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Twelfth Edition

Child Development

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The Self and Identity Chapter 11 Outline

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Self-Understanding
Understanding Others

Self-Esteem and Self-Concept
What are Self-Esteem and Self-Concept?
Assessment
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The Self and Identity Chapter 11 Outline (continued)

Identity
What is Identity?
Erickson's View
Developmental Changes
Social Contexts

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Chapter 11 Preview

Maxine Hong Kingston's life and writings reflect important aspects of each of our lives as we grew up:

- our efforts to understand ourselves
- our efforts to develop an identity that reflects our cultural heritage

This chapter is about the self and identity.

As we examine these topics, reflect on how much you understood yourself at different points in your life as you were growing up and think about how you acquired the stamp of your identity.

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Self-Understanding

- Recent research studies have revealed that young children are more psychologically aware—of themselves and others—than used to be thought (Harris, 2006; Laible & Thompson, 2007).

Self-Understanding:

- a child's cognitive representation of the self
- the substance and content of the child's self-conceptions

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Developmental Changes

Infancy

- Children are not just given a self by their parents or culture.
- They find and construct selves.
- As children develop, their self-understanding changes.
- A rudimentary form of *self-recognition*—being attentive and positive toward one's image in a mirror—appears as early as 3 months of age (Mascolo & Fischer, 2007; Pipp, Fischer, & Jennings, 1987).
- A central, more complete index of self-recognition—the ability to recognize one's physical features—does not emerge until the 2nd year (Thompson, 2006).

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Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Developmental Changes (continued)

Infancy (continued)

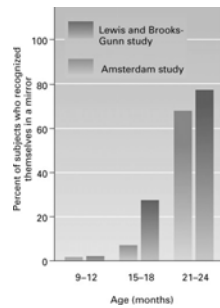
• **Mirror technique:**

- An infant's mother first puts a dot of rouge on the infant's nose.
- Then an observer watches to see how often the infant touches its nose.
- Next, the infant is placed in front of a mirror, and observers detect whether nose touching increases.
- Increased touching indicates that the infant realizes that it is the self in the mirror but that something is not right since the real self does not have a dot of rouge on it.

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Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

The Development of Self-Recognition in Infancy



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Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Developmental Changes (continued)

Infancy (continued)

- Late in the 2nd year and early in the 3rd year, toddlers show other emerging forms of self-awareness that reflect a "sense of me" (Laible & Thompson, 2007).

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Developmental Changes (continued)

Early Childhood

- Research on self-understanding in childhood is not limited to visual self-recognition, as it is during infancy.
- Mainly through interviews, researchers have probed many aspects of children's self-understanding.
- Preschool children often think of themselves and define themselves in concrete terms.
- Young children also distinguish themselves from others through many physical and material attributes.

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Developmental Changes (continued)

Early Childhood (continued)

- The *active dimension* is a central component of the self in early childhood (Keller, Ford, & Meacham, 1978).
- At about 4-5 years of age, as children hear others use psychological trait and emotion terms, they begin to include these in their own self-descriptions (Marsh, Ellis, & Craven, 2002; Thompson, 2006).
- Young children's self-descriptions are typically unrealistically positive.
- They don't yet distinguish between their desired competence and their actual competence.

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Developmental Changes (continued)

Middle and Late Childhood

- self-evaluation becomes more complex
- 5 key changes characterize the increased complexity:
 - **Internal characteristics**
 - shift toward defining themselves in terms of internal characteristics
 - **Social descriptions**
 - begin to include *social aspects* such as references to social groups in their self-descriptions

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Developmental Changes (continued)

Middle and Late Childhood (continued)

- **Social comparison**
 - self-understanding includes increasing reference to social comparison
- **Real self and ideal self**
 - begin to distinguish between their real and ideal selves
- **Realistic**
 - self-evaluations become more realistic

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Developmental Changes (continued)

Adolescence

- The development of self-understanding in adolescence is complex and involves a number of aspects of the self (Harter, 2006; Nurmi, 2004).
- Although adolescents increasingly compare themselves with others, they deny doing so.
- Youth who effectively navigate their various worlds can develop bicultural or multicultural selves and become “culture brokers” for others.

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Developmental Changes (continued)

Adolescence (continued)

- Other ways in which the adolescent’s self-understanding differs from the child’s:
 - abstract and idealistic
 - self-consciousness
 - contradictions within the self
 - the fluctuating self
 - real and ideal selves

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Diversity in Children’s Development

Multiple Selves and Sociocultural Contexts

- Differentiation of the self increases across the childhood and adolescent periods of development (Harter, 2006).
- Adolescents’ portraits of themselves can change depending on whether they describe themselves when they are with their mother, father, close friend, romantic partner, or peer.
- The multiple selves of ethnically diverse youth reflect their experiences in navigating their multiple worlds of family, peers, school, and community (Cooper & others, 1995).

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Diversity in Children’s Development (continued)

Self-Integration

- In late adolescence and emerging adulthood, self-understanding becomes more *integrative*.
- The disparate parts of the self more systematically pieced together (Harter, 2006).
- Older adolescents are more likely to detect inconsistencies in their earlier self-descriptions as they attempt to construct a general theory of self, an integrated sense of identity.

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Understanding Others

Young children are more sophisticated at understanding not only themselves, but others, than used to be thought.

Social cognition:

- processes involved in understanding the world around us, especially how we think and reason about other people

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Understanding Others (continued)

Early Childhood

- At 4-5 years old, children begin to perceive others in terms of psychological traits.
- Researchers have found that 4 year-olds understand that people may make statements that aren't true to obtain what they want or to avoid trouble (Lee & others, 2002).
- Even though children do sometimes believe things that are false, it may be adaptive to believe most things that people say, given that it is impossible to learn everything about the world through first hand experience (Harris & Koenig, 2006).

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Understanding Others (continued)

Early Childhood (continued)

- Individual differences characterize young children's social understanding (Laible & Thompson, 2007; Thompson, 2006).
- These individual differences are linked to conversations caregivers have with young children about other people's feelings and desires, and children's opportunities to observe others talking about people's feelings and desires.

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Understanding Others (continued)

Middle and Late Childhood (continued)

- Children show an increase in **perspective taking**:
 - ability to assume other people's perspectives and understand their thoughts and feelings.
- At about 6- to 8-years of age, children begin to understand that others may have a perspective because some people have more access to information.
- Perspective taking is especially thought to be important in whether children develop prosocial or antisocial attitudes and behavior.

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Understanding Others (continued)

Middle and Late Childhood (continued)

- In terms of prosocial behavior, taking another's perspective improves children's likelihood of understanding and sympathizing with others when they are distressed or in need (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006).
- In terms of antisocial behavior, some researchers have found that children who have a low level of perspective taking skills engage in more antisocial behavior than children at higher levels (Chandler, 1973).

Self-Understanding and Understanding Others (cont.)

Understanding Others (continued)

Middle and Late Childhood (continued)

- Children become more skeptical of others' claims.
- Elementary-school aged children also begin to understand other motivations.
- Children become increasingly skeptical of some sources of information about psychological traits.

Self-Esteem and Self-Concept

What Are Self-Esteem and Self-Concept?

Self-esteem:

- person's self-worth or self-image
- person's global evaluation of the self

Self- concept:

- domain-specific evaluations of the self

Self-Esteem and Self-Concept (cont.)

Evaluating Self-Esteem

These items are from a widely used measure of self-esteem, the Rosenberg Scale of Self-Esteem. The items deal with your general feelings about yourself. Place a check mark in the column that best describes your feelings about yourself.
1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree.

	1	2	3	4
1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
9. I certainly feel useless at times.				
10. At times I think I am no good at all.				

To obtain your self-esteem score, reverse your scores for items 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10. (That is, on item 3 if you gave yourself a 1, instead give yourself a 4.) Add those scores to your scores for items 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 for your overall self-esteem score. Scores can range from 10 to 40. If you scored below 20, consider contacting the counseling center at your college or university for help in improving your self-esteem.

Self-Esteem and Self-Concept (cont.)

Assessment

- Measuring self-esteem and self-concept hasn't always been easy (Dusek & McIntyre, 2003).
- Susan Harter's (1985) **Self-Perception Profile for Children**
 - taps general self-worth plus self-concept for 5 specific domains:
 - scholastic competence
 - athletic competence
 - social acceptance
 - physical appearance
 - behavioral conduct

Self-Esteem and Self-Concept (cont.)

Assessment (continued)

- Harter's **Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents** (Harter, 1989)
 - assesses global self-worth and the 5 domains tested for children plus 3 additional domains:
 - close friendship
 - romantic appeal
 - job competence
 - Self-esteem appears to have an especially strong tie with self-perception in physical appearance.

Self-Esteem and Self-Concept (cont.)

Correlations between Global Self-Esteem and Self-Evaluations of Domains of Competence

Domain	Harter's U.S. Samples	Other Countries
Physical appearance	.65	.62
Scholastic competence	.48	.41
Social acceptance	.46	.40
Behavioral conduct	.45	.45
Athletic competence	.33	.30

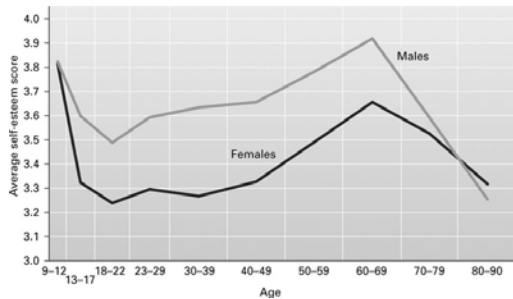
Self-Esteem and Self-Concept (cont.)

Developmental Changes

- Self-esteem is high in childhood, declines in adolescence, and increases in adulthood until late adulthood, when it declines again (Robins & others, 2002).
- Other researchers believe that the adolescent drop is very slight (Harter, 2002; Hyde, 2005, 2007; Kling et al., 1999).
- The self-esteem of females is lower than that of males throughout the life span, but the average score for adolescents girls is still higher than the neutral point.
- Cohort effects influence adolescents' self-esteem.

Self-Esteem and Self-Concept (cont.)

Self-Esteem across the Life Span



Self-Esteem and Self-Concept (cont.)

Variations in Self-Esteem (continued)

Increasing Children's Self-Esteem

1. Identify the domains of competence important to the child.
2. Provide emotional support and social approval.
3. Recognize achievement.
4. Encourage coping skills.

Identity

What is Identity?

Identity:

- self-portrait composed of many pieces, including:
 - vocational/career identity
 - political identity
 - religious identity
 - relationship identity
 - achievement/Intellectual identity
 - sexual identity
 - cultural/ethnic identity
 - interest, personality, and physical identity

Identity (cont.)

Erikson's View

Identity confusion:

- Erikson's 5th developmental stage (adolescence) during which adolescents are faced with deciding who they are, what they are all about, and where they are going in life

Psychosocial moratorium:

- Erikson's term for the gap between childhood security and adult autonomy during which society leaves adolescents relatively free of responsibility and free to try out different identities

Identity (cont.)

Erikson's View (continued)

- Youth who successfully cope with their conflicting identities emerge with a new sense of self that is refreshing and acceptable.
- Those who do not successfully resolve the identity crisis suffer what Erikson calls "identity confusion."

Identity (cont.)

Developmental Changes

- Identity begins with:
 - appearance of attachment
 - development of the sense of self
 - emergence of independence in infancy
- identity reaches its final phase with:
 - life review and integration in old age
- Adolescence is the first time that physical, cognitive, and socioemotional development advance to the point at which the individual can sort through and synthesize childhood identities and identifications to move toward adult maturity.

Identity (cont.)

Identity Statuses

- Crisis:**
- period of identity development during which the adolescent explores alternatives (most researchers use the term *exploration*)
- Commitment:**
- personal investment in identity

Identity (cont.)

Marcia's Four Statures of Identity

		Has the person made a commitment?	
		Yes	No
Has the person explored meaningful alternatives regarding some identity question?	Yes	Identity achievement	Identity moratorium
	No	Identity foreclosure	Identity diffusion

Identity (cont.)

Identity Statures (continued)

Marcia's Four Statures of Identity

- **Identity diffusion:**
 - status of individuals who have not yet experienced a crisis or made any commitments
- **Identity foreclosure:**
 - status of individuals who have made a commitment but who have not experienced a crisis

Identity (cont.)

Identity Statures (continued)

Marcia's Four Statures of Identity (continued)

- **Identity moratorium:**
 - status of individuals who are in the midst of a crisis but whose commitments are either absent or only vaguely defined
- **Identity achievement:**
 - status of individuals who have undergone a crisis and made a commitment

Identity (cont.)

Social Contexts (continued)

Family Influences (continued)

- **Individuality** consists of 2 dimensions:
 - **Self-assertion:** the ability to have and communicate a point of view
 - **Separateness:** the use of communication patterns to express how one is different from others
- **Connectedness** consists of 2 dimensions:
 - **Mutuality:** sensitivity to and respect for others' views
 - **Permeability:** openness to others' views

Identity (cont.)

Social Contexts (continued)

Culture and Ethnicity

- **Ethnic identity:**
 - enduring aspect of self that includes sense of membership in an ethnic group and the attitudes and feelings related to that membership (Phinney, 1996)
- aspects of sociocultural contexts influence ethnic identity:
 - membership in a minority group
 - to which generation of immigrants one belongs
 - broad social factors
 - immediate contexts in which ethnic minority youth live

E-LEARNING TOOLS

To help you master the material in this chapter, visit the Online Learning Center for Child Development, twelfth edition at:

<http://www.mhhe.com/santrockcd12>
