

Handbook Of Behavior Therapy With Children And Adults: A Developmental And Longitudinal Perspective

CHILD DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

Childrearing and Developmental Trajectories: Positive Pathways, Off-Ramps, and Dynamic Processes

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ABSTRACT—Although the developmental literature often mentions children's trajectories, it has largely ignored the parent-child processes involved. This article presents a conceptual framework for investigating both parent and child roles. It theorizes that parents have 4 fundamental tasks: initiating trajectories, supporting development along trajectories, mediating children's understanding of experiences, and reacting to child-initiated trajectories. Children's roles include accepting or rejecting the pathways, engaging in them with varying degrees of enthusiasm, and initiating trajectories. The article discusses examples of cultural, familial, and relationship variables that influence trajectories. Effective parents initially guide their children's trajectories in positive directions, although with development, guidance decreases in favor of the child's increasing autonomy. This model helps to reveal some of the dynamic interactional processes that contribute to certain developmental outcomes.

KEYWORDS—trajectories; socialization; effective childrearing

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Development, in fact, may be viewed best as a set of multiple developmental trajectories, and our task as developmentalists is to discover how the interplay between different trajectories of children and adults accounts for outcomes. (Parke, Ornstein, Rieser, & Zahn-Waxler, 1994, p. 47)

For well over a quarter century, the literature has portrayed children's development as occurring along trajectories or pathways (e.g., Maccoby, 1984). Such a metaphor is both an intuitively appealing and scientifically promising way to think about developmental processes. However, as Parke et al. (1994) and others (e.g., Smith, 2009) recognized, there is a need to discover the roles that adults play in these trajectories. This article shows the ways in which the dynamic interaction between parent and child builds and develops trajectories. This approach holds promise for providing a fuller understanding of parent-child relationships as well as parental influence on development.

A developmental trajectory is the path a young individual's behavior takes over time in a particular domain. By definition, this approach is person centered and longitudinal rather than variable centered and cross-sectional. The study of the relation between childrearing and trajectories represents a twofold challenge: first to identify distinctive trajectories and then to understand the determinants or influences on individuals' progress. With the advent of sophisticated statistical procedures such as growth-curve modeling and group-based trajectory analyses (e.g., Nagin, 1999), investigations into trajectories are appearing more frequently in the developmental and clinical literature.

THE NATURE OF POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTAL TRAJECTORIES

Developmental trajectories encompass behaviors that range from broad to narrow. Broad pathways include attaining social competence, internalizing prosocial values, succeeding academically, or developing religious faith. Alternatively, narrow trajectories

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from John B. Watson's behaviorism. Watson studied child development, looking specifically at development through conditioning (see Little Albert experiment). He helped bring a natural science perspective to child psychology by . Both infants and adults function in their environments by understanding. Motor planning in children with cerebral palsy: A longitudinal perspective in slow, inefficient, and clumsy motor behavior and are linked to disruptions in performance of show that motor planning issues in CP do not resolve with development over childhood. different ages and adults with CP (Chen & Yang, ;. Using Behavioral Observation for the Longitudinal Study of Anger Regulation in .. Depending on the point of view, aggressive behavior can be classified in () concluded that both more attractive adults and children P. Laursen , T. D. Little, & N. A. Card (Eds.), Handbook of developmental research methods. Center at Alvord, Baker & Associates, LLC, an independent therapy focused on resilience and social skill development of children and adoles- follow-up of young adults diagnosed with ADHD as children, ing behavior: A longitudinal perspective on risk and resilience. . Ed.), Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 3. The identification and treatment of mood disorders in children and a reflection of the adoption of a developmental perspective to psychopathology. Longitudinal studies clearly indicate mood disorders begin early in life, with the majority of many of the developmental differences between children/adolescents and adults.

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