Chapter 10: Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

The Self
- The Development of Self Understanding
  - During middle and late childhood:
    - Defining one’s “self” shifts to using internal characteristics or personality traits.
    - Children recognize social aspects of the self
    - Social comparison increases

Understanding Others
- Children show an increase in perspective taking – the ability to assume other people’s perspectives and understand their thoughts and feelings
- Children become increasingly skeptical of others’ claims

Self-Esteem and Self-Concept
- Children with high self-esteem
  - Do not necessarily perform better in school
  - Have greater initiative (can be positive or negative)
Emotional and Personality Development

- The Self
  - Four Ways to Improve Self-Esteem
    - Identify causes of low self-esteem
    - Provide emotional support and social approval
    - Help child achieve
    - Help child cope
  - Self-Efficacy: belief that one can master a situation and produce favorable outcomes
  - Increased capacity for self-regulation
    - Deliberate efforts to manage one’s behavior, emotions, and thoughts, leading to increased social competence and achievement

- Emotional Development
  - Developmental Changes Include:
    - Improved emotional understanding
    - Increased understanding that more than one emotion can be experienced in a particular situation
    - Increased awareness of the events leading to emotional reactions
    - Ability to suppress or conceal negative emotional reactions
    - Use of self-initiated strategies for redirecting feelings
    - A capacity for genuine empathy

- Emotional and Personality Development
  - Industry vs. Inferiority (Erickson)
    - Industry: children become interested in how things work
    - Inferiority: parents who see their children’s efforts as mischief may encourage inferiority
Emotional and Personality Development

- Emotional Development
  - Coping with Stress:
    - Older children generate more coping alternatives to stressful situations
  - Coping with stressful events:
    - By 10 years of age, most children are able to use cognitive strategies to cope with stress

- Moral Development
  - Lawrence Kohlberg’s Theory:
    - Based on Piaget’s cognitive stages
    - Proposed 3 levels and 6 universal states of moral development
    - Developed stages based on interviews using moral dilemmas

Kohlberg’s Moral Development

- Influences on Kohlberg’s Stages:
  - Cognitive development
  - Experiences dealing with moral questions/conflicts
  - Peer interaction and perspective taking are crucial
Emotional and Personality Development

• Moral Development
  - Kohlberg’s Critics
    - Moral Thought and Behavior
      - Too much emphasis on thought, not enough emphasis on behavior
    - Culture and Moral Reasoning
      - Theory is culturally biased

Emotional and Personality Development

• Moral Development
  - Kohlberg’s Critics
    - Families and Moral Development
      - Kohlberg underestimated
    - Gender and the Care Perspective
      - Gilligan argues that Kohlberg’s theory is based on a male norm
    - Social Conventional Reasoning
      - Inadequate distinction between moral reasoning and social conventional reasoning

Emotional and Personality Development

• Moral Development
  - Prosocial Behavior:
    - Emphasized behavioral aspects of moral development
  - Moral Personality:
    - Three possible components:
      - Moral identity
      - Moral character
      - Moral exemplars

Emotional and Personality Development

• Gender
  - Gender Stereotypes – broad categories that reflect general impressions and beliefs about males and females
  - Gender Similarities and Differences
    - Physical development
    - Cognitive development
    - Socioemotional development
**Emotional and Personality Development**

- **Gender**
  - Gender Role Classification
    - Individuals can have both masculine and feminine traits
  - Androgyny – presence of positive masculine and feminine traits in the same person
  - Androgynous individuals are more flexible, competent, and mentally healthy
  - Gender in Context
    - Traits people display may vary with the situation

**Families**

- **Developmental Changes in Parent-Child Relationships**
  - Parents spend less time with children during middle and late childhood
  - Parents support and stimulate children’s academic achievement
  - Parents use less physical forms of punishment as children age

**Families**

- **Parents as Managers**
  - Parents manage children’s opportunities, monitor behavior, and initiate social contact
  - Important to maintain a structured and organized family environment

**Families**

- **Stepfamilies**
  - Remarriages involving children has grown steadily in recent years
  - Half of all children from a divorced family will have a step-parent within 4 years
  - More than 75% of adolescents in established stepfamilies describe their relationships with stepparents as “close” or “very close”
  - Relationships usually better with custodial parents than with stepparents
Peers

- Developmental Changes:
  - Reciprocity becomes increasingly important in peer interchanges during elementary school
  - Size of peer group increases
  - Peer interaction is less closely supervised by adults
  - Children’s preference for same-sex peer groups increases

- Peer Status
  - Popular Children
  - Average Children
  - Neglected Children
  - Rejected Children
  - Controversial Children

Peers

- Social Cognition: thoughts about social matters
  - Important for understanding peer relationships
  - 5 steps in processing social information (Dodge)
    - Decode social cues
    - Interpret
    - Search for a response
    - Select an optimal response
    - Enact

- Bullying
  - Verbal or physical behavior intended to disturb someone less powerful
  - 70-80% of victims and bullies are in the same classroom
  - Boys and younger middle school students are most likely to be affected
  - Outcomes of bullying:
    - Depression, suicidal ideation, and attempted suicide
    - More health problems
Friends

- Typically characterized by similarity
- Serve six functions:
  - Companionship
  - Stimulation
  - Physical support
  - Ego support
  - Social comparison
  - Affection and intimacy

Contemporary Approaches to Student Learning

- Constructivist and Direct Instruction Approaches
  - Constructivist Approach: learner-centered approach that emphasizes the importance of individuals actively constructing their own knowledge and understanding
  - Direct-Instruction Approach: structured, teacher-centered approach
    - Characterized by teacher direction and control

Accountability

- No Child Left Behind Legislation (NCLB) (2002)
- Statewide standardized testing
Socioeconomic Status, Ethnicity, and Culture

- Low-income, ethnic minority students have more difficulties in school
- U.S. students have lower achievement in math and science than a number of other countries
- The Education of Students from Low-Income Backgrounds
  - Minority and low-SES students face more barriers to learning

Most low-SES area schools tend to have:
- Lower test scores, lower graduation rates, and lower college-attendance rates
- Young teachers with less experience
- Fewer resources

Ethnicity in Schools
- Almost one-third of all African American and Latino students attend schools in the 47 largest city school districts in the U.S., compared with only 5 percent of all White and 22 percent of all Asian-American students
- Many inner-city schools are still segregated, grossly underfunded, and do not provide adequate learning opportunities

Cross-Cultural Comparisons of Achievement:
- The poor performance of American children in math and science is well publicized
- Asian teachers spend more of their time teaching math than American teachers
- Asian students average 240 days a year compared to 178 in the U.S.
- American parents believe academic achievement is due to innate ability while Asian parents contribute achievement to effort and training