**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 <u>has changed</u>
  - 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

Importance of Studying Life-Span Development

- WHAT INFLUENCES CAN YOU THINK OF?

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

Importance of Studying Life-Span Development

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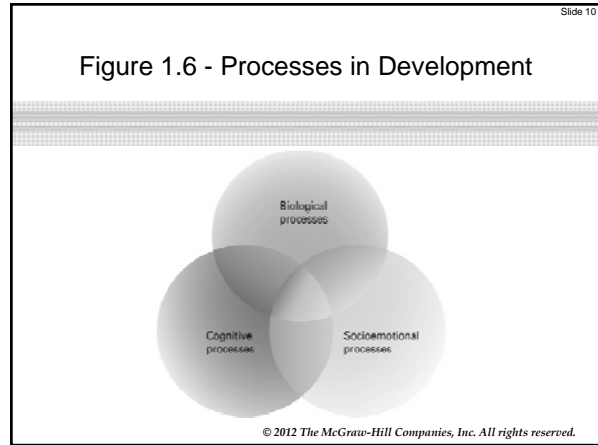 - Ethnicity
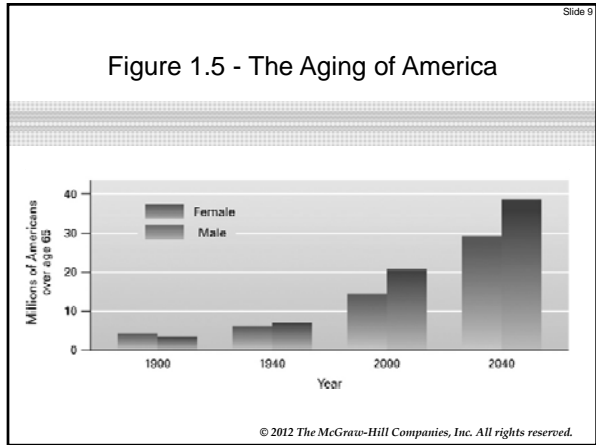 - Socioeconomic status
  - Gender

Importance of Studying Life-Span Development

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

Figure 1.5 - The Aging of America

Figure 1.6 - Processes in Development

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

Nature of Development

- Periods of development

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

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

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?

Figure 1.9 - Continuity and Discontinuity in Development

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

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)

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

Figure 1.10 - Freudian Stages

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

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

Erikson's Eight Life-Span Stages

Theories of Development

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

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

Figure 1.12 - Piaget's Four Stages of Cognitive Development

Sensorimotor stage	Preoperational stage	Concrete operational stage	Formal operational stage
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.	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.	The child can now reason logically about concrete events and classify objects into different sets.	The adolescent reasons in more abstract, idealistic, and logical ways.
Birth to 2 years of age	2 to 7 years of age	7 to 11 years of age	11 years of age through adulthood

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 1.13 - Bandura's Social Cognitive Model
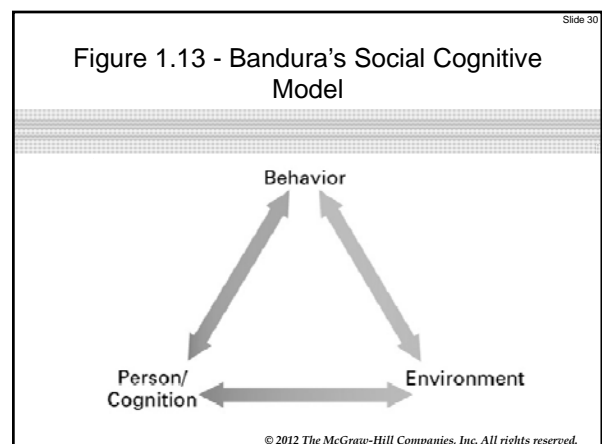
Theories of Development

- 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

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

Theories of Development

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

Figure 1.14 - Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory

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

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

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)

Figure 1.19 - Possible Explanations for Correlational Data

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

Figure 1.18 - Principles of Experimental Research

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

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

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)

The End