

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-01090-0 - Child, Adolescent and Family Development, Second Edition

Phillip T. Slee

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Child, Adolescent and Family Development

Second Edition

PHILLIP T. SLEE

Flinders University



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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo

Cambridge University Press
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521010900

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First published in 1993 by Harcourt Brace and Company, Australia
This second edition first published by Cambridge University Press in 2002
Reprinted 2007

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

National Library of Australia Cataloguing in Publication data
Slee, Phillip T.
Child, adolescent and family development.
Bibliography.
Includes index.
1. Family. 2. Child development. 3. Adolescence. I.
Title
155.4

ISBN 978-0-521-81200-9 Hardback
ISBN 978-0-521-01090-0 Paperback

Additional resources for this publication at www.cambridge.org/9780521010900

Transferred to digital printing 2009

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To the student

I was heartened by your responses and feedback to the first edition. As a teacher I was encouraged to proceed with the second edition with the singularly important aim of providing an even more readable, accessible and practical text. But if that was all I achieved I would have failed you miserably!

I am hopeful that in the pages of this second edition the ‘voices’ of children, adolescents and family members will be strongly heard. It is my fervent belief that children and adolescents are marginalised, ignored and largely disenfranchised in many western countries today. While we continue to view children as the ‘property’ of adults, we continue to oppress and deny them basic rights. Child psychology and the methods of child study have much to be accountable for in maintaining the status quo, viewing children as ‘subjects’ to be studied. The hierarchical and patriarchal assumptions inherent in the mainstream methods of child study deserve to be thoroughly challenged. While we continue to view childhood as a ‘journey’ towards some completion or resolution found in adulthood instead of appreciating childhood for its more immediate vibrancy and freshness we too are contributing to the oppression of children.

The challenge is yours to help redress much of the injustice and inequality adults daily heap upon children and adolescents. I am confident that you will rise to the challenge.

To work with you towards this end you I have provided a number of new features in this second edition.

- 1 details regarding the latest developments in theoretical thinking
- 2 a photo journal entry follows the development of selected children over a span of their life-time providing a ‘real-life’ example of child and adolescent development. For example, the photo journal entry for ‘Christopher’ follows his development from birth to his current age of 4 years with pictures, highlighting significant features of his story.
- 3 significant additional material regarding language development
- 4 a CD-ROM for your use. This extensive resource provides additional new information regarding the conduct of research, practical child and adolescent observation activities and self review tests.
- 5 the addition of websites information provides a significant resource for you to follow-up points of interest or to pursue information for projects and essays. In particular the website <http://wwwed.sturt.flinders.edu.au/DLT/default.htm> which lists university student’s investigations into various features of child development is a new and innovative feature of the text.
- 6 video resources provide significant teaching and learning material for teachers and students to access. For example, a video/discussion package is available from the author on the topic of children, families and stress. A written resource called ‘The P.E.A.C.E. Pack: A Program for reducing bullying in schools’ is also available from the author.

To the instructor


A CD-ROM is provided presenting:

- an introduction to the study of children
- details of methods for conducting research
- ethical guidelines for the conduct of research utilising a range of methods and linked to research/theory in the text
- Review tests and answers covering each chapter.

Reference to websites

The text provides a link to comprehensive websites addressing key issues associated with child, adolescent and family issues. The websites provide further links to facilitate research and report writing. In particular the websites <<http://www.ed.sturt.flinders.edu.au/HLT/default.htm>> and <<http://www.caper.com.au>> provide details of several years of university students’ research projects into child and adolescent development (reproduced with permission).

How to use the CD-ROM

The following icon:  appears in the margin throughout the book in places where the CD-ROM can be used in conjunction with that particular part of the book or as a specific activity.

The CD-ROM is located in the inside back cover of this book, and contains operating instructions.

The CD-ROM contains:

- an introduction to the study of children
- details of methods for conducting research
- ethical guidelines for the conduct of research
- practical research projects utilising a range of methods and linked to research/theory in the text
- review tests and answers covering each chapter.

CD-ROM contents

This publication no longer contains an attached CD-ROM. The full contents of the CD-ROM are available for download from www.cambridge.org/9780521010900.

Acknowledgements

Once again my special thanks go to all who contributed to the book. Photographs, many from family albums, were kindly provided by Elizabeth Downes, Pat McQuin, and Paul Wallace. Thanks to those who gave permission to reproduce copyright material in the book and, of course, I would be happy to hear from those whom I have been unable to contact.

Peter Debus, commissioning editor at Cambridge University Press, deserves special thanks for his expert help and guidance in editing and shaping the text. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank Margaret Trudgeon, my copyeditor, and Paul Watt of Cambridge University Press for their support and encouragement in the development of the book.

*This book is lovingly dedicated to Elizabeth and our three boys,
Matthew, Nicholas and Christopher.
The book would not have been written without Elizabeth's unstinting support.
The boys have gently helped remind me what really matters in life
when my attention has strayed.*

Introduction

As for the first edition, the second edition of *Child, Adolescent and Family Development* is written for all those who entertain an interest in children’s and adolescents’ lives, and for all those who appreciate the curiosity, strength and resilience of growing children. It is a book about the richness and diversity of children’s and adolescents’ lives, considered in the context of the family. In turn, the family and its individual members are viewed in the broader historical context of society and culture. This book is also about change. All that it discusses is considered to be in a process of flux and change.

In planning and writing the second edition I have taken note of the feedback I received from tertiary teachers and their students regarding the content of the book. A number of features in the first edition were consistently endorsed by readers including the ‘broad sweep’ of the book as it placed human development in an historical, philosophical and cultural context. Readers also commented favourably upon the Australasian flavour which considered child development in an international context. Finally, appreciation was expressed for the ‘readability’ of the text.

In preparing the second edition a number of anonymous reviewers responded to the proposed content and I am particularly grateful for their opinions. Where possible, I have taken into account their suggestions in this second edition but obviously the final responsibility for the content is mine.

The Foundation for the Text

The foundation for this text draws upon a number of inter-related elements.

- the book is embedded in theory and again for this I make no apology. In the book’s inception, its theoretical base reflects my prevailing belief that all our dealings with children in whatever role, whether as parent or teacher or in some other capacity, are bounded by theory, either implicit or explicit.
- human development is seen through the lens of philosophy, history and culture. The writings of this text strongly reflect the manner in which the philosophy of science shapes and influences our thinking about children and their development and particularly the nature of research conducted to better understand development. My intent in placing the study of child development in an historical context reflects my own love of history and my pursuit of its study in my undergraduate years at university. It is consistent with my belief that history provides a framework for helping interpret and understand behaviour. My travel and research in other cultures has strongly impressed upon me how deeply our development is steeped in culture and how significantly different and tantalising similar cultures are from one another.
- The text reflects my abiding commitment to a broad-based systemic view of development. In this regard I owe a depth of gratitude for several sabbaticals in Calgary, Canada, where in studying and practising family therapy I had the fortunate opportunity to explore the basic ideas and practice of systems theory.
- Finally, this text reflects my enduring commitment to translating research into knowledge with a strong practical application.

The Text Presentation

The text is presented in chronological order of the life span so as to provide the reader with a clear understanding of the complexity of the individual’s developing capacities. The drawback of this approach is that it may compartmentalise child development, but this is not an intended outcome of the book. Indeed, it has been my concern to show the interrelatedness of the child’s development wherever possible. An alternative more topical approach is described here.

The book is divided into eight parts, comprising a total of 21 chapters. Parts 1 and 2 deal with the study of human development, while parts 3–7 examine the development of the child from infancy to adolescence. Part 8 considers a life-span perspective.

In part 1, the first three chapters reflect a concern with the theoretical issues underpinning the study of child and adolescent development. Chapter 3 is an overview of theoretical contributions to developmental psychology and can be used either as a ‘stand alone’ chapter or as a reference for other chapters. Chapters 4 and 5 (part 2) deal with the beginnings of life, taking us through to the newborn period. Part 3 (chapters 6–8) is devoted to infancy, highlighting different components of the infant’s development. Part 4 (chapters 9–11) examines the toddler’s place in the world, emphasising the active and constructive nature of toddlers’ learning and development. In chapters 12–14 (part 5) the pre-schooler’s enlarging world, which draws on wider social contact, is discussed. Middle childhood is addressed in chapters 15–17 (part 6), focusing on the child’s place in school and society, and on broader issues facing the family, such as the birth of a second child. In part 7 (chapters 18–20) the rich, complex and diverse world of adolescence is explored, together with the adolescent’s moves towards independence from the family. In part 8, chapter 21 draws together the themes discussed throughout the text and places child and adolescent development in a life-cycle perspective.

The Family Life-cycle is a series of 21 items, one at the end of each chapter, dealing with different aspects of the family. These may be studied in the context of each chapter, or as a separate topic. Throughout the book, boxed features are devoted to items of special interest related to topics discussed in the main text. These special interest boxes are grouped under headings of (i) parents; (ii) culture; (iii) health; (iv) teachers; (v) research; (vi) case-studies; and (vii) policy. As an aid to study, each chapter concludes with discussion questions and activities. A separate CD-ROM provides (a) details of research methodology (b) 10 practical child observation activities (c) expanded review tests and answers.

For those who wish to teach a topical course on child development, the following chapter sequence will work well:

THE STUDY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

- Chapter 1: Seeing Children in Context
- Chapter 2: Concepts of Development
- Chapter 3: Theoretical Foundations of Child Development
- Family Life-cycles 1–3

THE BEGINNING OF LIFE

- Chapter 4: Prenatal Development
- Chapter 5: From Conception to Birth
- Family Life-cycles 4–5

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PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Chapter 6: Physical Development in Infancy
- Chapter 9: Physical Development of Toddlers
- Chapter 12: Physical Development of Pre-schoolers
- Chapter 15: Physical Development in Middle Childhood
- Chapter 18: Adolescent Physical Development and Health Issues
- Family Life-cycles 6–10

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Chapter 7: Cognitive Development in Infancy
- Chapter 10: Cognitive Development in Toddlers
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Thank you and best wishes for a peaceful journey in appreciating and understanding the nature and richness of others’ lives.