

# Detailed Chapter Outline with Key Terms

## Chapter 1: The Study of Human Development

**Focus:** Victor, the Wild Boy of Aveyron

### HOW THE STUDY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT EVOLVED

- **Human development:** Scientific study of processes of change and stability throughout the human life span.

#### Early Approaches

- *Baby biographies:* Journals kept recording the early development of a child, early forerunners of the scientific study of development.

#### Studying the Life Span

- **Life-span development:** Concept of development as a lifelong process, which can be studied scientifically.
- *Interdisciplinary:* Study that draws on many fields, or disciplines. The study of life-span development is interdisciplinary.

### HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TODAY: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD

- *Describe:* Goal in the study of human development in which scientists observe behavior in order to describe what happens in the lives of children and adults.
- *Explain:* Goal in which scientists attempt to understand, or explain, why observed behavior occurs—the cause of observed behavior.
- *Predict:* Goal in which scientists make educated guesses about what might happen in the future to behavior.
- *Modify:* Goal in which scientists use the knowledge of causes of behavior to change or control behavior.

#### Developmental Processes: Change and Stability

- **Quantitative change:** Change in number or amount, such as in height, weight, or size of vocabulary.
- **Qualitative change:** Change in kind, structure, or organization, such as the change from nonverbal to verbal communication.
- *Stability:* Constancy of personality and behavior that most people show.

## Domains of Development

- *Domain*: A dimension, such as physical, cognitive, or psychosocial.
- **Physical development**: Growth of body and brain and change or stability in sensory capacities, motor skills, and health.
- **Cognitive development**: Change or stability in mental abilities, such as learning, memory, language, thinking, moral reasoning, and creativity.
- **Psychosocial development**: Change and stability in emotions, personality, and social relationships.

## Periods of the Life Span

- **Social construction**: Concept about the nature of reality, based on societally shared perceptions or assumptions.

## INFLUENCES ON DEVELOPMENT

- **Individual differences**: Differences in characteristics, influences, or developmental outcomes.

## Heredity, Environment, and Maturation

- **Heredity**: Inborn characteristics inherited from the biological parents at conception.
- **Environment**: Totality of nonhereditary, or experiential, influences on development.
- **Maturation**: Unfolding of a natural sequence of physical and behavioral changes, including readiness to master new abilities.
- *Milestones*: Landmarks of development, or the average ages for the occurrence of certain events such as walking and talking.
- *Environmental*: Experiential factors that affect people, such as socioeconomic status or culture.

## Major Contextual Influences

### *Family*

- **Nuclear family**: Kinship and household unit made up of one or two parents and their natural, adopted, or stepchildren.
- **Extended family**: Kinship network of parents, children, and other relatives, sometimes living together in an *extended-family household*.

### *Socioeconomic Status and Neighborhood*

- **Socioeconomic status (SES)**: Combination of economic and social factors describing an individual or family, including income, education, and occupation.

- **Risk factors:** Conditions that increase the likelihood of a negative developmental outcome.

### *Culture and Race/Ethnicity*

- **Culture:** A society's or group's total way of life, including customs, traditions, beliefs, values, language, and physical products—all learned behavior passed on from parents to children.
- **Ethnic group:** Group united by ancestry, race, religion, language, and/or national origins, which contribute to a sense of shared identity.
- **Ethnic gloss:** An overgeneralization that obscures cultural differences within a group.

### *The Historical Context*

#### Normative and Nonnormative Influences

- **Normative:** Characteristic of an event that occurs in a similar way for most people in a group.
- *Normative age-graded influences:* Event or influence that is highly similar for people in a particular age group. Includes biological (puberty, menopause) and social (marriage, retirement) events.
- *Normative history-graded influences:* Event or influence common to a particular cohort. In this section, the concept of historical generations is defined as a group of people who experience the event at a formative time in their lives.
- **Cohort:** Group of people growing up at about the same time.
- **Nonnormative:** Characteristic of an unusual event that happens to a particular person, or a typical event that happens at an unusual time of life.

#### Timing of Influences: Critical or Sensitive Periods

- **Imprinting:** Phenomenon in which newly hatched birds will instinctively follow the first moving object they see, the result of the readiness of the nervous system of the organism to acquire certain information during a brief critical period in early life.
- **Critical period:** Specific time when a given event, or its absence, has the greatest impact on development.
- **Sensitive periods:** Times in development when a person is particularly open to certain kinds of experiences.

### BALTES'S LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

- **Plasticity:** Modifiability of performance.
- Baltes's Six Principles of the Lifespan Approach:
  - Development is lifelong.
  - Development involves both gain and loss.

- Relative influences of biology and culture shift over the lifespan.
- Development involves a changing allocation of resources.
- Development is modifiable.
- Development is influenced by the historical and cultural context.