

# Middle Childhood

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## Outline

- Physical Development
- Cognitive Development
- Language Development
- Social and Emotional Development

## Physical Development

- Growth slows considerably
  - Children typically grow 2 inches in height and 4 pounds in weight per year
- Children lose their baby teeth
- Gross and fine motor skills are refined and coordinated
- Physical movement is linked to brain development
  - “Children need to jump, run, swing, throw, and balance to become intellectually competent” (Trawick-Smith, 2014, p. 353)
- Rule-governed play is more common

## Violence

- Primary age children living in violent communities have more:
  - Aggression
  - Conduct problems
  - Poor concentration
  - Forgetfulness
  - Learning difficulties
- Exposure to violence may also lead to serious psychological disorders, despair, and psychic numbing (stop caring or feeling)

## Violence

- **Resilience:** The ability to successfully adapt despite problems that threaten one's wellbeing or development
- Protective factors that promote resilience in the US:
  1. Unconditional love of caregiver
  2. One best friend
  3. Regular opportunities to help others
  4. Regular involvement in sports group or other physical activity
- Protective Factors (Continued)
  5. Active membership in civic/religious group
  6. Engaging hobby (artistic or intellectual)
  7. Trusted adult (non-parent) who can give help/advice
  8. Home that is clean, safe, and has enough food
  9. Effective school
  10. Home where rules are clear and fairly administered

## Cognitive Development

- Reversibility and multi-dimensional thinking help children learn maths
- Understanding of causality enables children to make advances in scientific thinking
- Use of movement, dance, rhythm, and stories may help children remember information

## Language Development

- Rate of vocabulary learning slows, but understanding of words are refined
- Students learn from 4,000 to 6,000 new vocabulary words each *year* (Anderson, 1996)
  - Both direct and indirect vocabulary instruction is valuable
    - **Direct instruction:** Define a word, use it in sentences
    - **Indirect instruction:** Listening, speaking, reading, and writing in authentic situations

## Writing Development

- **Prephonemic Stage:** Random letters are used to stand for stories or messages
- **Phonemic Stage:** Consonants match the sounds of the story or message
- **Transitional Stage:** Writing is more conventional, though often with "invented spelling"
- **Conventional Writing:** Use correct spellings and other writing conventions (spaces, punctuation, etc.)

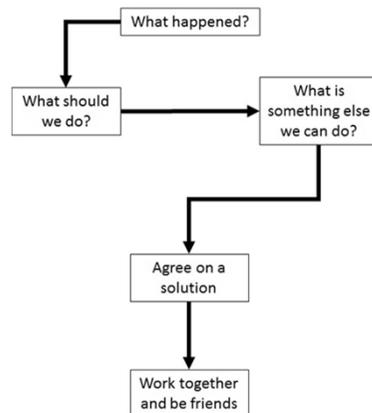
## Literacy Development

- **Emergent Reader:** Notice print in the environment, show an interest in text, reread familiar texts with predictable patterns, identify some letter names
- **Beginning Reader:** Identify letter names and sounds, recognize 20-100 high frequency words, read slowly – word by word, use beginning middle and end sounds to decode words
- **Fluent Reader:** Identify most words automatically, read with expression, read at a rate of 100 words per minute, use comprehension strategies to understand what is read

## Social Development

- Number of friends increases
- Friends become more important to development
  - Begin to rely on peers for companionship, advice, and emotional support

## Conflict Resolution



## Social Development

- Children deepen their understanding of cultural similarities and differences
  - Those who are similar to us:
    - We are fond of and attracted to
    - We tend to help more
- **Universal Orientation:** Identify and emphasize the similarities between the self and diverse others
  - Perceived similarity is fundamental to liking, helping, understanding, and even reducing prejudice