

**Child Development
Essential Curriculum
2007-2008**

UNIT I: Introduction to the Field of Child Development

Goal 1: Students will explore the nature of child development as an applied and interdisciplinary field.

Objectives-The student will:

- a. Explain the terms applied and interdisciplinary as they relate to the field of child development.
- b. Discuss how knowledge of child and adolescent development is the foundation for all careers working with children and adolescents.
- c. Discuss how knowledge of child and adolescent development supports exemplary instruction for diverse learners including children with physical, intellectual, social and emotional differences.
- d. List the periods of development, prenatal through adolescence, and define the three domains used in the study of child development.

Goal 2: Students will examine the evolution of the field of child development.

Objectives-The student will be able to

- a. Trace the historical influences on the study of child development.
- b. Compare and contrast the modern theories of child and adolescent development.
- c. Describe the methods used to observe and study children and adolescents and cite the advantages and disadvantages of each method.
- d. Perform structured observations of children and adolescents using a variety of data collection tools and instruments.

UNIT II: Introduction to the INTASC-based Portfolio

Goal 1: Students will recognize the role of a pre-service portfolio to guide reflection and document their growth as a child development professional.

Objectives-The student will:

- a. Describe a pre-service portfolio and identify its major components.
- c. Define the term artifact and cite at least four examples.
- d. Define the INTASC principles and generate a list of possible artifacts which could be used to document each principle.
- e. Begin an INTASC-based pre-service portfolio using the recommended format and documenting at least two INTASC principles.

UNIT III: The Foundations of Development

Goal 1: Students will examine the roles and influences of both heredity and environment on development from the prenatal period through adolescence.

Objectives-The student will:

- a. Describe the structure and function of chromosomes and DNA molecules.
- b. Outline the process of genetic transmission including mitosis and meiosis.
- c. Give examples of genetic events which play a role in determining normal and abnormal characteristics and traits.
- d. Explain the origin and consequences of problems or illnesses that are genetic or inherited.
- e. Investigate the role of the environment on development.
- f. Describe the family's influence on prenatal and early development and cite examples of both direct and indirect family influence.
- g. Discuss how socioeconomic status affects prenatal and early development.
- h. Explain how cultural values and public policies influence prenatal and early development.
- i. Identify various ways heredity and the environment combine to influence prenatal and early development.

Goal 2: Students will examine the societal, family and individual values and behaviors which affect preparation for parenthood as well as prenatal development.

Objectives-The student will:

- a. Give examples of current trends in family size and childbearing age and discuss their effects on child development.
- b. List the three phases of prenatal development and describe the milestones and risks associated with each phase.
- c. Examine environmental factors which can harm the developing fetus.
- d. Describe maternal factors which affect the normal development of the fetus.

Goal 3: Students will discuss the relationship among the events before, during, and immediately after childbirth and the healthy development of the newborn.

Objectives-The student will:

- a. Describe the events leading up to childbirth and the three stages of labor.
- b. Compare and contrast labor and delivery options available to prospective mothers including the benefits and concerns associated with each.
- c. Identify the reasons for and risk associated with common medical interventions during childbirth.
- d. Describe the baby's adaptation to labor and delivery including the effect on the newborn's physical appearance.
- e. Outline the features and use of the Apgar scale to evaluate the health and condition of the baby at birth.
- f. Relate possible birth complications including preterm and low-birth-weight infants to recommended interventions and the developmental outlook.
- g. Identify the senses, characteristics, and behaviors present in the newborn and distinguish those that disappear as the infant develops.

UNIT IV: The Infant

Goal 1: Students will examine how infants develop in the three domains: Physical, Cognitive, and Emotional/Social.

Objectives-

Physical Development: The student will:

- a. Define the terms “cephalocaudal” and “proximodistal” as they apply to early development.
- b. Outline physical changes during the first two years of life including skeletal growth, body size, body proportions, and muscle-fat percentage.
- c. Discuss the impact of heredity and environmental factors on physical growth from infancy to age two.
- d. Identify the nutritional needs which must be met in order for infants and toddlers to grow and thrive.
- e. Describe typical fine and gross motor development during the first two years including benchmarks and cultural variations in motor development.
- f. Summarize the development of the five senses during infancy.

Cognitive Development: The student will:

- a. Outline the process of brain growth and development during the first two years and describe the impact of these changes in the brain on the development of motor, language, and cognitive skills.
- b. Discuss the significance of sensitive periods and plasticity in brain development.
- c. Analyze how infants learn through conditioning, habituation, and imitation and compare this with learning during the toddler years.
- d. Summarize Piaget’s Sensorimotor Stage of cognitive development and compare and contrast his theory with recent research findings about infant and toddler learning and cognitive abilities.
- e. Summarize the contributions of the information processing approach to cognitive development and distinguish this approach from Piaget’s.
- f. Relate Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory to cognitive development during the first two years of life.
- g. Explain the interactionist view of language development and contrast this theory with other explanations of language acquisition.

Emotional/Social Development: The student will:

- a. Define “temperament” and explain how it is measured.
- b. Identify the components of temperament and the three types of temperament as described by Thomas and Chess.
- c. Describe several inherited and environmental factors that influence the stability of temperament and discuss the relationship of these factors to the goodness-of-fit model.
- d. Summarize the first two stages of Erikson’s psychosocial theory.
- e. Describe how infants express emotions and respond to the emotions of others.
- f. Discuss the importance of secure attachment and list factors which influence the bond between infant and caregiver(s).
- g. Outline the toddler’s increasing self-awareness and self-control and relate the growing sense of self to future emotional and social skills.

UNIT V: Early Childhood

Goal 1: Students will examine how toddlers develop in the three domains:
Physical, Cognitive, and Emotional/Social.

Objectives-

Physical Development: The student will:

- a. Outline physical changes during early childhood including skeletal growth, body size, body proportions, and muscle-fat percentage.
- b. Explain the typical growth curve and discuss atypical and asynchronous development.
- c. Cite major milestones in gross and fine motor development during early childhood.
- d. Discuss the range of motor skill development during early childhood.
- e. Describe activities that can enhance the development of fine and gross motor skills.

- f. Discuss the impact of heredity and environmental factors on physical growth and health.

Cognitive Development: The student will:

- a. Outline the process of brain growth and development and describe the impact of these changes in the brain on the development of motor, language and cognitive skills.
- b. Define the terms “synaptic growth” and “pruning” as they relate to brain development during early childhood.
- c. Summarize Piaget’s Preoperational Stage of cognitive development and compare and contrast his theory with recent research findings about learning and brain development during early childhood.
- d. Discuss Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory on early childhood and analyze its impact on early childhood education policies and practice.
- e. Outline the growth in language skills including expanding vocabulary and acquisition of grammar.
- f. Trace the development of early literacy and mathematical reasoning.
- g. Use the information processing model to describe emerging mental strategies and advances in attention, memory, and problem solving.
- h. Explain the importance of play in learning during early childhood.
- i. Compare and contrast a range of learning environments including home-based childcare, child care centers, Head Start, Montessori, and Reggio Emilia.
- j. Examine the NAEYC Standards and identify local examples of learning environments which meet these standards.

Emotional/Social Development: The student will:

- a. Discuss cultural influences on social and emotional development.
- b. Analyze the psychological conflict which forms the basis of Erikson’s Initiative Versus Guilt stage of early childhood.
- c. Trace the emergence of self-concept and self-esteem.
- d. Identify changes in expressing and responding to emotions.

- e. Describe the development of peer sociability during early childhood.
- f. Examine the impact of family and cultural influences on peer sociability.
- g. Compare and contrast psychoanalytic, social learning, and cognitive development approaches to moral development.
- h. Discuss the role of increased social interaction on the development of moral understanding.
- i. Analyze environmental factors which may enhance or inhibit the development of aggression in early childhood.
- j. Compare and contrast the major theories of gender identity development.
- k. Describe preschoolers' gender beliefs and stereotypes and describe strategies for reducing gender stereotyping.
- l. Identify the three features which characterize the major styles of child rearing.
- m. Describe variations in child rearing beliefs and practices and cite cultural and societal influences on child rearing.

UNIT VI: Middle Childhood

Goal 1: Students will examine development in middle childhood in the three domains: Physical, Cognitive, and Emotional/Social.

Objectives-

Physical Development: The student will:

- a. Outline physical changes during middle childhood including skeletal maturity, body size, body proportions, and muscle-fat percentage.
- b. Describe the overall status of children's health in the United States and worldwide.
- c. Outline the causes and consequences of poor health habits, including diet and exercise, during middle childhood.
- d. Suggest family and school-based strategies for encouraging good health habits in school-age children.

- e. Describe the major changes and the range in gross and fine motor skills during middle childhood.
- f. Compare and contrast adult-organized sports and child-controlled games.
- g. Identify reasons for increased accidental injuries during middle childhood.

Cognitive Development: The student will:

- a. Summarize Piaget's Concrete Operational Stage of cognitive development and compare and contrast his theory with recent research findings about learning and brain development during middle childhood.
- b. Examine changes in information processing including attention, memory, and the ability to self-regulate.
- c. Discuss the application of knowledge about cognitive development and the teaching and learning processes in educational settings.
- d. Explain Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and describe its application to the teaching and learning processes in educational settings.
- e. Examine issues such as class size, homework, use of technology, and grouping practices on academic achievement during middle childhood.
- f. Compare and contrast commonly used instruments for assessing intelligence.
- g. Examine recent developments in intelligence testing including research regarding cultural bias.
- h. Outline the growth in language skills including changes in metalinguistic awareness, vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatics during middle childhood.
- i. Discuss research findings regarding bilingual development and bilingual education.
- j. Describe the characteristics of exceptional learners and current trends in meeting their educational needs.
- k. Compare and contrast the performance of schools in the United States with performance data from other industrialized nations.

Emotional/Social Development: The student will:

- a. Trace changes to self-concept and self-esteem during middle childhood.
- b. Describe the school-aged child's need for mastery in contrast to feelings of learned helplessness.
- c. Analyze the psychological conflict which forms the basis of Erikson's Industry Versus Inferiority stage of middle childhood.
- d. Cite evidence for children's increasing ability to predict and read the emotions of others.
- e. Describe the impact of increased perspective taking on the development of social skills and peer relationships.
- f. Discuss the characteristics and importance of peer relationships to the school-age child.
- g. Examine the impact of family influences on emotional and social development during middle childhood.
- h. Summarize changes to gender identity including the influence of culture and gender stereotyping.
- i. Describe strategies parents and other adults can use to support school-aged children having difficulties developing prosocial behaviors.
- j. Discuss common fears and anxieties during middle childhood.
- k. Identify factors which promote emotional resiliency in school-age children.

UNIT VII: Adolescence

Goal 1: Students will examine development in adolescence in the three domains: Physical, Cognitive, and Emotional/Social.

Objectives-

Physical Development: The student will:

- a. Outline physical changes during adolescence including skeletal maturity, body size, body proportions, and hormonal changes associated with puberty.

- b. Define the terms “adolescence” and “puberty.”
- c. Cite factors that influence the onset of puberty.
- d. Discuss the impact of the timing of maturation on adolescent adjustment.
- e. Distinguish between boys’ and girls’ gross and fine motor development during adolescence.
- f. List the benefits of regular exercise and participation in sports during adolescence.
- g. Examine changes to sleep patterns during adolescence and describe the impact of sleep deprivation.
- h. Summarize the changes to nutritional needs during adolescence.
- i. Identify common health concerns during adolescence.
- j. Distinguish between social and biological influences on adolescent development.

Cognitive Development: The student will:

- a. Summarize Piaget’s Formal Operational Stage of cognitive development and compare and contrast his theory with recent research findings about learning and brain development during adolescence.
- b. Explain how information-processing theorists account for the development of abstract thought during adolescence.
- c. Discuss the consequences of abstract thought including changes in adolescent behaviors such as the tendency to argue and criticize.
- d. Define the terms “hypothetico-deductive reasoning” and “propositional thinking.”
- e. List the six mechanisms of cognitive change that take place during adolescence.
- f. Define the term “scientific reasoning.”
- g. Cite research that supports adolescents’ increased ability to use scientific reasoning.

- h. Define “metacognitive understanding.”
- i. Discuss family, peer, and school influences on academic achievement during adolescence.
- j. Identify factors related to dropping out of school and interventions to prevent adolescents from leaving school before graduation.
- k. Describe the process of making vocational choices and cite influences on adolescents’ career decisions.

Emotional/Social Development: The student will:

- a. Trace changes to self-concept and self-esteem during adolescence.
- b. Analyze the psychological conflict which forms the basis of Erikson’s Identity Versus Role Confusion stage of adolescence.
- c. Compare and contrast the four typical identity statuses during adolescence.
- d. Identify factors which support the development of positive self identity.
- e. Summarize Kohlberg’s theory of moral development and contrast his theory with the findings of other researchers including Gilligan.
- f. Define the term gender intensification and explain why it increases during adolescence.
- g. Discuss the characteristics and importance of friendships and peer relationships to the adolescent and compare and contrast friendships among girls with friendships among boys.
- h. Distinguish between cliques and crowds.
- i. Examine the role of peer pressure and conformity in shaping adolescent behavior.
- j. Examine the impact of family influences on emotional and social development during adolescence.
- k. Describe changes to the parent-child relationship during adolescence and cite characteristics of an effective parent-child relationship.
- l. Compare and contrast early and later adolescent dating norms.

- m. Define the term “depression” and cite the percentage of teens experiencing depression.
- n. Identify behavioral characteristics associated with depression and explain why it is difficult to diagnose in adolescents.
- k. Identify factors which promote emotional resiliency in adolescents.