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A Topical Approach to Life-Span Development 6e

Chapter One: Introduction

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The Life-Span Perspective

- The Importance of Studying Life-Span Development
- Characteristics of the Life-Span Perspective
- **Development:** Pattern of change that begins at conception and continues through life span

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Importance of Studying Life-Span Development

- Experiences influence development
 - Maximum human life span unchanged – 122
 - **Life expectancy:** Average number of years a person is expected to live when born in a particular year has changed
 - Developmental change occurs during adulthood as well as childhood

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Importance of Studying Life-Span Development

- Characteristics of the Life-Span Perspective
 - Lifelong
 - Multidimensional
 - Multidirectional
 - Plastic
 - Multidisciplinary
 - Contextual
 - Growth
 - Maintenance
 - Regulation of loss

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Importance of Studying Life-Span Development

- WHAT INFLUENCES CAN YOU THINK OF?

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Importance of Studying Life-Span Development

- Development is contextual
 - Normative age-graded influences
 - Shared by a particular age group
 - Normative history-graded influences
 - Shared by a specific generation
 - Nonnormative life events
 - Unique to the individual

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Importance of Studying Life-Span Development

- Some contemporary concerns:
 - Health and well-being
 - Parenting and education
- Sociocultural contexts and diversity
 - Culture
 - Ethnicity
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Gender

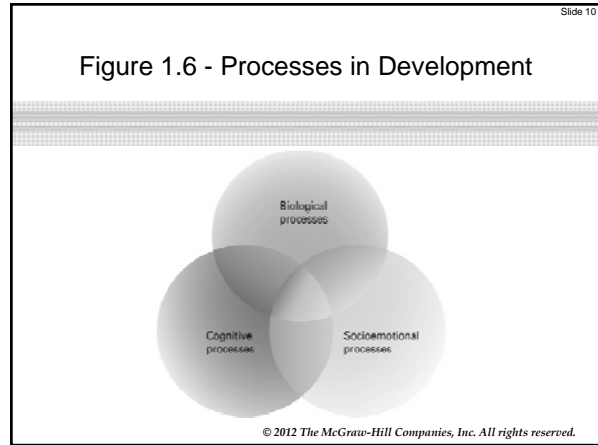
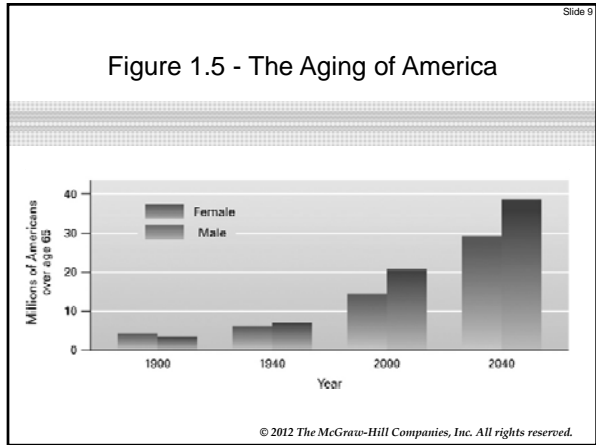
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Importance of Studying Life-Span Development

- **Social policy:** Laws, regulations, and government programs that influence citizens' welfare
 - U.S. family policies overwhelmingly treatment oriented

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Nature of Development

- Development period — time frame in one's life characterized by certain events
 - Interplay of biological, cognitive, and sociological processes
 - Each period has its own stresses, ups and downs, and concerns
 - Variations in capabilities of same age individuals occur in all periods of development

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Nature of Development

- Periods of development

– Prenatal Period	– Adolescence
– Infancy	– Early adulthood
– Early childhood	– Middle adulthood
– Middle and late childhood	– Late adulthood

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Nature of Development

- Conceptions of age
 - **Chronological age:** Number of years elapsed since person's birth
 - **Biological age:** In terms of biological health
 - **Psychological age:** One's adaptive capacities
 - **Social age:** Social roles and expectations related to one's age

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Nature of Development

- Developmental issues
 - Nature and nurture
 - Inheritance or environment?
 - Stability and change
 - Traits and characteristics; capacity for change?
 - Continuity and discontinuity
 - Gradual or abrupt changes in development?

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Figure 1.9 - Continuity and Discontinuity in Development



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Theories of Development

- **Theory:** Interrelated set of ideas that helps to explain data, make predictions
- **Hypotheses:** Assertions or predictions, often derived from theories that can be tested

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Theories of Development

- Psychoanalytic theories
 - Development is primarily unconscious, heavy with emotion
 - Behavior is surface characteristic of development
 - Analyze symbolic meanings of behavior and deep inner workings of the mind for true meaning of development
 - Early childhood experiences stressed (ages 1-5)

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Theories of Development

- Freud's theory
 - Id, ego, and superego create personality
 - Defense mechanisms and repression
 - Anxiety and defense mechanisms
 - Five stages of psychosexual development
 - Criticisms: overemphasized sexual instincts, unconscious is more important today

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Figure 1.10 - Freudian Stages

Stage	Age Range	Description
Oral stage	Birth to 1½ years	Infant's pleasure centers on the mouth.
Anal stage	1½ to 3 years	Child's pleasure focuses on the anus.
Phallic stage	3 to 6 years	Child's pleasure focuses on the genitals.
Latency stage	6 years to puberty	Child represses sexual interest and develops social and intellectual skills.
Genital stage	Puberty onward	A time of sexual reawakening; source of sexual pleasure becomes someone outside the family.

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Theories of Development

- Erikson's psychosocial theory
 - Primary motive for human behavior is social; desire to affiliate with others
 - Developmental changes throughout life span
 - Experiences at all ages are important
 - Criticisms: stages have positive/negative poles, crisis in each stage needs resolution

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Erikson's Eight Life-Span Stages

Erikson's Stage	Developmental period	Description
Trust versus mistrust	Infancy (birth to 1½ years)	A sense of trust requires a feeling of physical comfort and minimal amount of fear about the future. Trusty relationships are not to experience negative outcomes.
Autonomy versus shame and doubt	Toddlerhood (1½ to 3 years)	After gaining insight into their caregivers, toddlers start to discover that they have a will of their own. They assert their desires in a structured, or independent, way. When their will of theirs are repressed, the source of parental fear, they are being to develop a sense of shame and doubt.
Initiative versus guilt	Early childhood (3 to 6 years)	An emotional milestone associated with initiative is the child's ability to take and lead to do things that are pleasurable but not to do so with excessive caution and how to resolve any responsibility. Children begin to learn the value of initiative, if not initiative are inappropriate and are made to feel the source.
Industry versus inferiority	Middle and late childhood (6 to 12 years)	At this time, an individual may experience that at the end of early childhood's period of initiative exploration. As children face the challenges which apply, they start to gain longer-lasting knowledge and intellectual skills. The danger of this stage involves feelings of inferiority and incompetence.
Identity versus role confusion	Adolescence (12 to 18 years)	Individuals are faced with finding out who they are, where they are at, where they are going in life. An important milestone is the exploration of alternative identities for their better understanding of self.
Intimacy versus isolation	Early adulthood (18 to 25 years)	Individuals face the developmental task of forming intimate relationships with others. It has been described as being oneself and being oneself in another person.
Generativity versus stagnation	Middle adulthood (25 to 50 years)	A vital concern is to assist the younger generation in developing and handling useful lives.
Integrity versus despair	Late adulthood (50 to 70 years)	Individuals look back and evaluate what they have done with their lives. The developmental task is to have a positive, integrative, and meaningful life.

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Theories of Development

- Cognitive theories
 - Emphasize conscious thoughts
 - Three major theories
 - Piaget's cognitive development
 - Vygotsky's sociocultural cognitive theory
 - Information processing theory

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Theories of Development

- Piaget's cognitive developmental theory
 - Children actively construct their knowledge
 - Each of the four stages
 - Age-related
 - Has a distinct way of thinking
 - Has different way of understanding the world
 - Child's cognition is "qualitatively" different

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Figure 1.12 - Piaget's Four Stages of Cognitive Development

Stage	Age Range	Description
Sensorimotor stage	Birth to 2 years of age	The infant constructs an understanding of the world by coordinating sensory experiences with physical actions. An infant progresses from reflexive, instinctual action at birth to the beginning of symbolic thought toward the end of the stage.
Preoperational stage	2 to 7 years of age	The child begins to represent the world with words and images. These words and images reflect increased symbolic thinking and go beyond the connection of sensory information and physical action.
Concrete operational stage	7 to 11 years of age	The child can now reason logically about concrete events and classify objects into different sets.
Formal operational stage	11 years of age through adulthood	The adolescent reasons in more abstract, scientific, and logical ways.

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Theories of Development

- Vygotsky's sociocultural cognitive theory
 - Children actively construct their knowledge
 - Culture and social interaction guide cognitive development
 - Learning to use inventions of society
 - Learning from social interactions with more skilled adults and peers
 - Interaction creates tools to adapt to culture

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Theories of Development

- Information-Processing theory
 - Brain is compared to computer's hardware
 - Cognition is viewed as computer software
 - Individuals acquire increasingly complex information
 - Thinking: perceive, encode, represent, store, and retrieve information
 - Good strategies: important to development

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Theories of Development

- Behavioral and social cognitive theories
 - **Behaviorism:** Scientific studies can only be based on direct observations and measures
 - Development is observable behavior
 - Learned from experiences/environment
 - Development does not occur in stages; advocates continuity

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Theories of Development

- Skinner's operant conditioning
 - Consequences, rewards and punishment, shape behavior
 - No emphasis on thoughts, feelings
 - Development is pattern of behavioral changes
 - Modifying environment produces change
 - Changes determined by consistency experiences, rewards or punishments

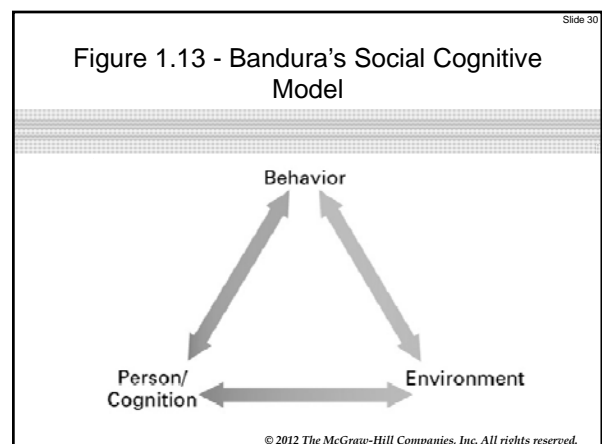
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Theories of Development

- Bandura's social cognitive theory
 - Behavior, environment, and cognition are key to development
 - Behavior is learned through observation and imitating (modeling)
 - Behavior of others is cognitively evaluated, strategies created for successful learning

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Theories of Development

- Ethological theory
 - Emphasis on biology and evolution, sensitive periods of development, and careful observations
 - Lorenz: **Imprinting**
 - Animals' rapid, innate learning process involving "attachment"
 - Critical period is early in life

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Theories of Development

- Ethological theory
 - Bowlby
 - Used ideas of Lorenz
 - **"Attachment"** determines development
 - Positive and secure, negative and insecure
 - Sensitive period is in infancy
 - Promotes good social relationships

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Theories of Development

- Ecological theory
 - Bronfenbrenner's view that development influenced by five environmental system
 - Microsystem
 - Mesosystem
 - Exosystem
 - Macrosystem
 - Chronosystem

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Figure 1.14 - Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory

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Theories of Development

- Eclectic theoretical approach
 - Life-span development is complex
 - Each theory has contribution to understanding development
 - Selects from best features of each
 - A mistake to rely on only one theory

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Research in Life-Span Development

- Methods for collecting data
 - Observation:
 - Laboratory
 - Naturalistic observation
 - Cultural concerns
 - Survey and interview
 - Self-report, clear and unbiased questions

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Research in Life-Span Development

- Methods for collecting data
 - Standardized test
 - Case study
 - Focus on aspects of individual's life
 - Unique, cannot be duplicated
 - Physiological measures
 - Blood tests, MRI

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Research in Life-Span Development

- Methods for collecting data
 - Descriptive research:
 - Observe and record
 - Correlational research:
 - Prediction based on strength of relationship
 - Correlation coefficient (+1.00 to -1.00)

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Figure 1.19 - Possible Explanations for Correlational Data

Observed correlation

As permissive parenting increases, children's self-control decreases.

Possible explanations for this correlation

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graph LR
    A[As permissive parenting increases, children's self-control decreases.]
    B[Permissive parenting] -- causes --> C[Children's lack of self-control]
    D[Children's lack of self-control] -- causes --> E[Permissive parenting]
    F[Other factors, such as genetic tendencies, poverty, and socio-historical circumstances] -- cause both --> G[Permissive parenting and Children's lack of self-control]
          
```

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Research in Life-Span Development

- Methods for collecting data
 - Experimental research
 - Causality and effect
 - Dependent (Y) and independent (X) variables
 - Control and experimental groups
 - Random assignment of subjects
 - Manipulation of independent (X) variable

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Figure 1.18 - Principles of Experimental Research

Independent variable

Participants randomly assigned to experimental and control groups

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graph TD
    A[Participants randomly assigned to experimental and control groups] --> B[Experimental group (aerobic exercise)]
    A --> C[Control group (no aerobic exercise)]
    B --> D[Newborns' breathing and sleeping patterns]
    C --> D
          
```

Dependent variable

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Research in Life-Span Development

- Time Span of Research
 - Cross-sectional approach
 - Compares different age groups at the same time on a variety of dependent variables
 - Longitudinal approach
 - Studies same group over long period of time
 - Cohort effects: time of birth, generation, era

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Research in Life-Span Development

- Research Journals
 - Learning about journal process is beneficial
 - Scholarly and academic information published
 - Articles evaluated before publishing
 - Some journals more prestigious than others
 - Organization of article
 - Abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion, references

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Research in Life-Span Development

- Conducting ethical research
 - APA guidelines address
 - Informed consent, confidentiality
 - Debriefing, deception
 - Minimizing bias (gender, culture, ethnicity)
 - Ethnic gloss — overgeneralizing about ethnic group(s)

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The End

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