together your interview and your reading, discuss what you have learned about EI.

6. Brain development guides personal development.

a. In a program you believe conducive to healthy development, record observations in as much detail as you can in a time block that involves active learning (not just listening and following directions). Referring to the text material on brain development, what practices did

you see that did or did not seem to be supporting healthy brain development in children you observed?

b. Interview a teacher about brain development. Ask the teacher's response to the idea in the text that if children experience high levels of stress over time, their learning and behaviors may be hindered. Ask about the teacher's approach when a child seems to be bringing high stress levels into the classroom. Compare the teacher's responses with the text material on brain development.

7. Guidance for healthy development in a diverse society

a. Observe a child who seems to be out of the cultural mainstream for the classroom.

Record sample interactions of the child with the teacher and other children. Observe details of the classroom and the daily program that do or do not seem inclusive of the child. Write down findings about how the teacher and the program seem to be accommodating of the child and what you know of the microculture of the child's family.

b. Interview a teacher

8. The teacher creates a climate for partnerships with families.

a. Interview a teacher about the steps he or she takes at the beginning of the year to build partnerships with families. Ask about the practices modeled by the teacher in the chapter. Compare your findings with material from the chapter about building partnerships.

b. Interview a family member about what is important for a teacher to do at the beginning of the year to create a climate for partnerships with family members. Ask about the practices modeled by the teacher in the chapter. Compare answers with material from the chapter about building partnerships.

CASE STUDIES

1. Peter is a curious and intelligent boy with a high IQ. He shows exceptional talent as an artist and musician. However, he manifests a learning disability in the subject of mathematics. In order to become successful mastering basic mathematics concepts, Peter needs repeated practice and review. He is about to leave elementary school and enter a middle school. His parents are very concerned about his success and how to guide him in areas of strength.

- What practice would you recommend about schooling and what to look for in educational institutions to parents who have children like Peter?
2. You are a new teacher who wants to foster strong ties between school and the home. It is the beginning of the school year and you want to initiate some relationship with the parents and guardians of your students.
 - Map out ideas about how and what you would do to inform parents of your instructional goals and what you hope to accomplish this year with their help and cooperation.
 3. As the teacher of at-risk students, you know that your students need much support and assistance in bridging the gaps they have in their learning. Helping them to grow successfully largely depends upon the methods you use to span the differences in their achievements and those of the students on grade level with their academics.
 - Indicate how Vygotsky's theories would work to help you bring your students to where they needed to be in order to be more successful in their academic achievements.

INTERNET EXERCISES

Go to the following Web site:

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/learning/lr1zpda.htm>

In the search box, type in “zone of proximal development.” Click on the link entitled, “[Zone of Proximal Development \(ZPD\)](#).” Advance to the link entitled, “[four-stage model of ZPD](#).” Briefly explain how a child moves from Stage I to Stage IV through Vygotsky's zone.

Go to the Web site: <http://www.funderstanding.com/>.

In the search box, type in “emotional intelligence.” Click on the first link, entitled [Funderstanding - Emotional Intelligence](#). Briefly describe what are the five characteristics of the term “emotional intelligence.”

Go to the Web site: <http://psychology.about.com/od/psychosocialtheories/a/psychosocial.htm> .

List the eight stages of human development as identified by Erik Erikson.

WEB LINKS

Daniel Goleman

Search this Web site for information on the work of Daniel Goleman in the area of emotional intelligences.

<http://www.eiconsortium.org/>

Erik Erikson

Search this Web site for information on the work of Erik Erikson and his theory of human development.

<http://www.psy.pdx.edu/>

Child Development

Preschool Brain Growth and Development

Preschool education activities and early childhood education lesson plans that give preschool children choices. Ideas for pre-k and kindergarten teachers that enrich classroom curriculum are arranged by theme.

<http://www.preschoolrainbow.org/>

Zero to Three

ZERO TO THREE is a national nonprofit organization that informs, trains and supports professionals, policymakers and parents in their efforts to improve the lives of infants and toddlers.

<http://www.zerotothree.org/>

Early Childhood Educational Research Foundation:

Topics > Brain Development > Brain Development FAQs

HighScope Educational Research Foundation is an independent nonprofit research, development, training, and public outreach organization with headquarters in Ypsilanti, Michigan. HighScope's mission is to *lift lives through education*. We envision a world in which all educational settings use active participatory learning so everyone has a chance to succeed in life and contribute to society.

<http://www.highscope.org>

Early Childhood Research

Early Childhood Research & Practice (ECRP), an Internet-only journal, features articles related to the development, care, and education of children from birth to approximately age 8.

<http://www.ecrp.uiuc.edu>

Early Childhood Care and Development

The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development (CGECCD) is a global inter-agency consortium with strong links to regional networks and a track record of advocacy and knowledge generation and dissemination at an international level.

<http://www.ecdgroup.com>

AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCES

Note: The following list of materials does not necessarily indicate author endorsement.

10 Things Every Child Needs. In this video, experts such as Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Dr. Bruce Perry, and Barbara Bowman discuss "ten simple things shown to help children's Brain Development." Well-known, watcher-friendly 60-minute video. Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, 1997. Chicago, IL 60611. 312-337-0480. Order at www.amazon.com by typing in "Ten Things Every Child Needs" under VHS, or by calling Consumer Vision at 1-800-756-8792.

Howard Gardner, Multiple Intelligences for the New Millennium. Eight-part video: (1) Who Owns "Intelligence"? (2) a New View; (3) the Nine Intelligences; (4) the Three Axes of Intelligence; (5) MI in Practice: Individualization and Assessment; (6) Disciplinary Understanding: Entry Points; (7) Intelligence in the New Millennium; (8) Intelligence and Ethics: Good Work. 48 minutes. 2002. Into the Classroom Media, 10573 West Pico Blvd., #162, Los Angeles, CA 90064. 1-800-732-7946. mi@classroommedia.com

Into the Classroom: Intelligence, Understanding, and the Mind. Video. Lecture by Gardner in which he discusses Multiple Intelligences and the education process. Into the Classroom Media, 10573 West Pico Blvd., #162, Los Angeles, CA 90064. 1-800-732-7946. mi@classroommedia.com

Multiple Intelligences. In this video program, educator David Lazaer argues that for all children to succeed instructors must adapt their teaching styles to multiple intelligences. He defines seven categories of intelligence: logical-mathematical, verbal-linguistic, visual-spatial, intrapersonal, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and musical. #UR784. Insight Media, 2162 Broadway, New York, NY 10024. 212-721-6316. www.insight-media.com

Nurturing Growth-Child Growth and Development. In this video, a child's development takes place in the context of the child's culture and family. This video examines how early childhood programs incorporate all the developmental domains and how teachers plan for the interaction of these domains to support the development of the whole child. #865. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1509 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036. 800-424-2460. www.naeyc.org

RECOMMENDED READINGS

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- Reineke, J., Sonsteng, K. & Gartrell, D. (2008). Nurturing mastery motivation: No need for rewards. *Young Children*, 65(5), 88–94.
- Rose, L. C. (2008). No child left behind: The mathematics of guaranteed failure. *Educational Horizons*. Winter 2004, pp. 121–129.
- Sapon-Shevin, M. (2008). Learning in an inclusive community. *Educational Leadership*, September 2008. 49–53.
- Vance, E., & Jimenez Weaver, P. (2003). Words to describe feelings. *Young Children*, 58(4), 45.

