

Social-Emotional Development in Young Children: Why 0-3 is critical for school readiness

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Agenda

- Identify aspects of normative child development age 0-3.
- Identify social emotional milestones for children age 0-3.
- Identify features which may impact normative development in young children.

Objectives

1. Participants will be able to understand the elements involved in normative child development
2. Participants will be able to identify milestones in development at various ages, and
3. Understand factors which may impact the developmental trajectory of children.
4. Participants will become more aware of how being mindful of factors which impact early SE development can help ECE professionals differentiate their instruction to meet children at their individual developmental level, and ensure ALL children in their care are ready to succeed.

Key Social Emotional Skills Needed for School

Confidence

Capacity to develop good relationships with peers and adults

Concentration and persistence on challenging tasks

Ability to effectively communicate emotions

Ability to listen to instructions and be attentive

Ability to solve social problems



Elements of Development

Brain

Cognitive

Body

Motor

Social

Emotional



Pop Quiz!

Periods of Child Development

Prenatal

Infancy (Birth – 12months)

Toddlerhood (12 – 36 months)

Preschool (3 – 6 years)



Infant Development

Infancy: 0 -12 months

Main developmental task of infancy:to organize their behavior so that they are able to play an active role in influencing the environment and eliciting the support they need for development.

Infants are born socially interactive and available; in fact, all infant development takes place within a social context.

Mothers and babies mutually drive and support each other.

Elements of Infant Development - Brain

Sequence of brain development: “bottom-up”.

“Primitive” areas (brain stem and midbrain) develop in utero and first few months postnatal.

Regulate basic bodily functions including respiration; heart rate; blood pressure; sleep cycles; and appetite.

Elements of Infant Development - Social

1-3 months

- Begins to develop a social smile
- Enjoys playing with other people and may cry when playing stops
- Imitates some movements and facial expressions
- Begins to regulate arousal and self-soothe



Elements of Infant Development - Social

4 -7 months

- Enjoys social play
- Interested in mirror images
- Responds to other people's expressions of emotion & often appears joyful
- Begins to initiate play with caregivers
- Development of attachment: clear preferences for caregivers, use of attachment relationship for regulation



Elements of Infant Development - Cognitive

8-12 months

- Responds to “no”
- Uses simple gestures, such as shaking head for “no”
- Babbles with inflection
- Says “dada” and/or “mama”
(may not be person specific)
- Uses exclamations, such as “oh-oh!”
- Tries to imitate words



Elements of Infant Development - Social

8 – 12 months

- Shy or anxious with strangers
- Cries when primary caregiver leaves
- Enjoys imitating people in play
- Shows specific preferences for certain people and toys
- May be fearful in some situations
- Prefers mother and/or regular caregiver over all others
- Repeats sounds or gestures for attention
- Finger-feeds him/herself
- Extends arm or leg to help when being dressed



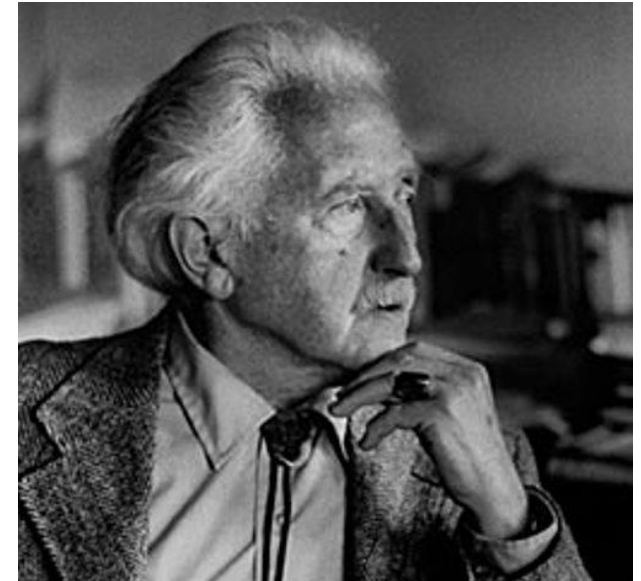
Elements of Infant Development – Emotional

Erik Erikson (15 June 1902 – 12 May 1994).

- Prominent German-born American psychologist. One of the originators of Ego psychology, which stressed the role of the ego as being more than a servant of the id. Theorized that the environment in which a child lived was crucial to providing growth, adjustment, a source of self-awareness and identity. Coined the term “identity crisis”.

Identity and the Life Cycle published 1959.

Well-regarded stage theory that spans throughout the lifespan.



Elements of Infant Development - Emotional

Stage 1: Trust vs. Mistrust (0-12 months)

Stage (age)	Psychosocial crisis	Significant relations	Psychosocial modalities	Psychosocial virtues	Maladaptations & malignancies
I (0-1) -- infant	trust vs mistrust	mother	to get, to give in return	hope, faith	sensory distortion -- withdrawal

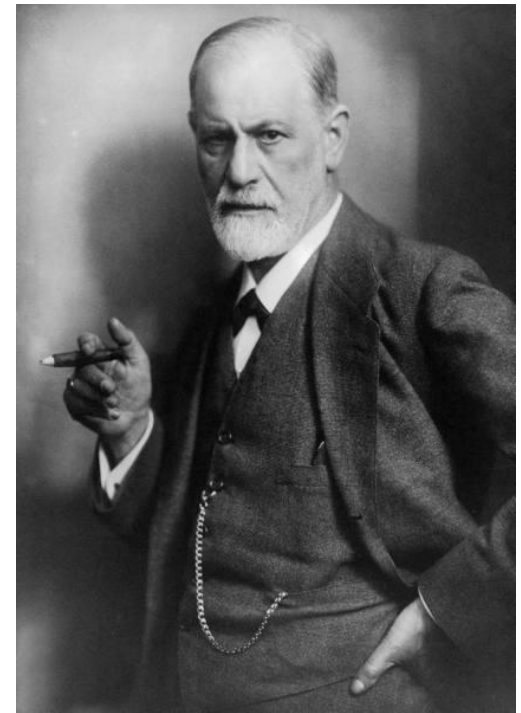
Elements of Infant Development – Emotional

Sigmund Freud (6 May 1856 – 23 September 1939)

- Austrian neurologist, now known as the father of psychoanalysis. Freud qualified as a doctor of medicine and then carried out research into cerebral palsy, aphasia, and microscopic neuroanatomy. Father of psychoanalysis, a clinical method for treating psychopathology through dialogue between a patient and a psychoanalyst, and the concept of the subconscious.

Structural Model explains the Id, Ego, and Superego.

Psychosexual Stages of Development



Elements of Infant Development – Emotional

Stage 1: Oral (0 – 12 months)

- Mouth is the center for development.
- Needs are met through oral exploration, sucking, and crying.
- If oral needs are not met during infancy, he or she may develop negative habits such as nail biting or thumb sucking to meet this basic need.

Strategies to Support S/E Development

Provide responsive care

- Get to know the child.

Support Developing Skills

- Delight in the baby's discoveries

Be Affectionate and Nurturing

- Give hugs and Kisses
- Be patient!

Help your Child Feel Safe and Secure

- Routines and Rituals

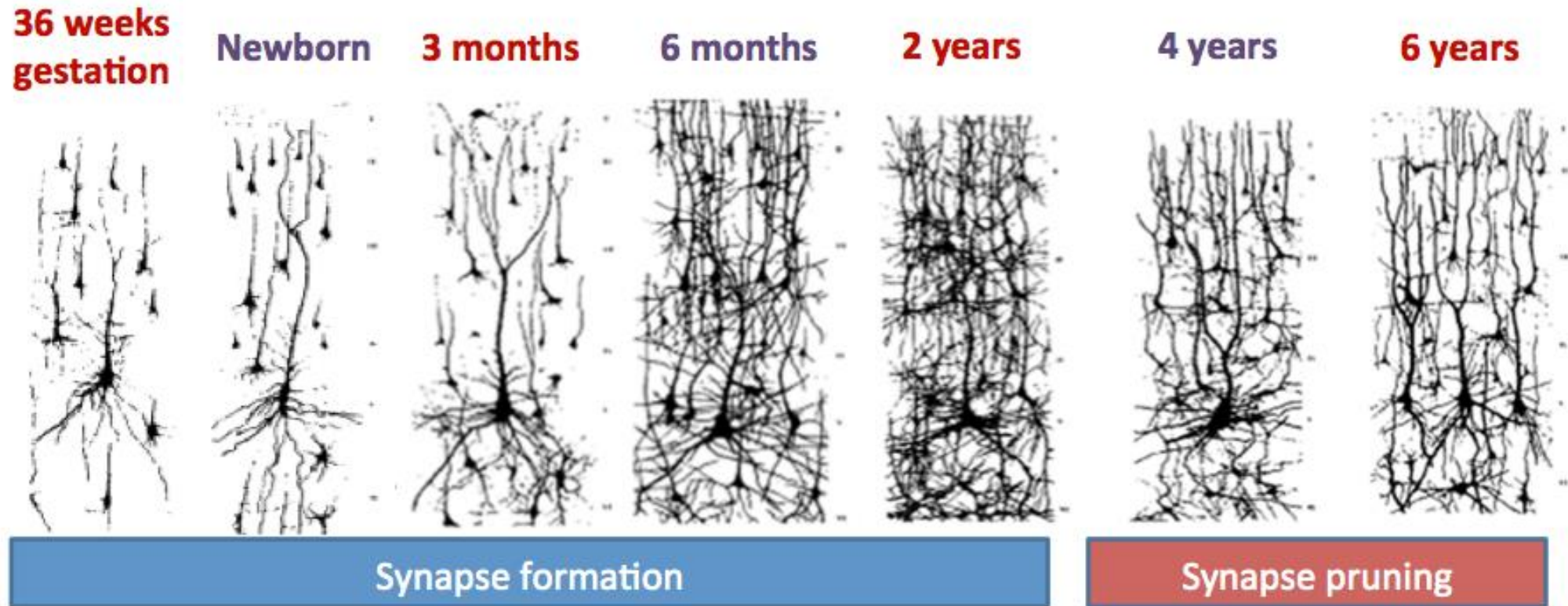
Toddler Development

Toddlerhood: 12 – 36 months

- Marked by the child's ability to function independently with gradually increasing skill.
- Upright posture contributes to new and different worldview (new body, new view!)
- Attachment needs are still prevalent, but look different
- “Toddlers have a dual orientation: toward maintaining attachment and toward exploring the world and the self” (Bowlby, 1969)



Elements of Toddler Development - Brain



Elements of Toddler Development - Social

Egocentric view of the world continues, limiting the toddler's ability to understand or verbalize the intentions of others (16 – 36 months)

Imitation of parental behavior as experimenting with social expectations – helps to internalize (2 – 3 years)

Working models of attachment develop (24 – 36 months)

Attachment relationships support development through behavior modeling; social referencing; encouraging language; supporting autonomous behavior (1 – 3 years)



Elements of Toddler Development - Social

Play

- Sensorimotor play: exploration of properties and functions of objects (1 – 2 years +)
- Pretend play: imitation of ordinary activities or caregiver behavior (12 – 18 months +)
- Symbolic play: substituting one object for another, pretending through sequences of actions (16 mos +)
- Play can be used to emotionally discharge stressful situations, and provide a nonverbal window into toddler's experiences.
(18 – 36 mos)

Elements of Toddler Development - Emotional

- Continuing **use of adults** to regulate arousal and affect. *Beginnings* of autonomous self-regulation; however, attachment figures are still necessary to rely on (1 – 3 years)
- Use of **transitional objects** to cope with separation and for self-soothing (16 – 36 mos)
- **Impulse control** *slowly* improves (1 – 3 years)
- **Coping methods** include: using adults for regulation; play use to master stress; language to communicate distress; imitating and internalizing parental methods of relieving anxiety (1 – 3 years)



Elements of Toddler Development - Emotional

The “Terrific” Twos

- Toddlers face difficult developmental challenges that lead to frequent frustration, internal conflicts, and conflict with others.
- Sources of potential distress, difficulties with autonomous regulation, and emerging independence converge to result in “negativistic” behavior.
- Behaviors can often seem irrational and out of control, due to these invisible sources.
- Aggressive behavior is typical, due to three factors:
 1. Disagreements about what is safe
 2. Toddler’s desire to ‘have it all’
 3. Wanting to have it their way



Elements of Toddler Development - Emotional

The “Terrific” Twos

- Toddlers may also react strongly when caregivers expect them to perform above their developmental level.
- E.g. toileting: toddlers signal readiness for toilet training by letting caregivers know when they urinate/defecate in their diaper. Toddlers whose parents push them to toilet train before they are ready are often angrier and more aggressive due to an outsider trying to exert control over an internal bodily function.
- When toddlers are pushed to do something they are not yet ready to do (such as toileting, sharing, or cleaning up) they react with refusal, protest, or tantrums.



Elements of Toddler Development - Emotional

Erik Erikson Stage 2: Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (2 -3 years)

Stage (age)	Psychosocial crisis	Significant relations	Psychosocial modalities	Psychosocial virtues	Maladaptations & malignancies
II (2-3) -- toddler	autonomy vs shame and doubt	parents	to hold on, to let go	will, determination	impulsivity -- compulsion

Strategies to Support S/E Development

Support Developing Skills

- Help them become confident Problem-solvers
- Praise the process, not just results

Help children to resolve conflict in appropriate and healthy ways

- Provide support when they play in a group
- Play turn taking games
- Distract or redirect their attention

Help children feel safe and secure

- Establish rituals and routines

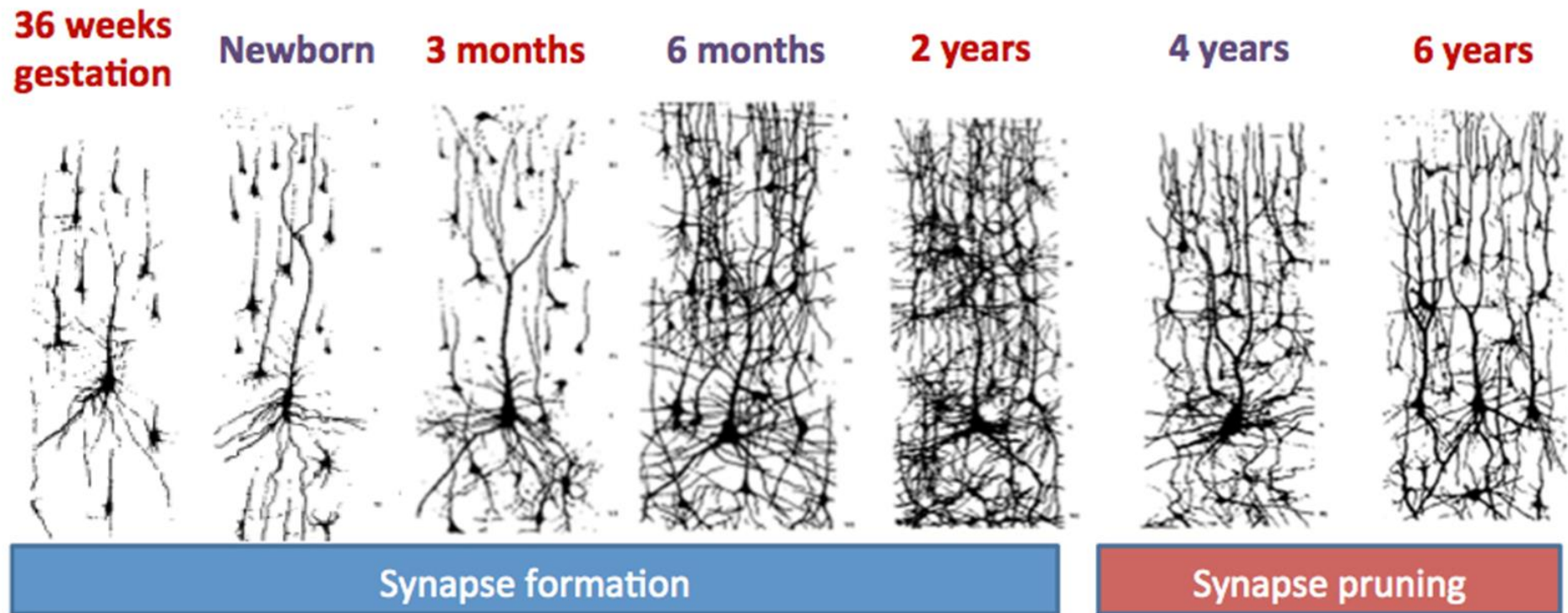
Preschool Development

Preschool: 36 – 60 months (3 – 6 years)

- Child evolves from an egocentric toddler to a child of the middle years who has more in common with adults.
- Develops realistic view of self.
- Increased autonomy.
- Relationships with peers develop through use of empathy, perspective-taking, negotiation, and cooperation.
- Increased capacity for self-regulation and impulse control.



Elements of Preschool Development - Brain



Elements of Preschool Development - Social

Exposure to **peers** in the preschool setting allows for cooperation, sharing, and problem-solving practice (3 – 6)

Prosocial interactions more frequent and complicated, based on imitation of adult models and growing skills with empathy and perspective-taking (3 – 6)

Friendships based on common play interests develop (4 – 6)

Peers increase in importance; preschoolers **identify with peers** and are motivated towards positive interactions (4 – 6)

Development of **verbal** approaches to social interaction and conflict resolution (4 – 6)

Elements of Preschool Development - Social

Importance of play:

- Play tends to be imaginative, dramatic, and interactive.
- Functions include exploration of reality and social roles; mastery of stress; expression of fantasies, wishes, and negative or forbidden impulses.
- Provides opportunity to practice emerging skills including: cause-and-effect thinking; perspective taking; problem-solving; and exploring different interpretations of reality.



Elements of Preschool Development - Emotional

Attachment:

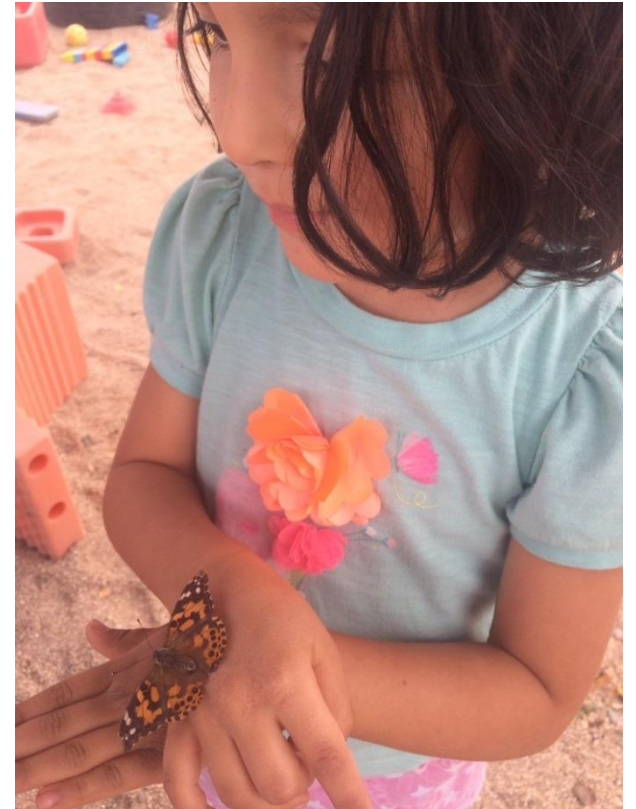
- Continues to provide security in times of stress
- Attachment needs frequently verbalized rather than expressed by actions
- Improving memory and sense of time allows for better coping with separation – child can understand better when a parent will return
- Working models of attachment firmly established and generalized to other relationships.



Elements of Preschool Development - Emotional

Self-regulation:

- Improvements in impulse control, supported by the ability to anticipate consequences of behavior and internalized social expectations.
- Previous experiences with adults for co-regulation are gradually internalized to self-regulation.
- Beginnings of conscious efforts to modify emotional expression, based on learned strategies.



Elements of Preschool Development - Emotional

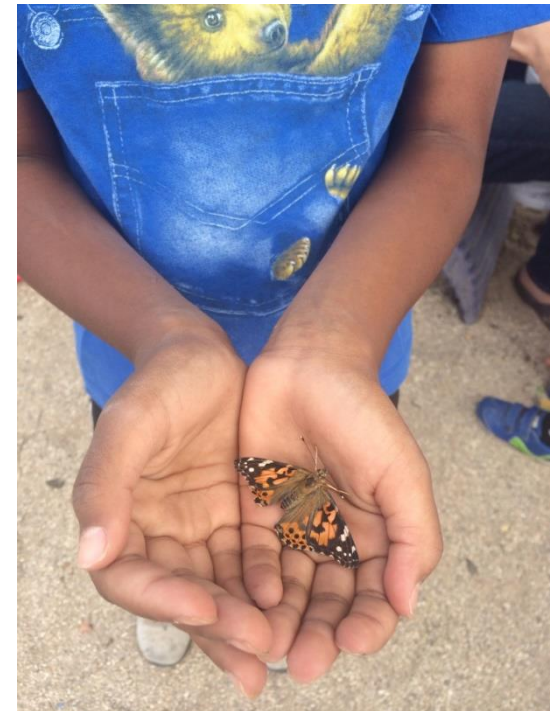
Sense of Self:

- Preschool children who have received parental love and support over time generally have a positive sense of self.
- Self-esteem is supported by a growing sense of competence, autonomy, and coping abilities (reinforced by adults).
- Increasing awareness of gender identity through play and peer relationships.
- Racial identity develops through awareness of societal prejudices and stereotypes (this can be mitigated for minorities based on how positive were their previous experiences contributing to self-esteem).

Elements of Preschool Development - Emotional

Moral development:

- Gradual internalization of moral values
- Increased self-monitoring, application of standards of moral behavior to themselves (though still inconsistent)
- Guilt develops as a distinct emotion
- Increasing capacity for empathy; increasing peer orientation.
- Rule-governed behavior (with reminders and reinforcement)



Elements of Preschool Development - Emotional

Erik Erikson Stage 3: Initiative vs. Guilt (3 – 6)

Stage (age)	Psychosocial crisis	Significant relations	Psychosocial modalities	Psychosocial virtues	Maladaptations & malignancies
III (3-6) -- preschooler	initiative vs guilt	family	to go after, to play	purpose, courage	ruthlessness -- inhibition

Strategies to Support S/E Development

Help children understand their feelings

- Explore feelings through play
- Be a careful observer
- Help children express their feeling age appropriately

Encourage friendships

Let children take the lead in deciding what to play

Enforce consistent limits and explain reasons for limits and requests

Consistent caregiver monitoring *and* praising

increasing expectations for self control

A note about prevalence...



Putting it all together

- 90% of brain development completed by age 6
- Every child has one brain for life
- Nature AND nurture play equal parts in child development
- Children Learn what they live
- School readiness resides primarily in social emotional skills, making it vital that ECE providers have a good foundation in SE development.
- As attachment figures, ECE providers play a crucial role in assisting with these developmental domains.

Post-test – what did you learn?

Questions?



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