

Stages of Social-Emotional Development In Children and Teenagers.

This page presents an overview of the developmental tasks involved in the social and emotional development of children and teenagers which continues into adulthood. The presentation is based on the Eight Stages of Development developed by psychiatrist, Erik Erikson in 1956.

According to Erikson, the socialization process consists of eight phases - the "eight stages of man." His eight stages of man were formulated, not through experimental work, but through wide - ranging experience in psychotherapy, including extensive experience with children and adolescents from low - as well as upper - and middle - social classes. Each stage is regarded by Erikson as a "psychosocial crisis," which arises and demands resolution before the next stage can be satisfactorily negotiated. These stages are conceived in an almost architectural sense: satisfactory learning and resolution of each crisis is necessary if the child is to manage the next and subsequent ones satisfactorily, just as the foundation of a house is essential to the first floor, which in turn must be structurally sound to support and the second story, and so on.

Erikson's Eight Stages of Development

1. Learning Basic Trust Versus Basic Mistrust (Hope)

Chronologically, this is the period of infancy through the first one or two years of life. The child, well - handled, nurtured, and loved, develops trust and security and a basic optimism. Badly handled, he becomes insecure and mistrustful.

2. Learning Autonomy Versus Shame (Will)

The second psychosocial crisis, Erikson believes, 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. For example, one sees many 2 year olds resolutely folding their arms to prevent their mothers from holding their hands as they cross the street. Also, the sound of "NO" rings through the house or the grocery store.

3. Learning Initiative Versus Guilt (Purpose)

Erikson believes that this third psychosocial crisis occurs during what he calls the "play age," or the later preschool years (from about 3½ to, in the United States culture, entry into formal school). 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)

Erikson believes that the fourth psychosocial crisis is handled, for better or worse, during what he calls the "school age," presumably up to and possibly including some of junior high school. Here 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, such as baseball 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 psychosocial crisis, is trusting, autonomous, and full of initiative will learn easily enough to be industrious. However, 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 psychosocial crisis (adolescence, from about 13 or 14 to about 20) the child, now an adolescent, 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 leadership (someone to inspire him), and gradually develops a set of ideals (socially congruent and desirable, in the case of the successful adolescent). Erikson believes that, 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 well - defined 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 - his children, his work, or his hobbies. If one or more

of the earlier psychosocial crises have not been resolved, he may view himself and his life with disgust and despair.

These eight stages of man, or the psychosocial crises, are plausible and insightful descriptions of how personality develops but at present they are descriptions only. We possess at best rudimentary and tentative knowledge of just what sort of environment will result, for example, in traits of trust versus distrust, or clear personal identity versus diffusion. Helping the child through the various stages and the positive learning that should accompany them is a complex and difficult task, as any worried parent or teacher knows. Search for the best ways of accomplishing this task accounts for much of the research in the field of child development.

Socialization, then is a learning - teaching process that, when successful, results in the human organism's moving from its infant state of helpless but total egocentricity to its ideal adult state of sensible conformity coupled with independent creativity.

Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

Physical and Language	Emotional	Social
<p>Birth to 1 month: Feedings: 5-8 per day Sleep: 20 hrs per day Sensory Capacities: makes basic distinctions in vision, hearing, smelling, tasting, touch, temperature, and perception of pain</p>	<p>Generalized Tension</p>	<p>Helpless Asocial Fed by mother</p>
<p>2 to 3 months Sensory Capacities: color perception, visual exploration, oral exploration. Sounds: cries, coos, grunts Motor Ability: control of eye muscles, lifts head when on stomach.</p>	<p>Delight Distress Smiles at a Face</p>	<p>Visually fixates at a face, smiles at a face, may be soothed by rocking.</p>
<p>4 to 6 months Sensory Capacities: localizes sounds Sounds: babbling, makes most vowels and about half of the consonants Feedings: 3-5 per day Motor Ability: control of head and arm movements, purposive grasping, rolls over.</p>	<p>Enjoys being cuddled</p>	<p>Recognizes his mother. Distinguishes between familiar persons and strangers, no longer smiles indiscriminately. Expects feeding, dressing, and bathing.</p>
<p>7 to 9 months Motor Ability: control of trunk and hands, sits without support, crawls about.</p>	<p>Specific emotional attachment to mother. Protests separation from mother.</p>	<p>Enjoys "peek-a-boo"</p>

<p>10 to 12 months</p> <p>Motor Ability: control of legs and feet, stands, creeps, apposition of thumb and fore-finger. Language: says one or two words, imitates sounds, responds to simple commands. Feedings: 3 meals, 2 snacks Sleep: 12 hours, 2 naps</p>	<p>Anger Affection Fear of strangers Curiosity, exploration</p>	<p>Responsive to own name. Wave bye-bye. Plays pat-a-cake, understands "no-no!" Gives and takes objects.</p>
<p>1 to 1 ½ years</p> <p>Motor Ability: creeps up stairs, walks (10-20 min), makes lines on paper with crayon.</p>	<p>Dependent Behavior Very upset when separated from mother Fear of Bath</p>	<p>Obeys limited commands. Repeats a few words. Interested in his mirror image. Feeds himself.</p>
<p>1 ½ to 2 years</p> <p>Motor Ability: runs, kicks a ball, builds 6 cube tower (2yrs) Capable of bowel and bladder control. Language: vocabulary of more than 200 words Sleep: 12 hours at night, 1-2 hr nap</p>	<p>Temper tantrums (1-3yrs) Resentment of new baby</p>	<p>Does opposite of what he is told (18 months).</p>
<p>2 to 3 years</p> <p>Motor Ability: jumps off a step, rides a tricycle, uses crayons, builds a 9-10 cube tower. Language: starts to use short sentences controls and explores world with language, stuttering may appear briefly.</p>	<p>Fear of separation Negativistic (2 ½ yrs) Violent emotions, anger Differentiates facial expressions of anger, sorrow, and joy. Sense of humor (Plays tricks)</p>	<p>Talks, uses "I" "me" "you" Copies parents' actions. Dependent, clinging, possessive about toys, enjoys playing alongside another child. Negativism (2 ½ yrs). Resists parental demands. Gives orders. Rigid insistence on sameness of routine. Inability to make decisions.</p>

Characteristic Behavior	
Sensory Motor Period (0 - 24 months)	
Reflexive Stage (0-2 months)	Simple reflex activity such as grasping, sucking.
Primary Circular Reactions (2-4 months)	Reflexive behaviors occur in stereotyped repetition such as opening and closing fingers repetitively.
Secondary Circular Reactions (4-8 months)	Repetition of change actions to reproduce interesting consequences such as kicking one's feet to move a mobile suspended over the crib.
Coordination of Secondary Reactions (8-12 months)	Responses become coordinated into more complex sequences. Actions take on an

	"intentional" character such as the infant reaches behind a screen to obtain a hidden object.
Tertiary Circular Reactions (12-18 months)	Discovery of new ways to produce the same consequence or obtain the same goal such as the infant may pull a pillow toward him in an attempt to get a toy resting on it.
Invention of New Means Through Mental Combination (18-24 months)	Evidence of an internal representational system. Symbolizing the problem-solving sequence before actually responding. Deferred imitation.

The Preoperational Period (2-7 years)

Preoperational Phase (2-4 years)	Increased use of verbal representation but speech is egocentric. The beginnings of symbolic rather than simple motor play. Transductive reasoning. Can think about something without the object being present by use of language.
Intuitive Phase (4-7 years)	Speech becomes more social, less egocentric. The child has an intuitive grasp of logical concepts in some areas. However, there is still a tendency to focus attention on one aspect of an object while ignoring others. Concepts formed are crude and irreversible. Easy to believe in magical increase, decrease, disappearance. Reality not firm. Perceptions dominate judgment. In moral-ethical realm, the child is not able to show principles underlying best behavior. Rules of a game not develop, only uses simple do's and don'ts imposed by authority.

Period of Concrete Operations (7-11 years)

[\[More on this stage\]](#)

Evidence for organized, logical thought. There is the ability to perform multiple classification tasks, order objects in a logical sequence, and comprehend the principle of conservation. Thinking becomes less transductive and less egocentric. The child is capable of concrete problem-solving.

Some reversibility now possible (quantities moved can be restored such as in arithmetic:

$3+4 = 7$ and $7-4 = 3$, etc.)

Class logic-finding bases to sort unlike objects into logical groups where previously it was on superficial perceived attribute such as color. Categorical labels such as "number" or animal" now available.

Period of Formal Operations (11-15 years)

Thought becomes more abstract, incorporating the principles of formal logic. The ability to generate abstract propositions, multiple hypotheses and their possible outcomes is evident. Thinking becomes less tied to concrete reality.

Formal logical systems can be acquired. Can handle proportions, algebraic manipulation, other purely abstract processes. If $a + b = x$ then $x = a + b$. If $ma/ca = IQ = 1.00$ then $Ma = CA$.

Propositional logic, as-if and if-then steps. Can use aids such as axioms to transcend human limits on comprehension.

SENSORIMOTOR STAGE

The sensorimotor stage is the first of the four stages Piaget uses to define cognitive development. Piaget designated the first two years of an infants life as the sensorimotor stage.

During this period, infants are busy discovering relationships between their bodies and the environment. Researchers have discovered that infants have relatively well developed sensory abilities. The child relies on seeing, touching, sucking, feeling, and using their senses to learn things about themselves and the environment. Piaget calls this the sensorimotor stage because the early manifestations of intelligence appear from sensory perceptions and motor activities.

Through countless informal experiments, infants develop the concept of separate selves, that is, the infant realizes that the external world is not an extension of themselves.

Infants realize that an object can be moved by a hand (concept of causality), and develop notions of displacement and events. An important discovery during the latter part of the sensorimotor stage is the concept of "object permanence".

Object permanence is the awareness that an object continues to exist even when it is not in view. In young infants, when a toy is covered by a piece of paper, the infant immediately stops and appears to lose interest in the toy(see figure above). This child has not yet mastered the concept of object permanence. In older infants, when a toy is covered the child will actively search for the object, realizing that the object continues to exist.

After a child has mastered the concept of object permanence, the emergence of "**directed groping**" begins to take place. With directed groping, the child begins to perform motor experiments in order to see what will happen. During directed groping, a child will vary his movements to observe how the results will differ. The child learns to use new means to achieve an end. The child discovers he can pull objects toward himself with the aid of a stick or string, or tilt objects to get them through the bars of his playpen.

THE PREOPERATIONAL STAGE

The preoperational stage occurs from 2 to 6 years of age, and is the second stage in Piaget's stages of cognitive development.

Throughout most of the preoperational stage, a child's thinking is self-centered, or **egocentric**. According to Piaget, during the preoperational stage a child has difficulty understanding life from any other perspective than his own. In this stage, the child is very me, myself, and I oriented.

Egocentrism is very apparent in the relationship between two preschool children. Imagine two children are playing right next to each other, one playing with a coloring book and the other with a doll. They are talking to each other in sequence, but each child is completely oblivious to what the other is saying.

Julie: "I love my dolly, her name is Tina"

Carol: "I'm going to color the sun yellow"

Julie: "She has long, curly hair like my auntie"

Carol: "Maybe I'll color the trees yellow, too"

Julie: "I wonder what Tina's eyes are made of?"

Carol: "I lost my orange crayon"

Julie: "I know her eyes are made of glass."

These type of exchanges are called "collective monologues". This type of monologue demonstrates the egocentrism of children's thinking in this stage.

Egocentrism of the young child leads them to believe that everyone thinks as they do, and that the whole world shares their feelings and desires. This sense of oneness with the world leads to the child's assumptions of magic omnipotence. Not only is the world created for them, they can control it. This leads to the child believing that nature is alive, and controllable. This is a concept of egocentrism known as "**animism**", the most characteristic of egocentric thought.

Closely related to animism is **artificialism**, or the idea that natural phenomena are created by human beings. Such as, the sun is created by a man with a match. "Realism" is the child's notion that their own perspective is objective and absolute. The child thinks from one perspective and regards this reality as absolute. Names, for example, are real to the child. The child can't realize that names are only verbal labels, or conceive the idea that they could have been given a different name.

In the pre-operational stage, the child begins to develop the use of symbols (but can not manipulate them), and the child is able to use language and words to represent things not visible. Also, the pre-operational child begins to master conservation problems.. Although the child is still unable to think in a truly logical fashion, the child may begin to treat objects as part of a group. The pre-operational child may have difficulty with **classification**.

In the latter part of the preoperational stage, the child begins to have an understanding between reality and fantasy. The child also begins to understand sex roles in society.

2's In The Classroom

Watching a two-year old can be fun and exhausting. Children in this age group are filled with energy and curiosity about the world and a new sense of increasing independence. Two's are highly active and interested in objects and people. They're undergoing rapid development in many areas, and eager for attention to help them learn and understand basic things about how the world works.

Two's curriculum is designed to support and reinforce the independence a two-year-old exhibits. Our program provides the structure and guidance he needs throughout his day as he learns to share, get along with others and perform tasks that require a longer attention span. Listening to stories, singing songs, playing games and doing art projects help develop language and vocabulary skills, as well as movement and sensory motor skills. The Two's Program should focus on developing these skills and readying a child for his 3's classroom.

Our Two's Classroom

A child's environment has a large influence on her growth and development and her attitude towards learning.

A two's classroom is specially planned to create a sense of safety and security, while at the same time offering a stimulating learning environment that she just can't wait to jump into. Everything about it is designed to help a two-year-old become a self-confident, capable learner, and improve the amount and quality of interactions between the children in the class, the teachers, and the materials.



Center Time

The two's classroom should be arranged into various Interest Centers including:

- Book and Storytelling Center - flannel board, large selection of age-appropriate books, puppets and cozy setting with large pillows and carpets

- Creative Arts Center - art and collage materials, play dough for tactile play art materials, large art easel, crayons, variety of paper, washable paint and brushes
- Water and Sand Center - sensory table, magnifying glass, magic bottles, wooden spoons, large paint brushes, straws and plastic figures with transportation toys
- Games and Puzzles Center - manipulatives, developmentally appropriate toys, peg puzzles, magnetic board with characters, letters, shapes and numbers
- Dramatic Play Center - kitchen set complete with utensils and lightweight pots & pans, play radio, dolls and dress up clothes representing men and women
- Block Center - large lightweight and heavy blocks, large vehicles with props such as animals and people



At Children's Eye Level

The classroom is arranged with low shelves containing picture-labeled containers. A child can easily help herself to the materials, and help put them back as well.

Décor and examples of environmental print are placed at eye level for the children to see easily. And teachers display the children's artwork throughout the room as a reminder of what they've communicated through their art

and to give them a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Remember our 2's are here for us to love and teach. When we begin chasing after them and dictating all activities we take out the necessary components for 2's to learn and grow naturally. Children of this age work, play, grow and develop best when we facilitate their learning vs. directing their learning. A carefully planned and prepared environment will make the children more independent and engaged while making your day much easier.