



SIXTH EDITION

**CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND PERSONALITY**

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*Jerome Kagan*

*Aletha Carol Huston*

SIXTH EDITION  
**C**hild Development  
and Personality

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# Preface

One of the most significant, recurrent problems in communicating psychology to students is showing them how scientific knowledge can be applied to real problems and to the practical concerns of parents, teachers, and others who work with children. Another is showing how progress is made in the field—conveying the understanding that theoretical controversy, evidence, and counter-evidence all contribute to cumulative gains in knowledge, and are not just reflections of the trendy concerns of scholars in the fickle spotlight of the moment. In the sixth edition of this book, many of the changes are stimulated by, or addressed to, one of these problems in teaching psychology.

In the five years since the fifth edition was published, scholars in the field of child development have continued to make conceptual advances and generate new data that permit a more refined understanding of the processes of development. Cognitive and social development have become increasingly integrated as the cognitive bases for social and emotional reactions have been recognized. We have moved beyond the platitude that both heredity and environment contribute to development and have invented concepts and implemented empirical studies that shed light on *how* the child's biological qualities interact with experience. The issues of continuity versus discontinuity in growth, and of stability of individual differences over time remain important, but these questions are addressed with more sophisticated concepts. Many psychologists have ventured to investigate complex, but important, constructs, such as self and identity. While the thinking of most developmental psychologists continues to be guided by developmental theory, important ideas are also drawn from other areas of psychology, including adult cognition, psycholinguistics, and social psychology. As a result, the field sometimes seems fragmented, but the richness of new ideas makes the effort at integrating those fragments exciting and fruitful.

In the preface to the fifth edition, we listed many social concerns about the welfare of children, such as: child abuse; increases in adolescent pregnancy; single-parent families; the high rate of divorce in families with children; the effects of television violence; the need for adequate day care; the lack of educational opportunities for many children whose families are poor; racial discrimination; changing sexual mores; drug abuse among young people; and problems faced by physically and mentally handicapped children. Unfortunately, little

progress has been made toward dealing with many of these problems in the last five years. In fact, reduced government services for children and the economic recession in the early 1980s led to exacerbation of many of them. High unemployment and reduced services strike disproportionately at poor families, especially those headed by women. As a result, children have a higher probability than adults of living in poverty in America today.

Partly in response to these social changes, child psychologists have become increasingly involved in efforts to influence social policies that affect children and families, and to contribute their expertise to the solution of social problems. They have directed more of their research efforts to studies of applied problems and to evaluation of intervention programs designed to ameliorate such problems.

The sixth edition reflects some of these changes in the field. It contains more discussion of social issues and applied research than earlier editions, but we have attempted to integrate this information with theory and basic research. This edition retains a chronological organization in four age periods: the prenatal period, infancy, childhood, and adolescence. Within age periods, the organization is topical. The three major theories of development—psychoanalytic, learning, and cognitive-developmental—are applied to the topics in each chapter rather than being described in the introductory chapter. This change is designed to help the student understand how each theory is related to empirically based knowledge for different age levels and different topic areas. Separated from the contexts in which they can be applied, brief descriptions of the theories may have little meaning for the student approaching the field for the first time. We have retained in the introductory chapter, however, a discussion of major issues in the study of development, in order to provide a broad framework for the subsequent chapters.

There are two new chapters that reflect recent developments in the field. One of these is "The Transition to Childhood: The Second and Third Years." Recent research on this previously neglected age period has generated a number of exciting insights about the transition from infancy to childhood. Another new chapter is "The Development of Social Cognition," which contains some of the recently garnered knowledge about children's understanding of their social worlds. The previous chapter on "Socialization in the Family" has been divided into two chapters. Topics such as sex typing, self-esteem, moral behavior, prosocial behavior, and aggression are covered in a chapter titled "Identity and Social Development." Child rearing, sibling influences, and family structure are considered in the chapter on "Socialization in the Family." Hence, each chapter title reflects its contents more accurately than in the earlier edition. The principal description of Piaget's theory now appears in the chapter "Cognitive Development in Childhood" rather than in the chapter "Intelligence and Achievement." The "Intelligence and Achievement" chapter, in turn, contains more discussion of motivation and school achievement than it did in earlier editions.

But, the basic orientation of the book has been retained. We have attempted to present a balanced picture of the field with samples of different theoretical views on the topics covered. Inevitably, the selections were guided



by our judgments about what is most interesting, creative, exciting, or illuminating among the vast array of information available. As in previous editions we maintain a scholarly and research-oriented focus, but in a style that is intended to communicate the excitement of research and theory to the student without being ponderous. We have continued earlier efforts to place the field in cultural and historical perspective with frequent references to cross-cultural research and occasional discussions of historical information. Finally, we have tried to present controversies in the field in a way that includes different viewpoints, but does not leave the student feeling as though no lasting answers are possible.

Writing a book, or even revising one, requires the help and support of many other people. We thank Carrie Freese, Patricia Parker, Jane Rateaver, Dorothy Townsend, and Whitney Walton for typing and retyping large portions of the manuscript and making useful suggestions. Catherine Brown did valuable editing, which helped to make the manuscript clearer and more readable. We have also been fortunate to have had the help of a group of excellent reviewers: Ray H. Bixler, University of Louisville; Joseph J. Campos, University of Denver; Frank Curcio, Boston University; Jill deVillers, Smith College; Ira Gross, University of Rhode Island; John Hagen, University of Michigan; Willard W. Hartup, University of Minnesota; Martin L. Hoffman, University of Michigan; Spencer Kagan, University of California, Riverside; Lorraine A. Low, Framingham State College; Ellen M. Markman, Stanford University; Gerald E. McClearn, Pennsylvania State University; Martin J. Meade, Rockhurst College; Patricia P. Minuchin, Temple University; Nora Newcombe, Temple University; Anne C. Petersen, University of Chicago; Alvin H. Price, Brigham Young University; Marian Radke-Yarrow, National Institute of Mental Health; Freda Rebelsky, Boston University; Thomas R. Sommerkamp, Central Missouri State University; Ross Vasta, SUNY College at Brockport; Marian M. Wilton, Framingham State College. Most important, we are grateful to our families for their support, understanding, and forbearance.

P.H.M.  
J.J.C.  
J.K.  
A.C.H.

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#### SUMMARY



S

ome letters a child psychologist might receive will serve to introduce the subject of development.

LETTERS TO  
A CHILD  
PSYCHOLOGIST

*Dear Professor Smith:*

*I am a judge in California, and I handle many divorce cases in which decisions about the custody of young children must be made. What information can you provide that will be useful in deciding what is the best environment for a child when both the mother and father want primary custody? Is there any way to determine which parent the child is more attached to? Is it more important for a young child to be with the mother than the father, or can fathers provide a child with just as much love and care as mothers? How can I evaluate how good a parent someone is?*

*What are the effects of joint custody, in which the children spend half their time with each parent, often going back and forth between the parents' homes every few days? Is it confusing to children? Are there some ages when it is better than others? Is it better for a child to have a lot of contact with both parents or to have a consistent home life with one parent? I would like your considered judgment about these issues, even though the information available may be incomplete, because the decisions must be made.*

*Sincerely,*

*Dear Professor:*

*I am a pediatrician in a small Midwestern city. Although my medical training prepared me well to diagnose and treat physical illnesses of children, it did not prepare me to deal with questions about the psychological and behavioral development of children. Parents often ask me for advice about how to handle such problems as bed wetting, nail biting, sleeplessness, and fighting. They also ask me for information about what behavior is normal at different ages. Answers to these questions do not come from medicine but from psychology and child development. I would appreciate your suggestions for any good books that I can read or recommend to parents.*

*Sincerely,*