# Learning Unit 1
# The development of babies, toddlers and young children

After completing this Learning Unit, you will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the development of babies, toddlers and young children, by successfully completing the following:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of theories of child development.
- Compare own views about the meaning and use of key terms to the views of others, showing how such views influence our ways of seeing and working with children.
- Compare different ways of seeing the development of young children to highlight key similarities and differences in the theories.
- Describe stages in the development of children in each domain in line with existing theories.
- Identify factors that enable the development of children in each domain in line with relevant existing theories.
- Ensure that explanations of how gender, socio-economic background, age, environment and special needs impact on the development of children in each domain are consistent with established theories or literature and the principles of inclusion and anti-bias.
- Provide descriptions to show how development is shaped by socio-cultural influences.
- Provide descriptions to show how development within each domain is linked to and affected by development in other domains.

# *The development of babies, toddlers and young children*

In this unit you will learn about the holistic (that is, total or complete) development of a child. You will also be able to understand the belief that all the different domains (areas) of child development are interconnected. When we say the domains are interconnected, we mean that learning in one domain will cause growth and development in the other domains.

You will also be introduced to psychologists who have produced theories on how children develop, their developmental stages, and which of their body parts and mind become ready to work at what age.

It is very important that you take a holistic approach to understand these theories. This means that you should not see the theories as separate, but as parts of one big whole. Once you are familiar with the theories of child development, you will need to combine and interpret them yourself so that you understand how the baby, toddler or young child develops as a whole person.

By holistic development we mean physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. This means that you need to provide children with activities that will make them grow and develop on all three these levels.

## Definitions of key terms in child development

### *Childhood*

Childhood refers to the period between infancy (about 1-2 years) and pubescence.

Most of the physical and mental development of a person takes place in childhood. It is the critical period during which children can establish good habits of both exercise and nutrition that can last a lifetime. By the age of seven, nearly all of the motor control mechanisms in the brain are present. Motor control mechanisms are those systems that help the child control movement. The child is now also quickly developing motor skills (movement skills).

Different cultures at different times have different views about childhood.

*These viewpoints are that children:*

- are basically good
- are eager to learn
- deserve kindness and respect
- should be seen, not heard

### *Human development*

Human development is a pattern of change or movements that starts when a baby is conceived and continues through old age. In the younger years, development involves growth and maturation (becoming an adult).

In the early childhood years, children develop the ability to be fully capable human beings. They learn to speak their home language - or more than one language if they are exposed to other languages. They learn to co-ordinate their bodies by walking, talking, climbing, skipping, hopping, and jumping. They learn to interact socially others, taking turns, sharing, greeting, communicating ideas and feelings. They learn to physically manage more and more complex activities – drawing, painting, making models, and completing puzzles. They learn to play in creative and imaginative ways and use their creativity and imagination in their learning

activities. They learn to develop and apply values, like kindness and caring, in their daily activities.

***Holistic development***

Holistic development is basically the development of everyone's intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative and religious values and feelings. It is pretty much just the development of the entire brain's thoughts and feelings.

***Teaching/Facilitation***

Teaching takes place when the teacher presents knowledge to the learner and invites the learner to become involved in the learning process.

Facilitation is the process during the teacher guides and supports the child in a structured or unstructured environment.

*Why do we talk about facilitating for child development, rather than teaching a child?*

In the holistic and integrated perspective of early childhood development, a teacher takes an active role when he or she presents learning material and shape knowledge. A facilitator simply promotes and guides a process that is already on track.

***Integrated learning***

The integrated curriculum views children's experiences as learning opportunities, which are all interconnected. Integrated themes for curriculum planning enable children to make connections among and between ideas and knowledge, which is meaningful to them. Integrated learning makes it easier to link learning experiences across developmental domains and across content/learning areas. Learning is therefore viewed in a holistic manner, and a variety of materials is used to lead children to acquire knowledge, skills and disposition and feelings.

***Developmentally appropriate activities***

Developmentally appropriate activities are activities that are appropriate for each child's development stage.

You should understand how children develop and grow so that you can choose appropriate activities for them.

Selection of appropriate activities will lay a solid foundation and accommodate children's different learning abilities.

## 1.1 Theories of child development – ways of seeing the development of babies, toddlers and young children

Many theories of development have been described by psychologists, doctors and philosophers, and together they create a field of knowledge about childhood. The theory focuses mostly on the development process. It regards the individual as being active in the process of development, with change occurring because of the unfolding of internal forces. It is assumed that human beings will progress through definite stages of development, directed by forces within them. (Hook et al. , 2002, p. 382. )

These theories explain that the child slowly grows and develops abilities as his or her body becomes able to do certain tasks. Each stage of development can proceed well only if the previous stages have been mastered. For this reason, children may be prevented from

developing well if some of their abilities are not stimulated at the right stage of their development.

Organismic development can be described as being similar to the way we bake a cake – if one ingredient is left out, the whole cake may not taste good, as all the ingredients interact together. Similarly, child development requires that all the right elements should interact together to be a total success.

In the same way that new born animals learn to stand on their legs within the first few hours after their birth if they are in a suitable environment, humans also need certain stimulating environmental conditions in order to develop all their abilities fully.

As you learn about the main theories of development, you should be aware that the child functions as a whole person, even though he is described in parts (domains) by the theorists. It is up to you to combine and integrate the theories so that you understand how the baby, toddler or young child develops as a whole person. Your work as an ECD practitioner/facilitator is to provide activities for babies, toddlers and young children, to help them grow and develop in all domains. Once development begins, it affects progress in all domains at once. You may not immediately see evidence of this but the parts of the picture will emerge later. (Think of a rainbow: sometimes you can't see all the colours at once, or even the whole rainbow, but if you walk to the end of your street or drive over a hill, you may see the whole thing – the potential was there all the time. )

Case Study 1 (below) paints a scenario of the holistic development of a child:

**Case Study 1: Thandeka Maseko**

*(Depicts holistic development areas)*

*Thandeka is a little five-year-old girl who lives with her grandmother, Lumka in a two – roomed shack in the back yard of the garage owner in Jabavu "SOWETO".*

*Lumka loved Thandeka and kept her clean and fed at all times. Thandeka was made to watch TV for the whole day, when her grandmother was doing other household chores.*

*One day a neighbour told Lumka that she had seen an advertisement in the community newspaper for a new preschool that is to be opened in the area, run by non-governmental organisation and advised Lumka to register Thandeka, for her to get stimulated rather than sitting at home watching TV.*

*Thandeka joined the centre, the ECD educator Mrs Mongala decided to take her into her class for three months to see how she would cope. She was sure that by playing with other children her own age would be a very constructive experience for Thandeka.*

*Mrs Mongala couldn't spend all her time working with Thandeka so she organised friends of hers to work alongside her, talking to her and making sure she was able to participate in all the learning areas provided which include:*

*Painting*

*Drawing*

*Play dough kneading*

*Cutting and pasting*

*This helped Thandeka to make friends and she learned quickly by copying what her new friends were doing, which helped her to develop the small muscles.*

*After three months, Thandeka was a different child. Her small muscle control was excellent. Her creativity was good. Other children in the class responded to Thandeka's positive attitude and she began to integrate easily and socially into the group.*

As this case study shows, there is a strong overlap between the different developmental areas. Thandeka's poor fine motor skills were an obstacle to her creative development, as well as her social and emotional development. However, when her fine motor skills improved, her development in other areas also improved.

- Holistic development means the need to help the child to develop in a holistic way, building and strengthening her skills and abilities in all of the main developmental areas.

**Psychoanalytic child development theories by Sigmund Freud**

The theories proposed by Sigmund Freud stressed the importance of childhood events and experiences, but almost exclusively focused on ***mental disorders*** rather that ***normal functioning.***

- He emphasised that a child's personality is formed by the ways which his parents managed his sexual and aggressive drives. There were five stages:
    - oral (0-18 months)
    - anal (18 months – 3 1/2 years)
    - phallic (3 1/2 years – 6 years)
    - latency (6 years – puberty)
    - genital (puberty – adulthood)

Stage 1: Beginning at birth:

*The Oral Stage*: The lips, tongue, and teeth are at the centre of understanding the world. The impulses of hunger and thirst are paramount -- and can only be gratified orally.

Oral Gratification in adulthood is seen as pathological only in extreme instances. Partial fixation in the oral stage is seen as a cause of smoking, overeating, or heightened interest in oral sexual gratification.

**Stage 2: Ages 2 to 4.**

*The Anal Stage*: As children learn how to control their own bladder, urination and defecation play an increasing role in the child's life. Children associate both praise and criticism with the withholding or release of body waste. Anal fixation can occur due to the inconsistency between the praise given for successful toilet practice and the coexisting disgust of fecal material.

**Stage 3: 3 years+**

*The Phallic Stage*: If the child has passed through the anal stage. Genital focus now captures the child's interest and the child is either obsessed with having a penis or not having one. Sexual pleasure

is linked to the closeness of one's parents. During this stage, children often want to sleep with their parents and become jealous when they are not the focus of their parent's attention.

**Stage 4:**

*The Latency Stage*: After the Phallic Stage, children repress sexual thoughts. Internal feelings of shame, guilt, and morality help maintain this latency period.

**Stage 5: Puberty**

*The Genital Stage***:** The sexual impulses are reawakened in the adolescent. The sexual behaviour is now directed toward other people, rather than the self-centred exploration of the phallic period. Females generally lose their penis envy during this stage. Heterosexuality (desire for a sexual partner of the opposite sex) is seen as a healthy direction for mature sexual impulses. Homosexuality is seen by Freud as a genital fixation.

Each psychosexual stage has three main parts:

1. *A physical focus*: where the child's energy is concentrated and their gratification obtained.
2. *A psychological theme*: related to both the physical focus and the demands of the outside world being made on the developing child. For each stage, there can be two extremes in psychological reaction – either doing too much or not doing enough of what is ideal.
3. *An adult character type*: in the first three stages this adult character type is related to being fixated or stuck at that stage. If a person doesn't resolve the psychological issues that arise at that stage they will always have problems relating to those issues.

At each stage, there is a crisis which must be worked through. If the crisis is not properly worked out, the person could become *fixated* at that stage of development. *Fixations* are seen in adulthood as child-like approaches to gratifying the basic impulses.

**Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development**

Erik Erikson also proposed a stage theory of development, but his theory involved ***development throughout the entire human lifespan.***

Erikson believed that each stage of development was focused on overcoming a conflict e. g. the primary conflict during the adolescent period. This stage involves ***establishing a sense of personal identity.***

Erikson suggests that success or failure in dealing with the conflicts at each stage can have an impact on overall functioning. During the adolescent stage, for example, ***failure to develop an identity results in role confusion.***

He expanded on Freud's theories.

- He believed that development is life-long.
- Erikson outlined eight stages of psychosocial development. Each stage is described in terms of a positive and a negative quality. People are happiest when they can manage their lives to reach the positive outcome of a particular stage of development.
- He emphasised that at each stage, the child acquires attitudes and skills resulting from the successful negotiation of the psychological conflict.
- He identified the following eight stages:

i. Basic trust vs mistrust (birth – 1 year)
ii. Autonomy vs shame and doubt (ages 1–3)
iii. Initiative vs guilt (ages 3–6)
iv. Industry vs inferiority (ages 6–11)
v. Identity vs identity confusion (adolescence)
vi. Intimacy vs isolation (young adulthood)
vii. Generativity vs stagnation (middle adulthood)
viii. Integrity vs despair (the elderly)

At different ages, certain types of behaviour and relationship might have a special meaning for socio-emotional development; for example for a school age child, it is important that the child get a sense of his own competence and ability to work.

With younger children there should be plenty of opportunities for free play and experimentation so that they can develop autonomy (independence). You as facilitator must balance this with firm guidance so that children will not experience self-doubt.

Among preschool children, for example, those who have been protected and have had everything done for them may have a lot of self-doubt. These children strive for perfection and are afraid of failure. To help children develop autonomy, you should let them know that it is acceptable to make mistakes and to create solutions that are less than perfect.

**Jean Piaget's cognitive child development theories**

Theorist Jean Piaget suggested that children think differently than adults and proposed *a stage theory of cognitive development*.

1. The first stage of cognitive development is the sensorimotor stage, which means the infant uses his senses and motor abilities to understand the world and which occurs between birth and two years of age.
2. The second stage of cognitive development is the pre-operational stage, which means the child uses mental representations of objects and is able to use symbolic thought and language and which lasts from about age two to age seven.

3. The third stage of cognitive development is the concrete operational stage, which means the child uses logical operations or principles when solving problems and lasts from about seven to eleven years of age.
4. The fourth stage of cognitive development is the formal operational stage, which begins at about twelve years of age. During this stage, children begin to think in more abstract and logical ways.

He was the first to note that children *play an active role in gaining knowledge of the world.*

According to his theory, children can be thought of as "little scientists" who *actively construct their knowledge and understanding of the world.*

**Behavioural Child Development Theories by John B. Watson, Ivan Pavlov and B. F. Skinner**

These theories were formulated by theorists such as John B. Watson, Ivan Pavlov and B. F. Skinner.

Behavioural theories of child development focus on *how environmental interaction influences behaviour.* The theories deal only with *observable behaviour* that means behaviour that can be seen or heard.

These theorists believe that development is considered a *reaction to rewards, punishments, stimuli and reinforcement.*

This theory differs considerably from other child development theories because it gives no consideration to internal thoughts or feelings.

Instead, it focuses purely on how our experience shapes who we are. The behavioural theories of Skinner continue to influence what goes on in schools, especially for some special education programmes. The mechanistic theory of behaviourism emphasises the role of the environment on an individual's development. Preparing the environment for appropriate reinforcement is a major goal.

Two examples of Skinner's contribution to education are behaviour modification and programmed learning. Both of these rely heavily on immediate reinforcement, in which a child has to exhibit the "right" behaviour or produce the "correct" answer in order to be positively reinforced.

Applications of this theory have resulted in an overemphasis on isolated skills and drill, as well as a heavy reliance on teacher-directed and teacher-reinforced activities. As a result, teachers often ignore children's curiosity and prior knowledge.

**Social Child Development Theories by John Bowlby**

There is a great deal of research on the social development of children. John Bowlby proposed one of the earliest theories of social development.

Bowlby believed that early *relationships with caregivers play a major role in child development* and *continue to influence social relationships throughout life*.

**Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory**

The psychologist Albert Bandura proposed what is known as *social learning theory.*

According to this theory of child development, *children learn new behaviours by observing other people.*

Unlike behavioural theories, Bandura believed that external reinforcement was not the only way that people learn new things.

Instead, *intrinsic reinforcements* such as a sense of pride, satisfaction and accomplishment could also lead to learning.

By observing the actions of others, including parents and peers, children develop new skills and acquire new information.

**Lev Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory**

Another psychologist named Lev Vygotsky proposed a seminal learning theory that has become very influential, especially in the field of education.

Like Piaget, Vygotsky believed that *children learn actively* and *through hands-on experiences.*

His socio-cultural theory also suggested that *parents, caregivers, peers and the culture at large* were responsible for the development of higher order functions.

An example of this might be when a parent "helps" an infant clap or roll her hands to the pat-a-cake rhyme, until she can clap and roll her hands herself.

Vygotsky was strongly focused on the role of culture in determining the child's pattern of development:

*"Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (inter-psychological) and then inside the child (intra-psychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals. "*

Vygotsky says that the child's cultural environment plays a large part in his or her cognitive development. The child learns what and how to think through language. By interacting with parents, teachers and peers, a child develops and masters problem-solving skills.

## 1.2 Compare own views to the views of others

We all have an internal viewpoint of how other cultures live, as well as our own bias and stories that are not necessarily true. Opening your mind to how others think will greatly enrich your life. South Africa is multi-culturally rich, and offers a fine opportunity to explore and widen your own viewpoint.

In this section we will compare our own views about the meaning and use of key terms to the views of others, showing how such views influence our ways of seeing and working with children:

- "Key terms" include but are not limited to childhood, development, teaching, well-being, Ubuntu and rights, etc.
- "Views of others" refers to those views in the immediate environment as well as a more global or international view.

**African culture point of view**

In African culture, the baby is valued and kept close to the mother at all times. Parental control begins at about age two when the toddler is mobile and busy exploring the world. Children should always use their home language at home and respect their origins (where their ancestors came from) and traditional beliefs. They should be respectful towards adults.

Ubuntu has its origins in the indigenous languages of southern Africa; the concept focuses on people's loyalty to and associations with each other.

“Ubuntu” is an ancient African word meaning "humanity to others". It also means "I am what I am because of who we all are". Children are therefore never orphans since the roles of mother and father are not limited to in a single individual with respect to a single child. No adult will ever allow any child around him/her to be an orphan. Your neighbour's child is your own, and his/her success is your success too.

**Western urbanised culture point of view**

In Western urbanised culture there is a belief that too much attention may spoil the baby.

The mother should consult experts if she is at all unsure of how to care for the baby.

The baby’s behaviour should fit the norms given in the media.

The mother’s need to earn an income is primary, and children’s needs must come second to that.

Young children should be respectful and quiet when in the company of adults.

(This urbanised culture is changing all the time as a result of various global influences so you may want to describe your own culture's beliefs here of the urban perspective on childhood. )

**The evolutionary approach to childhood point of view**

This is a new viewpoint on what childhood is.

This point of view looks at how human babies and mothers interact and compares it with how other babies interact with their mothers.

The human baby at birth is extremely weak and dependent, unlike most other babies who can walk very soon after birth.

Evolutionary adaptation refers to the changes of the human species to ensure that human beings can adapt to a changing environment.

These behaviours, like crying to be picked up and parenting of the mother, ensure that the baby gets what it needs in terms of both emotional comfort and food.

If the mother responds to the entire baby’s crying and attachment behaviour, a better relationship is created and the baby will be easier to manage.

From this point of view, there is no "spoiling" by giving the baby exactly what he or she needs; rather, it is better that way.

The repeated, long daily separation of the child from the mother goes against the evolutionary approach.

- Placing a child in a day care centre, increases the level of anxiety in the child-mother relationship, compared to when the child is raised at home. Though it is a solution for working mothers, leaving a baby at a full day care centre might negatively effect the child's development phases.

In this situation, the responsibility of a practitioner within the ECD setting is most important. The practitioner should respond to the needs of children in the most sensitive and caring way possible. Children are extremely vulnerable and dependent. The practitioner should give the same attention to the toddlers and young children in her class like she would give her own children. Knowing the effects of long separation, it will help if a practitioner is understanding and supportive when children display signs of anxiety or unhappiness with no apparent reason.

## 1.3 Compare different ways of seeing the development of young children

There are certain key similarities and differences between the theories.

The following table outlines the similarities and differences of development theories:

Table 1

| Theorist | Theories | Main Stages |
|---|---|---|
| Jean Piaget | Cognitive Development | Stages of Development<br>Children as constructors of knowledge.<br>Development leading learning.<br>Environmental factors influence learning.<br>Children assimilate experiences and then accommodate them within their current understanding.<br>Children adjust and use new information continually to make sense of experiences and perceptions. |
| John Dewey & Jean Piaget | Constructivism | Learning is active and constructive.<br>Learning by doing.<br>Learning is interactive.<br>Children learn through play. |
| Lev Vygotsky | Socio-constructivism | Children are actively engaged in social and cultural experiences.<br>Play leads to development.<br>Zone of proximal development – the area between actual and potential learning.<br>Language is important.<br>Interaction between children and more experienced others. |
| Erik Erikson | Psychosocial theory | Development is described in terms of eight stages that span childhood and adulthood, each offering opportunities for personality growth and development. |
| Abraham Maslow | Humanistic | Children's physical needs must be met.<br>Children must feel psychologically safe and secure. |
| Urie Bronfenbrenner | Ecological | Children living and learning in multiple social and cultural context influence children's learning and development.<br>Learning as reciprocal.<br>Interactions and how they affect children. |
| Howard Gardner | Multiple intelligences | Human cognitive competence refers to a set of abilities, talents, or mental skills, which we call intelligences.<br>Individuals differ in the degree or skill and the nature of their combinations. |
| Brain Researchers R. N. Caine and G. Caine, E. Jensen And R. Sylvester | Brain-based learning | Early childhood is a critical period for brain development.<br>Children learn through all their senses and stimulation triggers chemicals that build connections.<br>Children demonstrate different modes of knowing and different ways of representing what they know. |
| Loris Mamaguzzi | Constructivist, Socio-cultural | The Reggio Emilia Approach<br>Child and Childhood<br>Physical Space<br>Parental Involvement<br>Collaborative Relationships<br>Documentation<br>The Hundred Languages of Children |
| D. Weikart and P. Hohmann | Cognitively oriented curriculum-based on Piaget and Vygotsky's Theory | The High/Scope Curriculum.<br>Children are active learners.<br>Use of a variety of learning centres with adequate materials and developmentally appropriate activities.<br>Key experiences<br>Active problem solving-plan-do-review process.<br>Balance between child initiated and teacher planned instructional activities.<br>Teachers responsible for planning curriculum that reinforces and extends learning activities. |

| Theorist | Theories | Main Stages |
|---|---|---|
| Post-Modernists | Post-modernist Theory | Understanding children as capable learners having a role and a voice in the decision-making process, with diverse understandings, capabilities and dispositions.<br>Understanding the contextualized and dynamic nature of practice.<br>Understanding the danger of universalised practice.<br>Recognizing many paths to learning.<br>Having broad and diverse interests.<br>Children need to be supported socially, culturally and emotionally as they engage in learning environments.<br>Diversity is valued. |

## 1.4 Describe stages in the development of children in each domain of development

The domains of childhood development are relevant to the development concepts of the following skills:

- gross motor
- fine motor
- cognitive
- social/emotional
- adaptive/self help
- spiritual and moral

Many theorists have come to their own conclusions of what occurs internally at the various stages of development and ages. Examining these conclusions will allow you to validate your own often instinctive knowledge of what occurs in the various stages.

### Stages of development in different domains

All the domains of children's development are closely connected and influence each other. Developmentally appropriate practice embraces the concept that children are active learners who need direct cognitive, physical, and social experiences in order to construct their own understandings of the world.

Children need opportunities to form and test their own assumptions through social interaction, physical manipulation, and their own thought processes by observing what happens, reflecting on their findings, asking questions, and formulating answers. In addition, developmentally appropriate practice acknowledges that play is an important vehicle for children's development in all areas.

### Freud's stages of childhood development are as follows:

*First Stage: Oral*

From birth until a child is one year old, Freud theorised an individual's psychic and sexual energy is concentrated on the mouth, from which he receives all his initial pleasure through breastfeeding.

*Second Stage: Anal*

Toddlers from ages two to three have reached Freud's second stage of psychosexual development. Freud believed that children at this age connect their developing understanding of societal rules and regulations to the pleasure they find in controlling their bowel movements.

*Third Stage: Phallic*

Freud's third stage of development is the phallic stage; it dominates from about age three to six. According to Freud, during this time a child finds pleasure in the genitals. He believed boys develop unconscious sexual desires for their mother and feel they must compete with their father for their mother's affection. This theory is known as the Oedipus complex. Freud theorized that out of fear, boys ultimately choose to identify with their father instead of fight him and learn to repress sexual feelings for their mother.

Freud's full psychosexual theory includes two more stages: the latent stage, in which a child's sexual development goes into a dormant period as he focuses on school from about age six until puberty, and the genital stage, at which children grow into their sexual maturity and refocus their source of sexual pleasure in the genitals in preparation for adulthood.

**Erikson's childhood development is as follows:**

*First Stage: Infancy: Birth to 18 Months*

Ego Development Outcome: Trust vs Mistrust. Basic strength: Drive and Hope

Erikson also referred to infancy as the Oral Sensory Stage (as anyone might see who watches a baby put everything in her mouth) where the major emphasis is on the mother's nurturing the child, with a big emphasis on visual contact and touch.

*Second Stage Early Childhood: 18 Months to 3 Years*

Ego Development Outcome: Autonomy vs Shame. Basic Strengths: Self-control, Courage, and Will.

During this a child masters skills for themselves. They learn to walk, talk and feed as well as developing finer motor development and toilet training. This is when self-esteem and autonomy is built and more control is gained over bodies and acquiring new skills, and learning right from wrong. And one of the skills during the "Terrible twos" is the ability to use the powerful word "NO!" an important skill of will. The most significant relationships are with parents.

*Third Stage Play Age: 3 to 5 Years*

Ego Development Outcome: Initiative vs Guilt. Basic Strength: Purpose

During this period the child experiences a desire to copy the adults around them and takes initiative in creating play situations. They make up stories with their environment of toys and objects, playing out roles in a trial universe, experimenting with the blueprint for what they believe it means to be an adult. The word WHY appears and the most significant relationship is with the basic family.

**Piaget's childhood development is as follows:**

- **Sensory-motor stage birth to 2 years**. This stage consists of six sub-stages infancy. Children are using their physical or motor skills and their senses to explore their world and develop their cognitive understandings.
- **Pre-operational stage 2 to 7 years**. In this stage children are less reliant upon senses and physical exploration and, according to Piaget. During this stage, for example, children can be shown that two balls of dough are exactly the same size, and they will agree that the balls are the same size, but when one is flattened, they will usually tell you that one of them is now bigger. This inability to conserve is a feature of the preoperational stage.

**The Behaviourists theories (Skinner, Watson and Pavlov) can be summed up as early childhood development as follows (Watson's "words")**

“Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select – doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors. I am going beyond my facts and I admit it, but so have the advocates of the contrary and they have been doing it for many thousands of years. ”

**The Social Learning Theorists:**

These theorists agree that any stage is reinforced through rewards and punishment.

The domains of ECD are divided into five areas of development:

1. **Physical** - During this stage of development children are fast developing their gross and fine motor skills. They will learn how to jump and balance on one foot, write numbers and letters, draw shapes, and throw and catch a ball.
2. **Cognitive** - The cognitive domain is where children begin to think and ask questions about where why things happen and where they are. Cognitive development rapidly occurs during the preschool years. In the preschool years children can imagine objects that are being talked about even though the object is not physically present. Children also begin to form stable concepts about their environment and their own being.
3. **Emotional** - This grows as social development grows. Children understand that actions have consequences and begin to manage their emotions. They realise they can manage emotions such as fear, sadness, anger and happiness. During this period their confidence also develops.
4. **Social** - Children do not have a natural empathy (compassion) at this stage but will show signs of this development as they begin to share more information willingly. They begin to develop conflict resolution skills. They start to understand the basic rules of reasoning and how the world works, and they also understand that there are advantages and disadvantages of being a cooperative, active member of society. Participation in group activities becomes clear, especially games, and there is a lot of imaginary play time.
5. **Adaptive** - Adaptive domains in early childhood refer to children's ability to use daily living skills such as getting themselves dressed, brushing their teeth, combing their hair and even being able to help themselves to food. As the child enters preschool they should be learning how to open and close buttons and should be using the bathroom.

Table 2 below outlines stages from 0 to five years of age. It also describes the observable developments at various stages in different domains.

This table will help you to identify children's abilities at different stages. The purpose is to guide an ECD Practitioner to choose the appropriate learning resources and activities for children at different developmental stages.
Table 2

| Stage | Physical and language | Emotional | Social |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Birth to 1 month** | Feedings: 5-8 per day<br>Sleep: 20 hrs per day<br>Sensory Capacities: makes basic distinctions in vision, hearing, smelling, tasting, touch, temperature, and perception of pain | Generalized Tension | Helpless<br>Asocial<br>Fed by mother |
| **2 months to 3 months** | Sensory Capacities: colour perception, visual exploration, and oral exploration.<br>Sounds: cries, coos, grunts<br>Motor Ability: control of eye muscles, lifts head when on stomach. | Distress<br>Delight | Smiles at a face<br>Visually fixates at a face, May be soothed by rocking. |
| **4 months to 6 months** | Sensory Capacities: localizes sounds<br>Sounds: babbling makes most vowels and about half of the consonants<br>Feedings: 3-5 per day<br>Motor Ability: control of head and arm movements, purposive grasping, rolls over. | Enjoys being cuddled | Recognises their mother. Distinguishes between familiar persons and strangers, no longer smiles indiscriminately. Expects feeding, dressing, and bathing. |
| **7 months to 9 months** | Motor Ability: control of trunk and hands, sits without support, crawls about. | Specific emotional attachment to mother. | Protests separation from mother<br>Enjoys "peek-a-boo" |
| **10 months to 12 months** | Motor Ability: control of legs and feet, stands, creeps, apposition of thumb and forefinger.<br><br>Language: says one or two words, imitates sounds, and responds to simple commands.<br>Feedings: 3 meals, 2 snacks<br>Sleep: 12 hours, 2 naps<br>Shows anger | Affection<br>Fear of strangers<br>Curiosity, exploration | Responsive to own name.<br>Waves bye-bye.<br>Plays pat-a-cake,<br>Understands "no-no!"<br>Gives and takes objects |
| **1 years to 1 ½ years** | Motor Ability: creeps up stairs, walks (10-20 min), and makes lines on paper with crayon.<br>Dependent Behaviour | Gets very upset when separated from mother<br>Fear of bath | Obeys limited commands.<br>Repeats a few words.<br>Interested in his mirror image.<br>Feeds himself. |
| **1 ½ years to 2 years** | Motor Ability: runs, kicks a ball, builds 6 cube tower (2yrs)<br>Capable of bowel and bladder control.<br>Language: vocabulary of more than 200 words<br>Sleep: 12 hours at night, 1-2 hr nap | Temper tantrums (1-3yrs) | Resentment of new baby.<br>Does opposite of what he is told (18 months). |
| **2 years to 3 years** | Motor Ability: jumps off a step, rides a tricycle, uses crayons, builds a 9-10 cube tower.<br>Language: starts to use short sentences. Controls and explores world with language, stuttering may appear briefly. | Negativistic (2 ½ yrs)<br>Violent emotions, anger<br>Differentiates facial expressions of anger, sorrow, and joy.<br>Sense of humour (Plays tricks) | Talks, uses "I" "me" "you"<br>Copies parents' actions.<br>Dependent, clinging, possessive about toys, enjoys playing alongside another child.<br>Negativism (2½ yrs). |

| Stage | Physical and language | Emotional | Social |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Fear of separation | | Resists parental demands.<br>Gives orders.<br>Rigid insistence on sameness of routine.<br>Inability to make decisions. |
| **3 years to 4 years** | Motor ability: Stands on one leg, jumps up and down, draws a circle and a cross (4 yrs) | Self-sufficient in many routines of home life.<br>Affectionate toward parents.<br>Pleasure in genital manipulation<br>Romantic attachment to parent of opposite sex (3 to 5 yrs.)<br>Jealousy of same-sex parent.<br>Imaginary fears of dark, injury, etc. (3 to 5 years) | Likes to share, uses "we".<br>Cooperative play with other children, nursery school. Imitates parents.<br>Beginning of identification with same-sex parent, practices sex-role activities.<br>Intense curiosity & interest in other children's bodies.<br>Imaginary friend. |
| **4 years to 5 years** | Motor ability: mature motor control, skips, broad jumps, dresses themselves, copies a square and a triangle.<br>Language: talks clearly, uses adult speech and sounds, has mastered basic grammar, relates a story, knows over 2 000 words (5 yrs) | Responsibility and guilt<br>Feels pride in accomplishment | Prefers to play with other children, becomes competitive prefers sex-appropriate activities. |

## 1.5 Identify factors that enable the development of children in each domain

In this section we are going to look at the factors that enable the development of children in each domain by studying some of the relevant theories:

### Domains/areas of development

The domains of development are areas that are not static and continue from childhood to adulthood. The successful completion of each developmental milestone will help the child reach their full potential. The child's social, cognitive, communicative and adaptive development determines future success as much as physical development.

### *The three-year-old*

*Gross motor skills*

The two most evident characteristics of the three-year-old child are movement and balance:

- Walking: The child can walk, but not yet balance on a straight line.
- Running: Running comes easily, but for the child can stop, he or she must think about it.
- Climbing stairs: When climbing stairs, the child has to steady him or herself with one hand or be held by an adult, especially when going downstairs.

- Riding a tricycle: The child is able to ride a tricycle if he or she has been exposed to this.
- Jumping with both feet from a standing position: The three-year-old can jump with both feet from a standing position, but is not able to take all on one foot or jump over an obstacle.
- Catching and throwing a ball: The child can catch and throw a ball (using both hands). He or she enjoys kicking the ball, but distance and direction differ a lot.

*Fine motor skills*

Fine motor skills would depend on what opportunities the child has had to explore. The following characteristics can be observed and supported:

- Holding a crayon and scribbling: The child holds a crayon in his/her fists and scribbles. If this skill is practised, then his or her grip will become refined.
- Playing with building blocks and jigsaw puzzle: The children build a tower using five or six blocks and can try to build a jigsaw puzzle.
- Threading large beads: Threading large beads are useful activities to develop fine motor muscles.

***The four-year-old***

*Gross motor skills*

Two words that best describe this age group are "energy and action".

- The child prefers running to walking, and often jumps into objects.
- The child finds it easier to climb stairs and he or she likes to jump two or three stairs at a time.
- The four-year-old can even master a running jump. Climbing ladders, trees and the jungle gym are part of the child's new skills, but the child sometimes overestimates his or her abilities.
- He or she may try throwing the ball with one hand but is still not yet accurate. However, the child can kick quite accurately, especially if he or she has been exposed to this activity.

*Fine motor skills*

Again, fine motor skills are dependent on what opportunities the child has had to practise these skills. The four-year-old child tends to rush through activities when told to do them, but when he or she chooses an activity, he or she may spend more time and care to perform the task.

Depending on circumstances, the child may do the following:

- Draw or paint quite detailed picture of homes and families, including animals. Pencil and crayon grip is improving.
- This is a good time to introduce scissors and the skill of cutting. This is especially for left-handers. The adult can help by placing a hand over the child's hand so that they can feel the "cutting movement".
- The child still enjoys block play, but will often enjoy it just as much to destroy what has been built. He or she can now show focus on a jigsaw puzzle for a long time and can try to build more advanced puzzles.

***The five-year-old***

*Gross motor skills*

By now most of the gross motor skills of adulthood are developed.

- The five-year-old walks and runs with confidence, has a good sense of balance and is able to estimate distance and speed.
- The child no longer bumps into the projects and can climb up and down stairs confidently.
- Most five-year-old children like to run, gallop and jump.
- They are able to concentrate on tasks like catching a beanbag or tennis ball.
- Kicking skills are well developed, and the child may begin to show talent in this area.

*Fine motor skills*

With enough practice, a five-year-old can be skilled and accurate in manipulating crayons, scissors, paintbrushes, puzzles and building apparatus:

- He or she is able to colour in a picture within the lines.
- The child shows energetic skills when he/she copies simple shapes.
- Blocks are standing to work in the left-to-right reading direction.

***The six-year-old***

*Gross motor skills*

The six-year-old child's sense of balance is accurate and developed.

- They can stand on one foot until the count of 10.
- They can walk backwards for about five metres.
- They can jump with both feet together.

*Fine motor skills*

- They can throw and catch a ball.
- They can kick a ball.
- They can hit a ball with a bat.

***Middle childhood***

Though children in the middle childhood stage are extremely active, in school they have to spend a lot of time in quiet activities. They may develop nervous habits such as pencil chewing, running and general fidgeting. To help children work off nervous energy they need to take frequent breaks from quiet activities.

Important facts to note:

- Children in the early stage need some stimulation because of their mental and physical exertion (effort). It is a good thing to schedule relaxing activities after strenuous ones to create mental stability.
- Fine muscle control is still not completely developed during the early stages of middle childhood, especially in boys.
- Schedule writing assignments, such as printing letters and short sentences in the beginning stage.
- Move on to tasks such as writing and art works.
- Creative art projects and learning to play musical instruments are good ways to use these new skills.
- Children may struggle to focus on fine print or small objects. The shallow shape of the eye at this stage creates far-sightedness in many children. Do the following if your schedule allows:
    - Break up reading time into short periods to avoid eye fatigue.
    - Do not give children of this age reading materials with fine print.
- Although children become more and more co-ordinated, they are often reckless during this stage. Because accidents are common, you should not allow children to play with anything that can be dangerous if broken.

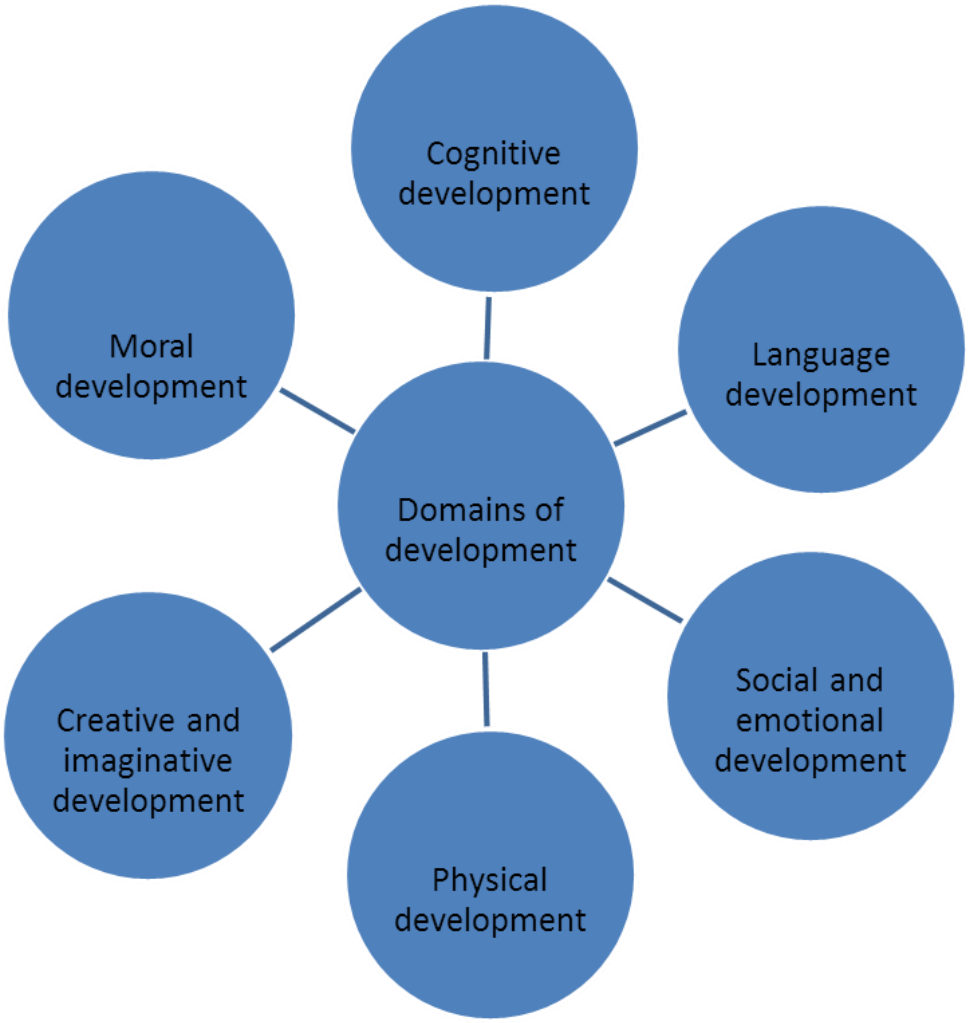
- Bone growth is not yet complete, and the skeleton and ligaments may injure easily. Children should avoid tiring and strenuous activities to reduce the risk of injury.

## 1.6 Factors that impact on the development of children in each domain

There are five different developmental domains of children, which all relate to each other. They are easily referred to as the SPICE of life:

- **Social** - Refers mostly to the ability to form attachments, play with others, co-operation and sharing, and being able to create lasting relationships with others.
- **Physical** - Development of fine (small) and gross (large) motor skills.
- **Intellectual** - The process of making sense of the world around them.
- **Creative** - The development of special abilities creating talents. Music, art, writing, reading, and singing are all ways in which creative development take place.
- **Emotional** - Development of self-awareness, self-confidence, and coping with feelings as well as understanding these feelings.

The following diagram shows the developmental domains:



## 1.7 Describe how development is shaped by socio-cultural influences

- Socio-cultural learning theories have a lot to say about the influence of the environment that the child develops in. This is an influence that they will carry into their adulthood and will form a platform from which they will function for the rest of their lives. The emotional and social development environment of "growing up" determines how children handle relationships with others, and help them to better understand their own feelings.

### Socio-cultural influences

This concept focuses not on the development stages as such, but rather on the overall effects that what children learn from their social environments, may have on their development.

- Children basically develop their value system from the environment in which they live.
- If children are raised by caregivers who put a strong emphasis on sharing, helping, and compassion for others, these children will probably integrate these values.
- If children are raised by caregivers who explain the difference between right and wrong actions, these children will develop the ability to distinguish between right and wrong.

### Socio-economic background

Children's development may be affected by their background in the following ways:

- Girl children may be treated as less important in some cultures.
- Poverty or social disadvantage may mean that the child does not receive adequate stimulation, care or suitable models of appropriate behaviour.
- An environment without enough age-appropriate play materials may mean that the child reaches some milestones later than the norm.
- Special needs require extra attention, both at home and in the class, and they may cause problems in social relationships.

### Cultural practices

- The parents or primary caregivers pass on their beliefs, values and practice to their children through modelling.
- They also reward their children for what they regard as culturally appropriate behaviour.
- The primary caregiving relationship is the most powerful way to impact beliefs, values and lifestyle practices. This happens through the process of identification: the child takes on the images that are portrayed by the caregiver. Eventually the child identifies with certain qualities of the caregiver and the environment.

## 1.8 Describe how development within each domain is linked to and affected by development in other domains

The domains of development are not motionless and each is inseparably linked to the other. Development in one domain influences and is influenced by development in other domains. Development in one domain can limit or facilitate development in others. Knowing these interrelations can give great insight into a child's development.

The case study below demonstrates how children can be influenced by people and environment around them.

|  | **CASE STUDY: ROLE MODELLING** |
|---|---|
| Fikile is four years old. Her mother Nomvula always wears skirts rather than jeans or trousers because she wants to be seen as valuing Xhosa tradition. Nomvula allows Fikile to wear jeans and trousers while she is a young child, but expects Fikile to also wear only skirts when she reaches puberty. | |

Identification with another person means that you absorb and take on the images and qualities of that person.

Your role as ECD practitioner is not as powerful as the role of the primary caregiver. Nevertheless your role is powerful because of the amount of time you spend with the child and also because the young child is very open to learning.

In conclusion, it is obvious from the discussion of the various theories that all the domains of development are interdependent. The baby cannot learn to socialise or draw until she is physically mobile and can grasp a crayon. She cannot learn to speak until her brain has developed sufficiently (physically and cognitive development) and she has heard others speaking her home language in her environment, and seen them interacting socially. She cannot draw creatively or participate in creative and fantasy play until she has a physical foundation of skills for drawing and playing, combined with an awareness of the constancy and security of herself unchanged by fantasies and play experiences. She cannot judge an action as right or wrong until she has developed cognitively and also been a part of social interaction and understood how right and wrong affects others.

- Physical development of the baby must take place so that all systems (walking, talking, and ability to feed self and care for self, social interaction) develop to their full extent.
- Cognitive development takes place at the same time as physical development.
- Psychosocial development depends on cognitive (and therefore also on physical) development.
- Moral maturity depends on social and cognitive development.
- Creative ability depends on physical, social and cognitive development.

***Class Activity 1: The development of babies, toddlers and young children***

Please follow the instructions from the facilitator to complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.