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UNIT 1 Conception to Birth

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- 1. New Calculator Factors Chances for Very Premature Infants,** Denise Grady, *The New York Times*, April 17, 2008
Researchers have developed a **statistical tool** to determine the chance of a **premature** baby's **survival** and the likelihood of **birth defects**. Gender and birth weight are key factors in helping babies born as early as 22 to 25 weeks survive. The calculations influence **medical decisions** that are to be made for the care of these premature infants. 2
- 2. Genes in Context: Gene–Environment Interplay and the Origins of Individual Differences in Behavior,** Frances A. Champagne and Rahia Mashoodh, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, June 2009
The old-fashioned **nature–nurture debate** is giving way to more sophisticated approaches, such as **epigenetics**, to unravel how genes and experience interact to shape development. Environment can determine which **genes** can “turn on” or stay silent. 4
- 3. Effects of Prenatal Social Stress on Offspring Development: Pathology or Adaptation?,** Sylvia Kaiser and Norbert Sachser, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, April 2009
This article describes how **prenatal stress** can affect development in humans and animals. Social instability and stress can cause **hormonal changes** for the fetus that may lead to **masculinized effects** in daughters and decreased masculinization in sons. 8



UNIT 2 Cognition, Language, and Learning

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Part A. Early Cognition and Physical Development

- 4. Infants' Differential Processing of Female and Male Faces,** Jennifer L. Ramsey-Rennels and Judith H. Langlois, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, April 2006
This article about **infants' processing of faces** discusses infants' difficulty in forming a male prototype and also the fact that infants **preferred female faces** to male faces. This is explained in terms of **environmental experiences** with female faces and **evolutionary dispositions**. 16
- 5. The Other-Race Effect Develops during Infancy: Evidence of Perceptual Narrowing,** David J. Kelly et al., *Psychological Science*, December 2007
Additional support for **environmental influences** on **face processing** is presented in this article. **Infants** learn to discriminate faces in their own race from other races by 9 months of age, a form of **“perceptual narrowing”** that may facilitate the development of the **other-race effect** seen in adults. 20

6. **New Advances in Understanding Sensitive Periods in Brain Development**, Michael S. C. Thomas and Mark H. Johnson, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, January 2008
The human brain is marked by **plasticity** early in life but also is susceptible to the power of experiences at different ages. **Sensitive periods** occur when the brain seems optimally prepared to learn certain skills and knowledge, such as **imprinting** and **attachment** and even **second languages**. 26
7. **Contributions of Neuroscience to Our Understanding of Cognitive Development**, Adele Diamond and Dima Amso, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, February 2008
Neuroscience has shown that **biology is not destiny**—that experience affects the growing brain. Authors Diamond and Amso describe recent neuroscience research in several areas, including **infant imitation and mirror neurons**, **neurotransmitters**, **maternal touch** and **infant stress**, and the **intergenerational transmission of biological and behavioral characteristics**. 30
8. **Infant Feeding and Cognition: Integrating a Developmental Perspective**, Elizabeth Soliday, *Child Development Perspectives*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2007
It is widely assumed that **breast-feeding** is good for **babies' health and cognitive growth**. However, this article argues that optimistic conclusions may be premature. More precise research is needed on **infant feeding practices**, **cognitive development**, and **individual differences** before coming to a more certain answer on breast-feeding. 35
9. **Do Babies Learn from Baby Media?**, Judy S. DeLoache et al., *Psychological Science*, vol. 21, no. 11
Parents are gobbling up **educational videos** assuming that they will help their babies learn. However, this hope seems misplaced, as this article shows that **toddlers' vocabulary** did not improve due to baby videos, though it did thanks to old-fashioned **mother-child interaction**. 41
10. **Developmental Narratives of the Experiencing Child**, Katherine Nelson, *Child Development Perspectives*, vol. 4, no. 1, March 11, 2010
In contrast to most theories that analyze the child as an object, this paper describes childhood development by emphasizing **the child's personal experiential perspective**. The child's **meaning** of life is shaped by **language**, **memory**, and **shared experience** in different contexts of **interactive encounters**. 46
11. **Social Cognitive Development: A New Look**, Kristina R. Olson and Carol S. Dweck, *Child Development Perspectives*, April 2009
The field of **social cognitive development** uses methods to study how children's thinking about other people and social relationships develops. This research is illuminating **how children think about people's good and bad actions** and **understand people who are similar or different**. 51
12. **Evidence for "Rose-Colored Glasses": An Examination of the Positivity Bias in Young Children's Personality Judgments**, Janet J. Boseovski, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2010, vol. 4, no. 3
From the preschool years through middle childhood, children display a **positivity bias**—the tendency to think of themselves and other people in a good light, by exaggerating the impact of positive behaviors or traits and minimizing negative ones. This tendency, the author claims, arises from **metacognitive immaturity**, **early socialization**, and **cultural factors** and may be adaptive for helping young children persevere in the face of failure. 56
13. **Talking about Science in Museums**, Catherine A. Haden, *Child Development Perspectives*, vol. 4, no. 1, March 2010
Parent-child conversation is a major influence on children's development. This article examines such communication, specifically about science topics, in an interesting setting: museums. Children's knowledge is enhanced by parents' use of **elaborative conversation** with many questions and expansions on children's comments. 63

Part B. Learning in School

14. **Should Learning Be Its Own Reward?**, Daniel T. Willingham, *American Educator*, Winter 2007–2008
The author uses recent initiatives by several schools in several states to pay students for performance on **high-stakes standardized tests** as a way to examine the use of an impact of rewards on **student learning**. He then summarizes the arguments against the use of rewards into three categories and suggests ways teachers can appropriately use rewards while avoiding their potentially detrimental effects. 69
15. **Recess—It's Indispensable!**, NAEYC, *Young Children*, September 2009
Recess used to be a staple of school, as much a part of a normal day as reading, writing, and lunch. But recess is now under attack, as **school districts are cutting recess for more instructional time**. This article criticizes this recent change and argues that children have a **"right" to recess** and that it promotes **physical, cognitive, and social development**. 75
16. **Social Awareness + Emotional Skills = Successful Kids**,
Tori DeAngelis, *Monitor on Psychology*, April 2010
Although schools have emphasized academic intelligence, evidence is mounting to show that **emotional intelligence** matters, too. This article reviews research confirming that children who complete a social and emotional learning program score significantly higher on **achievement tests** and appear **healthier on depression and anxiety scales**. 78
17. **Kindergartners Explore Spirituality**, Ben Mardell and Mona M. Abo-Zena, *Young Children*, July 2010
Beginning at very young ages, children ask **philosophical and spiritual questions**. This article describes a creative kindergarten project—the Beliefs Project—that emphasized children's **dramatic play, writing, and art** to explore spirituality. Through it all they learned about themselves, about others, and about differences, and even their **teachers and parents** grew in the process. 80



UNIT 3 Social and Emotional Development

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Part A. The Child's Feelings: Emotional Development

18. **Don't! The Secret of Self-Control**, Jonah Lehrer, *The New Yorker*, May 18, 2009
Learning how to **control one's emotions, desires, and actions** is a crucial task of early childhood. The article describes fascinating research that tests when such skills develop, how they are related to **children's behavior and brain maturity**, and how self-control matters for **long-term development**. 87
19. **The Moral Life of Babies**, Paul Bloom, *The New York Times Magazine*, May 3, 2010, www.nytimes.com/2010/05/09/magazine/09babies-t.html
Can babies be moral? Despite theorists' claims of infants' immaturity, many fascinating new studies reveal that babies seem to possess **a rudimentary moral sense, a naïve morality**. Bloom's article describes numerous **experiments** that use ingenious methods to measure infants' understanding of good and bad in the first year of life. 93

Part B. Entry into the Social World: Peers, Play, and Popularity

20. **Social Context Influences on Children's Rejection by Their Peers**, Amori Yee Mikami, Matthew D. Lerner, and Janetta Lun, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2010, vol. 4, no. 2
Some children are cast out by their peer group, and the assumption has been these **rejected children** have **social or emotional deficits**. This article presents evidence that factors in the **social context** in which children interact are key, including **deviation from peer norms** and a **social dominance hierarchy**. Suggestions are offered to reduce peer rejection through better **classroom intervention** and **teacher training**. 99

21. **Same Place, Different Experiences: Bringing Individual Differences to Research in Child Care**, Deborah A. Phillips, Nathan A. Fox, and Megan R. Gunnar, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2011, vol. 5, no. 1
 Research on children's development has often overlooked the role of **individual differences** among children. The authors describe how children's **temperament** and **reactivity to stress** are key aspects of early personality that influence how children are affected by early environments. 106
22. **When Girls and Boys Play: What Research Tells Us**, Jeanetta G. Riley and Rose B. Jones, *Childhood Education*, Fall 2007
 Play has many benefits for all children, but research shows that girls and boys often play in different ways. The authors review research on gender patterns in social interactions, physical play, and language usage. Implications for educators and parents are also discussed. 112
23. **Playtime in Peril**, Lea Winerman, *Monitor on Psychology*, September 2009
Recess and free play time are diminishing in children's lives, replaced by **electronic media** and "**edutainment**" toys. This article argues for the valuable role **pretense and play** have in children's **cognitive and academic growth**. 117
24. **The Role of Neurobiological Deficits in Childhood Antisocial Behavior**, Stephanie H. M. van Goozen, Graeme Fairchild, and Gordon T. Harold, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, March 2008
 Some children early in childhood engage in antisocial behavior. There are biological and social influences on these problem behaviors. This article describes the interplay between children's adverse early environments and certain neurobiological deficits that lead to antisocial behavior later in childhood. 119



UNIT 4

Parenting and Family Issues

Unit Overview 124

25. **Children of Lesbian and Gay Parents**, Charlotte J. Patterson, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, October 2006
 Does **parental sexual orientation** affect child development? After years of research, it has been determined that there is **little difference** between the children of heterosexual and homosexual parents. In fact, the **quality of relationships** in the family seems to matter more than the parents' sexual orientation. 127
26. **Evidence of Infants' Internal Working Models of Attachment**, Susan C. Johnson, Carol S. Dweck, and Frances S. Chen, *Psychological Science*, June 2007
Internal working models of attachment underlie the **instinctual behaviors** children display in their attachment relationships. The authors use an ingenious visual **habituation technique** to measure infants' internal working models of attachment, showing that infants' **personal attachment experiences** are reflected in their **abstract mental representations** of social interactions. 131
27. **Parental Divorce and Children's Adjustment**, Jennifer E. Lansford, *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, February 2009
 This article reviews the research evidence on how **divorce affects children's short- and long-term development** in areas such as **academics, social relationships, and internalizing and externalizing symptoms**. Other potential mitigating factors are considered, such as **family income, child well-being** prior to divorce, and the timing of divorce. 133
28. **Within-Family Differences in Parent-Child Relations across the Life Course**, J. Jill Sutor et al., *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, May 2008
 In the same family, parents often treat their children very differently. Such differential treatment and sometimes favoritism are expressed in different levels of closeness, support, and control of siblings. 147

29. **The Role of Parental Control in Children's Development in Western and East Asian Countries**, Eva M. Pomerantz and Qian Wang, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, October 2009
Parental control over children is a crucial dimension of parenting and **discipline**, yet too much control can have negative effects on children. This article examines how parental control is situated in **different cultures** and may affect children differently in the United States and East Asian countries. 152
30. **Fatal Distraction: Forgetting a Child in the Backseat of a Car Is a Horrifying Mistake. Is It a Crime?**, Gene Weingarten, *The Washington Post*, April 3, 2009
Each year, **children die** as a result of being left in an overheated vehicle. Is this **neglect** and should these **parents be punished?** Gene Weingarten writes about this horrific occurrence and asks readers to consider whether it could happen to them. 157
31. **Siblings Play Formative, Influential Role as 'Agents of Socialization'**, *ScienceDaily*, January 20, 2010
Siblings play an important, formative role in children's development. Children especially look up to and try to emulate the behaviors of their older siblings. This doesn't mean that children turn out like their elder siblings; most want to carve out their own path, their own identity as they mature. 160
32. **Sibling Experiences in Diverse Family Contexts**, Shirley McGuire and Lilly Shanahan, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2010, vol. 4, no. 2
Siblings are a key influence in children's lives, but this article argues that we need better understanding of the embedded layers of **social context**. Siblings live in a family, which has an **ethnicity and culture**, and these factors influence the sibling relationship. The authors review research on **European-, African-, and Mexican-American families**, as well as **adoptive and lesbian and gay families**, to illuminate these complex dynamics between culture, family, and siblings. 162



UNIT 5 Cultural and Societal Influences

Unit Overview 170

Part A. Social and Cultural Issues

33. **Independence and Interdependence in Children's Developmental Experiences**, Catherine Raeff, *Child Development Perspectives*, 2010, vol. 4, no. 1
Culture surrounds children's lives and exerts direct and indirect influences on their development. This article describes how cultures vary in their value on **independence and interdependence**, though it is dangerous to simply categorize a culture as one or the other exclusively. Children's behavior, from where they **sleep to conflict resolution**, is affected by these values. 173

Part B. Special Challenges

34. **Treating Traumatized Children**, Rebecca A. Clay, *Monitor on Psychology*, August 2010
Psychologists are recognizing the special needs of children in the aftermath of natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina. Studies are showing that, while many children are **resilient** after such events, many children suffer clinical levels of **post-traumatic stress** for years after the event. **Treatments** are needed for children who have lost parents, homes, or pets during these natural disasters. 178

