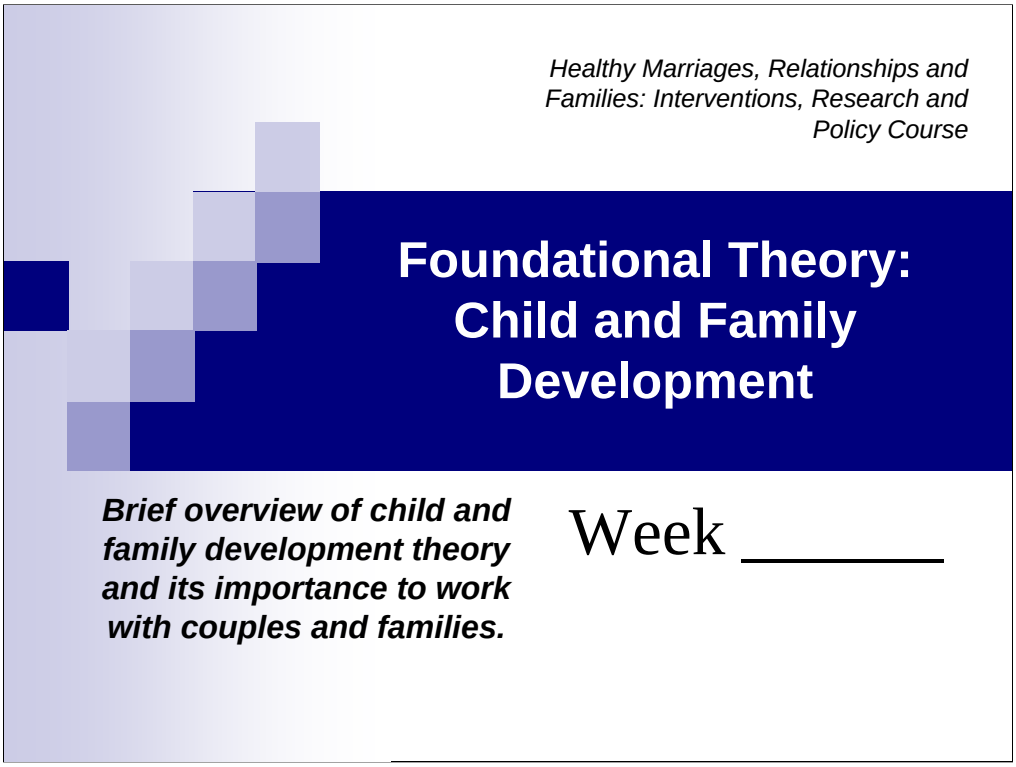

This lesson can be paired with the lesson detailing the impact of marital status on children and/or the Structured Family Therapy lesson.

Promoting Child Welfare: Training Professionals to Support Healthy Marriages, Relationships and Families Project.

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Project Mission: To develop curricula and provide training for students and professionals that enhance their ability to facilitate healthy marriages, relationships and families in the child welfare population, with the end goal of promoting and improving the well-being of children.

Project funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.
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U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
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Learning Objectives

- **D**emonstrate an understanding of family system theories and child and family developmental theories and be able to critique and synthesize these theories for use in formulating interventions and/or approaches that will promote child welfare through healthy marriages, relationships and families.
- **L**earn and apply assessment tools, skills, and practices appropriate to the target population for couples, children and families as a whole in order to discern challenges and supports to family health, well-being and formation.

One of the most significant changes in the American family over the last 5 decades has been the decline in the number of children growing up in households with married parents.

***Family structure and the ability to successfully negotiate the various phases of change within families significantly impacts child-wellbeing*.**

(Amato, 2005)

Key Professional Knowledge

A thorough understanding of child and family development theory is essential for working with families and couples, as well as developing programs.

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Child and Family Development

Key Points

- Children and adults change over their life span and the duration of relationships.
- There are many different models.
- Macro structures impact child and family development.

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Vocabulary

- *Stage* - a period of life that is characterized by some underlying organization or emphasis.
- *Developmental tasks* – set of skills and competencies that are acquired as the person gains mastery over the environment.

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Child Development Theories

Examine the changes in children beginning with birth and proceeding through a set number of stages leading to adulthood

Two Important Theorists:
Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson

Choose to present either Piaget or Erikson.

Jean Piaget (1896 – 1980)

- General theoretical framework called: Genetic Epistemology.
- Based on the idea that:
  - Developing children build ***cognitive*** structures – mental maps, schemes or networked concepts of understanding and responding to physical experiences within environment.
  - Children's cognitive structure increases in sophistication and complexity with development moving from innate reflexes

(Crain, 1992)

Piaget Principles

- Children will provide different explanations of reality at different stages of cognitive/intellectual development.
- Cognitive development is facilitated by providing activities or situations that engage learners and require adaptation (i.e. assimilation and accommodation).
  - If a new experience fits easily into existing schemes/mental maps, it is assimilated.
  - If the new experience is different, it alters the child's structure and the accommodate the new conditions. In this way they continuously build and add to cognitive structures.
- Learning materials and activities for programs should involve the appropriate level of motor or mental operations for a child of a given age.

(Crain, 1992)

Piaget's Four Stages of Intellectual Development

1. *Sensorimotor stage (birth – 2 years)*
   1. The child, through interaction with the environment, builds a set of concepts about reality and how it works. This is the stage where a child does not know that physical objects remain in existence (object permanence) even when out of sight.

2. *Preoperational stage (ages 2 – 7)*
   1. The child is not yet able to conceptualize abstractly and needs concrete physical situations.

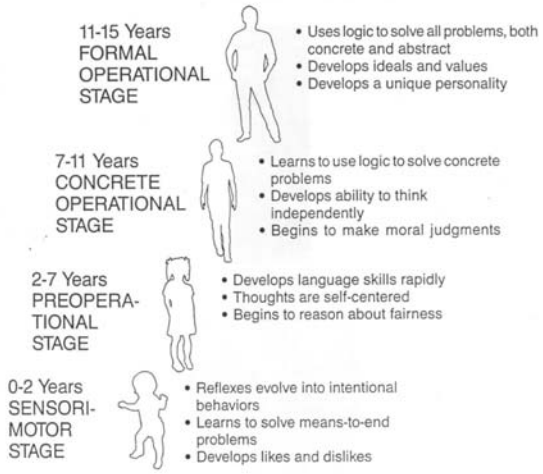
(Crain, 1992)

Piaget Stages cont.

3. Concrete operations (ages 7 – 11)
   1. As physical experience accumulates, the child starts to conceptualize, creating logical structures that explain his or her physical experiences. Abstract problem-solving is also possible at this stage.
4. Formal operations (11 – 15)
   1. By this point, the child's cognitive structures are like those of an adult and include conceptual reasoning.

(Crain, 1992)

PIAGET'S STAGES OF INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT



http://childdevelopmentinfo.com/development/piaget. html

Piaget's theory depicts learning as a continuous, developmental process.

Piaget:

- The accumulating evidence suggests that this scheme is too rigid: many children manage concrete operations earlier than Piaget thought, and some people never attain formal operations (or at least are not called upon to use them).

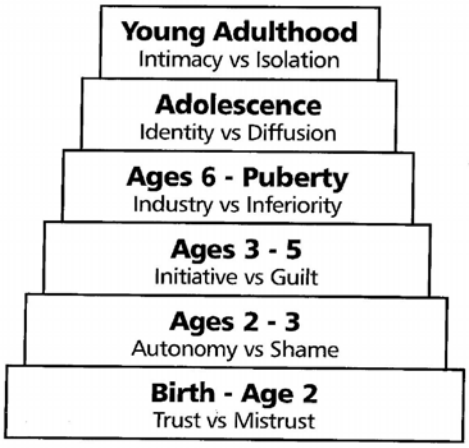
(Crain, 1992)

Erik Erikson(1902 – 1994)
Eight Stages of *Social* Development

- Social development theory that proposes 8 stages of child development characterized by different conflicts that must be resolved by the individual. When the environment makes new demands on people, the conflict arises.
- Individual is faced with a choice of 2 ways to cope: adaptive or maladaptive.
- Only when each conflict is resolved, which involves change, does the person move to the next stage. Resolution of one stage or psychosocial crisis is the foundation for the next.

(Crain, 1992)

Erikson's Eight Stages of Social Development



(Crain, 1992)

Erikson's Eight Stages of Development (See handout)

1. Learning Basic Trust Versus Basic Mistrust (Hope): This is the period of infancy through the first 1 or 2 years of life. The child, well - handled, nurtured, and loved, develops trust and security. A basic optimism. Badly handled, he becomes insecure and mistrustful.

2. Learning Autonomy Versus Shame (Will): The second psychosocial crisis occurs during early childhood, probably between about 18 months or 2 years and 3½ to 4 years of age. The "well - parented" child emerges from this stage sure of himself, elated with his new found control, and proud rather than ashamed. Autonomy is not, however, entirely synonymous with assured self - possession, initiative, and independence but, at least for children in the early part of this psychosocial crisis, includes stormy self - will, tantrums, stubbornness, and negativism.

3. Learning Initiative Versus Guilt (Purpose): This third psychosocial crisis occurs during what he calls the "play age," or the later preschool years. During it, the healthily developing child learns: (1) to imagine, to broaden his skills through active play of all sorts, including fantasy (2) to cooperate with others (3) to lead as well as to follow. Immobilized by guilt, he is: (1) fearful (2) hangs on the fringes of groups (3) continues to depend unduly on adults and (4) is restricted both in the development of play skills and in imagination.

4. Industry Versus Inferiority (Competence): The fourth crisis is handled during the "school age" period up to and possibly including some of junior high. The child learns to master the more formal skills of life: (1) relating with peers according to rules (2) progressing from free play to play that may be elaborately structured by rules and may demand formal teamwork and (3) mastering social studies, reading, arithmetic. Homework is a necessity, and the need for self-discipline increases yearly. The child who, because of his successive and successful resolutions of earlier crisis, is trusting, autonomous, and full of initiative will learn easily enough to be industrious. The mistrusting child will doubt the future. The shame - and guilt-filled child will experience defeat and inferiority.

5. Learning Identity Versus Identity Diffusion (Fidelity): During the fifth crisis (adolescence to about 20) the child learns how to answer satisfactorily and happily the question of "Who am I?" But even the best - adjusted of adolescents experiences some role identity diffusion: most boys and probably most girls experiment with minor delinquency; rebellion flourishes; self - doubts flood the youngster, and so on.

Erikson believes that during successful early adolescence, mature time perspective is developed; the young person acquires self-certainty as opposed to self-consciousness and self-doubt. He comes to experiment with different - usually constructive - roles rather than adopting a "negative identity" (such as delinquency). He actually anticipates achievement, and achieves, rather than being "paralyzed" by feelings of inferiority or by an inadequate time perspective. In later adolescence, clear sexual identity - manhood or womanhood - is established. The adolescent seeks someone to inspire and gradually develops a set of ideals (socially congruent and desirable, in the case of the successful adolescent). In our culture, adolescence affords a "psychosocial moratorium," particularly for middle - and upper-class American children. They do not yet have to "play for keeps," but can experiment, trying various roles, and thus hopefully find the one most suitable for them.

6. Learning Intimacy Versus Isolation (Love): The successful young adult, for the first time, can experience true intimacy - the sort of intimacy that makes possible good marriage or a genuine and enduring friendship.

7. Learning Generativity Versus Self-Absorption (Care):In adulthood, the psychosocial crisis demands generativity, both in the sense of marriage and parenthood, and in the sense of working productively and creatively.

8. Integrity Versus Despair (Wisdom): If the other seven psychosocial crisis have been successfully resolved, the mature adult develops the peak of adjustment; integrity. He trusts, he is independent and dares the new. He works hard, has found a role in life, and has developed a self-concept with which he is happy. He can be intimate without strain, guilt, regret, or lack of realism; and he is proud of what he creates. If one or more of the earlier psychosocial crises have not been resolved, he may view himself and his life with disgust and despair.

- Eight stages were formulated, not through experimental work, but through his extensive practice (psychotherapy) experience with children.
- Critiques:
  - Theory is more applicable to boys than to girls, and that
  - More attention is paid to infancy/childhood than to adulthood, despite claims to being a life-span theory.

(Crain, 1992)

Family Development Theories

These theories outline the developmental tasks of the family.

Prominent Theorist: Salvador Minuchin

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Given that the Family Dev theory presented via Salvador Minuchin's material, the Structural Family Therapy Intervention module could be paired with this lesson.

Family Development Perspective

- It takes the family as the unit of analysis and begins at the formation of the family.
- Details the family life cycle – the succession of stages in which key developmental tasks are conducted.
- Typical stages are marked by
  - The addition and subtraction of members
  - The various stages that children go through
  - Changes in the family's connection with other social systems (For example - food stamps, unemployment and retirement)

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Key Understandings:

- The lives of all people involve responses to certain universal developmental challenges.
- The life cycle model gives insight into the complexities of family life circumstances over time.
- Family development theory provides a framework with which to view the maturational development of individuals as it influences and is influenced by the social environment of the family.

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Typical Stages

- Beginning Family- couple
- Childbearing families
- Families with preschool children
- Families with elementary/pre-teen children
- Families with adolescents
- Families as launching centers for adult children
- Families in middle years, Empty Nest
- Aging Families

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Important Alternative Stages:

- Divorce
- Blending (Reconstitution, Remarriage, Multi-partner fertility)
- Relocating
- Both Parents Working Outside of Home (after a period of near full-time parenting)
- Long-term illness or disability

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Alternative Stages - Divorce

- Letting ex-spouse go
- Rediscovering individuality and raising self-esteem. Developing meaningful activities.
- Re-learning to trust and invest in others.
- Dealing with the child(ren)'s loss.
- Living alone
  - Psychological adjustment
  - Financial adjustment
  - Giving oneself sufficient time

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Blending Families

- Family formation.
- Developing appropriate expectations and roles for self, spouse/partner, children, step-children, ex-spouse/partner and/or other biological parent.
- Adjusting to individual differences.
- Negotiating co-parenting alliances.

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

See handout “Elements of a Healthy Co-parenting Alliance”

Relocating

- Decision process – analysis of gains, losses and each family member's needs.
- Letting go of old community.
- Developing new friendships and support systems.
  - Allowing sufficient time.
  - Dealing with differences from past.

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Working Outside Home After Extended Full-Time Parenting

- Maintaining spouse and child relationships. Quality time.
- Family adjustments to new roles, time schedule changes, new demands and loss of ready availability.
- Adjust to world of work.
  - Conflict over relinquishing full-time parenting and changes creates in family.
  - New set of people.
  - New sense of self.
  - Values conflicts.

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Long-term illness or disability

- Maintain relationships in the new situation.
- Realign future plans and goals.
- Lifestyle changes.
- Self-care by those caretaking.
- Individual who is ill – new sense of self.
- In case of child with significant disability –
  - Re-aligning hopes and dreams for child.
  - Planning for current and future caretaking.
  - Self-care and attending to relationship with spouse/partner and other children.

(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008)

Developmental Family Life Stages

- Salvador Minuchin
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yorKLGegpS0
- Key Principles:
  - The family evolves in stages of increasing complexity
  - Family's overarching task throughout life stages is to blend the diversity of individual growth with the unity of membership in the system.

Foster Parent Manual: Session One

Family Studies; 1990

Minuchin – Families with Infants (Ages 0 to 1 year)

- Ensure survival (feeding and caring)
- Connect the infant to people (dependable contacts)
- Provide stimulation (people, objects, play_
- Ensure a Sense of Security (predictability, affection, meeting needs)
- Help Older Children Connect to the Baby (supervised involvement)

Foster Parent Manual: Session One

Family Studies; 1990

See Handout of Minuchin's stages in chart form. This is also detailed in the Structural Family Therapy lesson.

Minuchin – Families with Toddlers (1 – 3 years old)

- Encourage Exploration (movement, imitation, trial and error)
- Help Speech Development (listening, talk, reading)
- Protect and Control (limits, guidance, praise)
- Expect Individual Differences (variations as normal)
- Encourage Relationships Among Siblings (autonomy & supervision).

Foster Parent Manual: Session One

Family Studies; 1990

Minuchin – Families with Preschoolers (Ages 3 – 5 years)

- Encourage Competence (skills, self-directed play)
- Establish Controls (clarity, patience, fairness)
- Coordinate Adult Authorities (agreement about rules)
- Encourage Relationships with Children (opportunities, settling conflicts)
- Maintain Relations with Day Care or Preschool (frequent contact)

Foster Parent Manual: Session One

Family Studies; 1990

Minuchin – Families with School Age Children (Ages 6 – 12 years)

- Support School Experience (praise, help & contact with school)
- Increase Responsibilities (household chores & following rules)
- Allow More Autonomy (privacy & privileges)
- Encourage Peer Group Activities (friends, visits, activities)
- Discuss Values & Social Behavior (drugs, sex & safety)

Foster Parent Manual: Session One

Family Studies; 1990

Minuchin – Families with Adolescents (Ages 13 – 18 years)

- Recognize Biological and Social Changes (sex, privacy, autonomy)
- Establish Mutual Rule-Making (negotiation, conflict, resolution)
- Clarify Role in the Family (balance autonomy & responsibility)
- Clarify Firm Family Values (drugs, safe sex, school, future)
- Recognize Power of the Peer Group (acknowledge, partial control)

Foster Parent Manual: Session One

Family Studies; 1990

Minuchin – Families with Adults

- Support Relationships (partners, kin, neighbors)
- Organize Work Life (income, timing, responsibility)
- Clarify Family Roles (child rearing, decision-making authority, household responsibilities)
- Organize Contacts with Extended Family (closeness and boundaries for privacy)
- Relate With the Larger Community (health, religion, education, agencies)

Foster Parent Manual: Session One

Family Studies; 1990

Minuchin – Families with Elderly Relatives

- Monitor Health Needs (attention and care)
- Respect Independence and Experience (consult and give space)
- Include in the Family (contact, access to grandchildren)
- Negotiate Rules of Contact (closeness, distance, authority)
- Employ Community Resources (as needed)

Foster Parent Manual: Session One

Family Studies; 1990

Semira Gibbons Family Case Study

- What are the familial strengths and stressors?
- What are the couple strengths and stressors?
- What are the developmental tasks of this family (based on Minuchin's model)?
- How do these tasks, good or bad, impact the couple relationship?
- How, if any, does it (the impact of the couple's developmental tasks) "trickle down" to the children?

Familial Strengths:

-Semira's education – some college education
-Small child support stipend from Aaron Williams
-Semira's stable employment as Asst. Teacher. Hours also support family life.
-Extended family support in Aunt Constance.
-Children care for one another. Children are close.
-Connected to financial supports such as food stamps.
-Religious affiliation.
-Head Start affiliation

African-American Cultural Forces:

Shared parenting of children (Semira sent north to Aunt Constance)
Discipline Styles
Multi-generational involvement

Familial Relationships Stressors:

-First son Lucas has little contact with Dad
-Five children – large family. All born before Semira turned 30 years old.
-Ronald accepts responsibility for the children
-Aunt Constance does not totally support Ronald and Semira's relationship.
-Father of 2 of children (Trey) was killed by a gang, Lucas lost 2nd father figure. No benefits for his children.
-One child has "issues" maybe ADHD which Mother is denying.
-Frequent moves when children were young – security issues and forced to be on public assistance
-Lucas truancy and possible association with drugs/drug dealers

Couple Relationship Strengths and Stressors:

Strength – shared commitment to children, role flexibility (Ronald cares for kids)

What are the developmental tasks of this family (based on Minuchin's model)?

See attached chart

How do these tasks, good or bad, impact the couple relationship?

Recommended Reading

- Paul R. Amato, The Impact of Family Formation Change on the Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Well-Being of the Next Generation,? *The Future of Children*, Fall 2005

Works Cited

- Paul R. Amato, The Impact of Family Formation Change on the Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Well-Being of the Next Generation,? *The Future of Children*, Fall 2005
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