Development Part II

Socioemotional Development
Socioemotional Development

• The child’s emerging capacity to function as a social and emotional being

• **attachment**: a strong, enduring emotional bond formed between two individuals (earliest is between infant and caregiver)
Earliest interactions

• Identifying Primary Caregiver

• From a very early age, infants are interested in face-to-face interaction.

• Social referencing
  • When infants begin to crawl (7 to 9 months), they begin to rely on facial cues -- for instance, if the infant crawls into a dangerous or inappropriate situation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6cqNhHrMJA
Separation Anxiety

- Infants begin to feel separation anxiety between 6 and 8 months.

- Bowlby: Infants have a need for contact comfort, which provides the infant with a secure base.
Why do attachment bonds form?

• Survival value (imprinting)
• Reinforcement (food)
• Need for psychological comfort (Harlow experiments)
Imprinting

• Seminal work by Konrad Lorenz: study of animal behavior in natural environments

• Within the first 12 hours of life, if ducklings see something moving, they will **imprint** on the object and follow it -- they form a sort of “attachment” to the object.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGBqQyZid04&feature=related
Video: Imprinting as tool for nature documentaries

http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7358644n&tag=contentMain;contentAux
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pc_qpk2d-ao
Harlow’s experiments

- Do infants bond with the mother because she feeds them or because she provides psychological comfort?

- Harlow experiment with wire or terrycloth monkey
Video: Harlow Monkeys (1 min)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmbbfisRiwA&feature=related
Bowlby theory

• Caregivers serve as **secure base** from which infants can explore

• Children develop **internal working models** about caregivers typical responses

• These models guide attachment expectations, feelings, and behaviors throughout life
Strange Situation

• Attachment is assessed by observing behavior of children in the *Strange Situation*

• Observing a child’s responses to brief separations and reunions with the caregiver

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTsewNrHUHU

Mary Ainsworth (1913-1999)
Video: Attachment Styles (~ 4 min)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnFKaaOSPmk
Patterns of attachment

Types of attachment relationships

- securely attached
- insecure attachment:
  - avoidant
  - resistant (ambivalent)
  - disorganized
Causes of attachment styles

- Experience
- Cultural differences
- Temperament
Attachment Styles: Causes

• Experience
  – Are caregivers responsive to children in times of need?
Attachment Styles: Causes

• Cultural differences
  – How often are infants left alone?
  – Do infants co-sleep?
  – Are infants encouraged to play with toys?
Cultural Differences in Patterns of Attachment

Notice how the patterns of attachment vary from one culture to the next. What childrearing and cultural factors contribute to these differences?

Attachment Styles: Causes

• Characteristics within the child
  – Temperament
    • How sociable is the child
    • How generally fearful is the child

Most shy children are born that way, says Jerome Kagan, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at Harvard University and a Parents adviser, who conducted a large, long-term study of the temperaments of children ages 4 months to 11 years. An oversensitivity to new people and situations seems to be genetic and manifests itself in physical as well as psychological ways.
Video: temperament research by Kagan (~5 min)

This video shown in class is not available online but here is a similar video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVJBzvaylH8
Attachment Styles: “Consequences”

• In the U.S., securely attached infants when they reach preschool/kindergarten:
  – Are more positive in emotional expressions
  – Are more positively evaluated by peers
  – Show more helping behaviors
  – Are more likely to have close friends
Attachment Styles: “Consequences”

• Attachment often stable through adulthood
  – Securely attached infants often become securely attached adults
  – Anxious-avoidant adults less interested in romantic relationships
  – Secure adults report being happier in relationships
Consequences of attachment

- There is a debate over the mechanisms behind these correlational findings.
Parenting Styles

- Authoritative: Reasonable demands, consistently enforced, with sensitivity to and acceptance of the child.
- Authoritarian: Many rules and demands, few explanations and little sensitivity to the child's perspective.
- Permissive: Few rules and demands, children are allowed much freedom by indulgent parents.
- Uninvolved: Few rules and demands, parents are uninvolved and insensitive to the child's needs.
Which Parenting Style is the best for kids?

In the United States, authoritative parenting related to numerous benefits for children, but… benefits most consistently observed in children from middle/upper class families and Caucasian children.
Video: do parents matter? (~5 min)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPol_GTequY
Do parents matter?

• Harris argues that parents do not have any long-term effect on the development of the child’s personality

• According to her, the child’s peer group is more important