Socialization and Human Development

The influence of family, school, media, culture
Socialization

• Socialization is the process of learning the skills required to survive in your culture.

• Socialization is dependant on heredity and environment (nature and nurture)

• Socialization....
  – Is learned through interaction with others
  – Begins early in life within the family
  – Strongly influences who you become
  – Is strongest in youth but does continue through life
Agents of Socialization

• **Family** translates the social norms of the culture by teaching children language, communication, self care, gender roles, self image.

• **School** exposes students to adult society, and teaches academic skills. Schools lately have become increasingly responsible to teach life skills and influence identity development.

• **Peers** are most important in adolescence, providing a reference group for social conflict, decision making, ability, gender roles, dealing with adults.
Agents of Socialization

• **Media** sends a variety of social messages and cues to the viewer. The individual is passive in this process.

• **Work** cultures expect specific types of behavior from individuals that reinforce the organizations norms.

• **Religion** offers a moral code which generally reinforces the norms of society. Religious morality often acts as a social control on an individuals behaviour.
Primary and Secondary Agents of Socialization

• Primary Agent: how an individual learns basic norms and values of society during childhood. Is critical in the formation of self-image. (family; daycare; school)

• Secondary Agent: how an individual learns further social behaviors and norms. Can change an individuals established self-image. (peers; school; workplace; media; religion)
## Primary vs. Secondary Agents of Socialization

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<tr>
<td>• Parent or Guardian</td>
<td>• Authority Figures</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Extended family</strong></td>
<td>• Peers</td>
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<td>• Siblings</td>
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<td>• <strong>Church</strong></td>
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Socialization

The influence of family on development
Infancy Affects later Life

• Research indicates that healthy development throughout life is related to prenatal and infant environment and experiences.

• Our success in school and work; our intelligence; our ability to form and maintain relationships; our stress management ability are all related to our infant experience.
Research links to infant development

- Fetal and infant health relates to long term health
- Nutrient intake for infants affects blood pressure and cholesterol levels later
- Quality of infant care affects adult stress response (cortisol production)
- Early sense stimulation influences later ability to think and regulate body functions
- Breast fed infants may score higher intellectually and achieve better health later
- Rich language environment in infancy contributes to intelligence, language acquisition and early literacy
- Infant trust translates to self confidence
- Lack of infant attachment is a factor in some criminal behaviour
Attachment Theory

• Attachment is a close and affectionate bond between the infant and caregiver (culturally the mother)
• Attachment is necessary for normal health, human growth and development.
• Harlow:
  research with monkeys showed failure to thrive without some form of touch or physical contact
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KlfOecrr6kI

• Bowlby:
  identified a feedback circuit between child and adult – the child demonstrates attachment behavior and is rewarded with a response from the caregiver which reinforces the child behavior (regression is normal after a separation)
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ljZ4a8Uc8Q&feature=related

• Ainsworth:
  determined children require a “secure base” from which to explore the world and engage in a call and response with their caregiver to identify this base (a sense of trust is established which is the foundation for lifelong social emotional development)
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTsewNrHUHU
Failure to thrive

• Failure to thrive is caused by lack of contact or negative contact with a caregiver – attachment is not achieved
  – Little or no physical or verbal contact with infant
  – Inconsistent response from the adult
  – Untimely responses from the adult
  – Negative or abusive response from the adult

• Because of this failure to bond, the infant’s development will suffer in all aspects.
Isolation

Physical
• Animal like development: resilience to heat and cold; variety of survival wounds
• Lacking normal physical ability – walking, fine motor control

Cognitive
• Lack normal speech (moderate improvement with training)
• Limited mental capacity

Social
• No understanding of social norms (behavior)

Emotional
• Lack of emotional response (limited emotional range)

Moral
• No understanding of social morality (ex. Theft)
Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD)

- is characterized by *markedly* disturbed and developmentally inappropriate ways of relating socially.
- RAD arises from a *failure to form normal attachments to primary caregivers in early childhood.*
- This results from severe early experiences of neglect, abuse, abrupt *separation* from caregivers between the ages of six months and three years.
- It also results from a frequent change of caregivers, or a lack of *caregiver responsiveness* to a child’s communicative efforts.
Environmentalist Theory

• Humans must be placed in an environment conducive for development. Without this environment there is a marked impact on physical, cognitive, emotional, social and moral development. An enriched environment later in life will not undo developmental damage.
Family and Socialization

- **Attachment**: bonding behaviors between child and caregiver, intended to keep the adult in close proximity to the child
- **Enculturation**: the process of teaching an individual the accepted norms and values of her/his society
- **Family dynamics**: the ways individual family members interact with one another
- **Family of orientation**: the family a child is born into
- **Family of procreation**: the family the parents create through procreation and enculturation
- **Primary group**: family and other intimate relations
- **Role reversal**: the switching of normal family roles by its members (eg: a child providing care for a sick parent)
Healthy Family Dynamics

- Parents are aware of normal childhood needs and behaviors
- Each parent has a strong bond with each child resulting in frequent positive interactions
- Parents are consistent with their rules and confident in asserting their authority
- Parents use positive discipline (reasoning, positive reinforcement, clear expectations, logical consequences)
Strong Families

• Supportive relationships among members
• Family identity
• Stress management and conflict resolution skills
• Encouragement of goal achievement
• Communication
• Clear roles and responsibilities
• Shared division of labour
• Respect for difference
• Firm fair rules
• Traditions, routines and rituals
Thomas Principle

• A situation that is believed to be real is real in it’s consequences; perception of a situation shapes the experience of the situation.

In families:

Children raised in strong families have academic and social success, self esteem and confidence. This positive experience is generalized to the larger society.
Socialization

The influence of schools
School and Socialization

• Public schools were established in response to child labour laws – to house children while their parents worked.
• Students were expected to follow strict codes of behavior and to acquire academic standing
Vygotski

Five Step Process:
- **Step 1** - Adult provides tools, modeling, guidance, interaction and encouragement.
- **Step 2** - Child performs task under adult guidance and adult asks appropriate questions and expands on the child’s responses.
- **Step 3** - Adult helps child develop tasks into smaller segments and assesses child’s understanding.
- **Step 4** - Adult provides the “scaffolding” (support) necessary in a learning situation.
- **Step 5** - Adult guides child into new situations by having child transfer familiar knowledge to the unfamiliar.

Learning
- **First** – All learning occurs on two levels. Learning occurs first through interaction with others and is then integrated internally becoming part of the individuals mental structure.
- **Second** – Learning is limited by cognitive preparedness and requires guidance and social interaction to fully develop. Learning requires a “teacher” to support it.
Changing roles for schools

• Today schools also play a role in the social emotional and physical well being of student. Schools also teach social skills, and social morality along with academia.
  • Schools often take on the role of feeding students through breakfast programs (parent responsibility)
  • Schools have changed their culture to minimize violence and promote acceptance and inclusion among all members
  • Schools have begun to teach basic manners to students in order to create appropriate learning environments (parents responsibility – negative media influence)
1. Gain knowledge about a variety of practices, issues, social skills

2. Understand academic disciplines through curriculum

3. Interact with teachers and authority figures

4. Interact with peers

5. Accomplish tasks and compare our accomplishments against those of others.

6. Determine in which direction we want our lives to go
Identity creation

The importance of peer groups

- Negotiate social behavior
- Choice of peer group

Allows for self determination: challenges adolescents to develop a consistent identity by interpreting feedback from a range of peer role models.
Role of the Family

• first environment of socialization and the primary role models
• acquire identity in terms of ethnicity, religion, etc.
• determines life path i.e. sports, music etc.
• teach values & attitudes required for success
• learn value of work by helping out at home
• children of authoritative parents learn self-reliance and responsibility and parents set high standards and expect adolescents to accept responsibility for actions

Role of School

• first step in separation from family socialization through curriculum in terms of knowledge and skills
• socializing through peers by interpreting feedback from them
• explore competence through subjects of study and formal assessment and acquire realistic perception of what they are capable of achieving
• socialization for occupational tasks, provides value in working skills along with communication and teamwork skills
Socialization

The influence of cultural norms on the socialization practice
What is Culture, Anyway?

• Culture can mean many different things, depending upon context (being well-cultured, high vs. low culture, a culture of bacteria, etc)

• For anthropologists and other behavioral scientists, culture is the full range of **learned human behavior patterns**

• "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."  Edward B. Tylor, 1871
Socially acceptable behavior

- Social norms, manners, courtesy, respect as determined by a specific culture

- Private and public norms differ as does what is socially acceptable in each culture

- Inappropriate behavior will ilicit a negative response or an uncomfortable feeling

- Adults model behavior, state their expectations for the child's behaviour and give positive feedback. This encouragement will eventually reinforce the socially acceptable behavior long term
Socializing Children Through Culture

• Role Model: family members and others model appropriate behavior and interpersonal relationships to the child

• Stories: books illustrate social interaction and help children learn appropriate responses to different situations (very culturally specific!)

• Play: gives children a safe place to practice different social roles, both acceptable roles and unacceptable roles
Cultural aspects of Socialization

• Social norms change over time
• Social norms change between cultures
• Social norms are different in each family and community
• Social norms can be challenged, this leads to change, but not thwarted, that threatens the social fabric.
• The goal of socialization is not only a well behaved child but a well functioning citizen.
Culture and Socialization

• **Enculturation**: the process of teaching an individual the accepted norms and values of her/his society

• Enculturation influences our self-concept and world view, including family, school, peers, church, and the media. This force can help shape our opinions and attitudes towards ourselves and others.

• Cultural Relativism?
Gender Roles

• the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex
• how women and men are expected to behave, think, act according to your culture
Taliban treatment of women: effect on human growth and development

- **Physical**: limited medical treatment; physical punishment; early marriage; body must be covered completely
- **Emotional**: flogging; no voice; property
- **Moral**: suppression of women is the moral code
- **Cognitive**: not educated
- **Social**: must be accompanied by a man; not permitted to work; cannot speak publically; must not be seen by any unrelated man
Socialization

The influence of media on development
Media Issues

• Media targets children and creates a consumptive culture
  – Much advertising is targeted to children and teens selling “lifestyle” through product

• Media affects social inclusion
  – Children as early as nursery school choose friends based on product (clothing and toys)

• Media represents our society in unrealistic ways
  – Children are sexualized
  – Violence is rampant
  – Family and social reality is skewed

• Stereotyping is still evident in Canadian media

• Responsible behavior is generally ignored
Censorship of Media

• Tobacco and liquor advertised in print ads only
• Sexual violence toward children may not be shown (child pornography) only implied – the rape of adults is fine, as is violence toward both children and adults
• No hate propaganda permitted – stereotyping is fine

Parents must work with their children to establish appropriate boundaries.