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# CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

97/98



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# CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT 97/98

*Fourth Edition*



## Editor

**Ellen N. Junn**

California State University, Fullerton

Ellen Junn is a professor of child development, Administrative Fellow in the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Director of the Office of Educational Equity at California State University, Fullerton. She received a B.S. in experimental psychology from the University of Michigan and her M.A. and Ph.D. in cognitive and developmental psychology from Princeton University. In addition to her work on educational equity issues, Dr. Junn's research and publications focus on developments in children's conceptions regarding adult social relationships and on college teaching effectiveness.

## Editor

**Chris J. Boyatzis**

Bucknell University

Chris Boyatzis is an assistant professor of psychology at Bucknell University. He received a B.A. in psychology from Boston University and his M.A. and Ph.D. in developmental psychology from Brandeis University. Many of his research interests lie at the intersection of social and cognitive development in early childhood. Dr. Boyatzis has published research on children's nonverbal behavior and social status, media effects on children, symbolic development, and play and art. He has also written on the use of literature and film to teach developmental psychology.

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Fourth Edition

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Members of the Advisory Board are instrumental in the final selection of articles for each edition of ANNUAL EDITIONS. Their review of articles for content, level, currentness, and appropriateness provides critical direction to the editor and staff. We think that you will find their careful consideration well reflected in this volume.

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# To the Reader

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In publishing ANNUAL EDITIONS we recognize the enormous role played by the magazines, newspapers, and journals of the *public press* in providing current, first-rate educational information in a broad spectrum of interest areas. Many of these articles are appropriate for students, researchers, and professionals seeking accurate, current material to help bridge the gap between principles and theories and the real world. These articles, however, become more useful for study when those of lasting value are carefully *collected, organized, indexed, and reproduced in a low-cost format*, which provides easy and permanent access when the material is needed. That is the role played by ANNUAL EDITIONS. Under the direction of each volume's *academic editor*, who is an expert in the subject area, and with the guidance of an *Advisory Board*, each year we seek to provide in each ANNUAL EDITION a current, well-balanced, carefully selected collection of the best of the public press for your study and enjoyment. We think that you will find this volume useful, and we hope that you will take a moment to let us know what you think.

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We are delighted to welcome you to this fourth volume of *Annual Editions: Child Growth and Development 97/98*. The amazing sequence of events of prenatal development that lead to the birth of a baby is an awe-inspiring process. Perhaps more intriguing is the question of what the future may hold for this newly arrived baby—for instance, will this child become a doctor, a lawyer, an artist, beggar, or thief? Although philosophers and prominent thinkers such as Charles Darwin and Sigmund Freud have long speculated about the importance of infancy on subsequent development, not until the 1960s did the scientific study of infants and young children flourish. Since then, research and theory in infancy and childhood has exploded, resulting in a wealth of new knowledge about child development. Past accounts of infants and young children as passive, homogeneous organisms have been replaced with investigations aimed at studying infants and young children at a “microlevel”—as active individuals with many inborn competencies, who are capable of shaping their own environment—as well as at a “macrolevel,” by considering the larger context surrounding the child. In short, children are not “blank slates,” and development does not take place in a vacuum; children arrive with many skills and grow up in a complex web of social, historical, political, economic, and cultural spheres.

As was the case for previous editions, we hope to achieve at least four major goals with this volume. First, we hope to present you with the latest research and thinking to help you better appreciate the complex interactions that characterize human development in infancy and childhood. Second, in light of the feedback we received on previous editions, we placed greater emphasis on important contemporary issues and challenges, exploring topics such as understanding development in the context of current societal and cultural influences. Third, attention is given to articles that also discuss effective, practical applications. Finally, we hope that this anthology will serve as a catalyst to help students become more effective future professionals and parents.

To achieve these objectives, we carefully selected articles from a variety of sources, including scholarly

research journals and texts as well as semiprofessional journals and popular publications. Every selection was scrutinized for readability, interest level, relevance, and currency. In addition, we listened to the valuable input and advice from members of our advisory board, consisting of faculty from a range of institutions of higher education, including community and liberal arts colleges as well as research and teaching universities. We are most grateful to the advisory board as well as to the excellent editorial staff of Dushkin Publishing Group/Brown & Benchmark Publishers.

*Annual Editions: Child Growth and Development 97/98* is organized into five major units. Unit 1 focuses on conception, prenatal development, and childbirth. Unit 2 presents information regarding developments in cognition, language, and learning. Unit 3 focuses on social and emotional development. Unit 4 is devoted to parenting and family issues such as working parents, marital transitions, siblings, and discipline. Finally, unit 5 focuses on larger cultural and societal influences (such as poverty, media) and on special challenges (such as childhood victimization and abuse, children with attention deficits).

Instructors for large lecture courses may wish to adopt this anthology as a supplement to a basic text, whereas instructors for smaller sections might also find the readings effective for promoting student presentations or for stimulating discussions and applications. Whatever format is utilized, it is our hope that the instructor and the students will find the readings interesting, illuminating, and provocative.

As the title indicates, *Annual Editions: Child Growth and Development* is by definition a volume that undergoes continual review and revision. Thus, we welcome and encourage your comments and suggestions for future editions of this volume. Simply fill out and return the comment card found at the end of this book. Best wishes, and we look forward to hearing from you!

Ellen N. Junn  
Editor

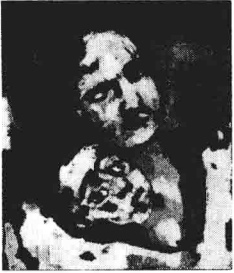
Chris J. Boyatzis  
Editor

# Topic Guide

This topic guide suggests how the selections in this book relate to topics of traditional concern to students and professionals involved with the study of infant and child development. It is useful for locating articles that relate to each other for reading and research. The guide is arranged alphabetically according to topic. Articles may, of course, treat topics that do not appear in the topic guide. In turn, entries in the topic guide do not necessarily constitute a comprehensive listing of all the contents of each selection.

TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN	TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN
<b>Aggression/Violence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eugenics Revisited</li> <li>20. Children without Friends</li> <li>26. Why Spanking Takes the Spunk Out of Kids</li> <li>29. Why Leave Children with Bad Parents?</li> <li>31. Violence, Reel to Real</li> <li>33. Victimization of Children</li> </ul>	<b>Developmental Disabilities and Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Most Intimate Bond</li> <li>35. Young Children with Attention Deficits</li> <li>36. Life in a Parallel World</li> </ul>
<b>Attachment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Amazing Minds of Infants</li> <li>23. Fathers' Time</li> <li>24. Life-Span Adjustment of Children to Their Parents' Divorce</li> </ul>	<b>Discipline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Ten Myths about Child Development</li> <li>18. Moral Power of Good Stories</li> <li>25. How Children Learn to Resolve Conflicts in Families</li> <li>26. Why Spanking Takes the Spunk Out of Kids</li> </ul>
<b>Birth and Birth Defects/ Reproduction/ Teratogens</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Making Babies</li> <li>3. Waiting Game</li> <li>4. In the Name of the Children</li> <li>5. Fantastic Voyage of Tanner Roberts</li> <li>6. Putting a New Spin on the Birth of Human Birth</li> </ul>	<b>Divorce/Stepparents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24. Life-Span Adjustment of Children to Their Parents' Divorce</li> <li>29. Why Leave Children with Bad Parents?</li> </ul>
<b>Brain and Physical Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Putting a New Spin on the Birth of Human Birth</li> <li>10. Your Child's Brain</li> <li>13. Malnutrition, Poverty, and Intellectual Development</li> <li>17. Early Experience and Emotional Development</li> <li>35. Young Children with Attention Deficits</li> <li>36. Life in a Parallel World</li> </ul>	<b>Drug Abuse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. In the Name of the Children</li> <li>29. Why Leave Children with Bad Parents?</li> </ul>
<b>Child Abuse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>26. Why Spanking Takes the Spunk Out of Kids</li> <li>29. Why Leave Children with Bad Parents?</li> <li>33. Victimization of Children</li> </ul>	<b>Economic Issues/Poverty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Malnutrition, Poverty, and Intellectual Development</li> <li>29. Why Leave Children with Bad Parents?</li> <li>30. Child Labor in Pakistan</li> <li>32. Get 'em While They're Young</li> </ul>
<b>Cognitive Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Amazing Minds of Infants</li> <li>10. Your Child's Brain</li> <li>11. Vygotsky's Theory</li> <li>12. How Do Infants Learn about the Physical World?</li> <li>13. Malnutrition, Poverty, and Intellectual Development</li> <li>14. What Should Children Learn?</li> <li>15. How Kids Learn</li> <li>16. IQ Puzzle</li> <li>35. Young Children with Attention Deficits</li> <li>36. Life in a Parallel World</li> </ul>	<b>Emotional Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eugenics Revisited</li> <li>7. Most Intimate Bond</li> <li>10. Your Child's Brain</li> <li>17. Early Experience and Emotional Development</li> <li>18. Moral Power of Good Stories</li> <li>19. EQ Factor</li> <li>20. Children without Friends</li> <li>23. Fathers' Time</li> <li>24. Life-Span Adjustment of Children to Their Parents' Divorce</li> <li>25. How Children Learn to Resolve Conflicts in Families</li> <li>26. Why Spanking Takes the Spunk Out of Kids</li> <li>34. Resilience in Development</li> <li>36. Life in a Parallel World</li> </ul>
<b>Creativity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Your Child's Brain</li> <li>11. Vygotsky's Theory</li> <li>28. Buried Alive</li> </ul>	<b>Family/Parenting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Ten Myths about Child Development</li> <li>18. Moral Power of Good Stories</li> <li>22. Little Big People</li> <li>23. Fathers' Time</li> <li>24. Life-Span Adjustment of Children to Their Parents' Divorce</li> <li>25. How Children Learn to Resolve Conflicts in Families</li> <li>26. Why Spanking Takes the Spunk Out of Kids</li> <li>27. School and Family in a Postmodern World</li> <li>28. Buried Alive</li> <li>29. Why Leave Children with Bad Parents?</li> <li>32. Get 'em While They're Young</li> <li>33. Victimization of Children</li> <li>34. Resilience in Development</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-Cultural Influences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30. Child Labor in Pakistan</li> </ul>		

## UNIT 1



### Conception to Birth

Seven articles discuss the development of the child from the prenatal stage to birth.

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#### A. PRENATAL DEVELOPMENT

1. **Eugenics Revisited**, John Horgan, *Scientific American*, June 1993. 6  
In the *nature versus nurture debate*, some scientists are claiming victory for nature, noting that research has proven that *genes influence many aspects of behavior*, including *mental illness, criminality, sexual orientation, and intelligence*. However, other scientists warn that the apparent trend toward embracing nature as the major cause of development is scientifically premature and perhaps socially and ethically dangerous.
2. **Making Babies**, Nancy Wartik, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, March 6, 1994. 15  
For many couples, the realities of a "normal" conception may be beyond reach. Today, a dizzying number of *high-technology fertilization techniques* (artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, GIFT, SUZI, ICSI, and others) extend hope to millions of couples coping with various forms of infertility. However, couples who opt for these often *costly techniques* may face *moral and social concerns* as well.
3. **Waiting Game**, Susan Gilbert, *New York Times Magazine*, April 25, 1993. 22  
Pregnant women and physicians have available to them an impressive arsenal of *prenatal diagnostic tests*. Susan Gilbert reviews some of the most common, such as *chorionic villi sampling, ultrasound, and amniocentesis*.
4. **In the Name of the Children**, Barry Siegel, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, August 7, 1994. 25  
Barry Siegel presents a case study of a growing national controversy—the legal and ethical tensions between *the rights of pregnant women* and the well-being of their unborn children. *Should the government force drug-addicted pregnant women to enter treatment programs?*

# UNIT 2



## Cognition, Language, and Learning

Nine selections consider the growth of a child's cognitive and language abilities and their experiences in the learning process in school.

### B. BIRTH AND BABIES

5. **The Fantastic Voyage of Tanner Roberts**, Pamela Warrick, *Los Angeles Times*, March 1, 1992. 33  
This fascinating article captures the final days and minutes before a child's birth. Psychological and physiological details about the *birth experience* for the child and the mother are described in this personal account of one boy's birth.
6. **Putting a New Spin on the Birth of Human Birth**, Joshua Fischman, *Science*, May 20, 1994. 37  
Joshua Fischman presents *an evolutionary perspective on birth* and raises provocative questions about why humans are born the way we are. Fischman discusses anthropological and evolutionary evidence on the *challenges posed by human babies' large heads and shoulders*.
7. **The Most Intimate Bond**, Claudia Wallis, *Time*, March 25, 1996. 39  
*Conjoined twins* are a rarity—two individuals physically joined due to a *genetic fluke that prevents the fertilized egg from dividing into separate identical twins*. Claudia Wallis presents the remarkable case of the *Hensel twins*, girls who illustrate the phenomenon of two people sharing one body.

### Overview

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### A. EARLY COGNITIVE AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

8. **The Amazing Minds of Infants**, Lisa Grunwald with Jeff Goldberg, *Life*, July 1993. 44  
Recent research indicates that *babies have wonderfully active minds*. By employing ingenious techniques that interpret *how infants watch and move*, scientists are discovering many heretofore unrealized skills.
9. **Ten Myths about Child Development**, Julius Segal, *Parents*, July 1989. 49  
Using research findings, Julius Segal exposes 10 popular misconceptions involving child development issues ranging from *attachment and IQ to discipline and neglect*.
10. **Your Child's Brain**, Sharon Begley, *Newsweek*, February 19, 1996. 53  
This fascinating article discusses recent research that suggests *the human brain is sensitive to experiences very early in life*, which influence brain development for *skill in language, music, math, and other learning*. Sharon Begley describes "*learning windows*" when *children may be most influenced by environmental stimulation*.



11. **Vygotsky's Theory: The Importance of Make-Believe Play**, 59  
Laura E. Berk, *Young Children*, November 1994.  
This article describes the view of *Lev Vygotsky*, a Russian psychologist who emphasizes the importance of *pretend play as a forum for learning*. In particular, children learn through guidance from parents and teachers that creates a *scaffold for experiences*, allowing youngsters to take over more responsibility as their skills increase.
  12. **How Do Infants Learn about the Physical World?** Renée 68  
Baillargeon, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, October 1994.  
Based on the pioneering work of *Jean Piaget*, researchers once assumed that infants lacked a sense of *object permanence*. Renée Baillargeon describes her well-known and ingenious research indicating that *young infants do, in fact, possess more fundamental and elaborate knowledge about physical objects than once thought*.
  13. **Malnutrition, Poverty, and Intellectual Development**, 76  
J. Larry Brown and Ernesto Pollitt, *Scientific American*, February 1996.  
The authors describe research from around the world demonstrating that *a poor diet influences children's intellectual development* in many ways. The article also addresses other *effects of poverty on children's mental growth*.
- B. LEARNING IN SCHOOL**
14. **What Should Children Learn?** Paul Gagnon, *The Atlantic 81*  
*Monthly*, December 1995.  
Paul Gagnon describes one of the most contentious debates in American education today—whether there should be national standards for children—and explains the *competing political forces that shape and impede educational reform*. Gagnon presents *a historical perspective on the debate over national standards* for education.
  15. **How Kids Learn**, Barbara Kantrowitz and Pat Wingert, 90  
*Newsweek*, April 17, 1989.  
Between the *years of five and eight*, children absorb an enormous amount of information. New research indicates that learning is best facilitated when *active hands-on exploration, cooperation, and problem solving* are emphasized over more traditional forms of passive rote learning of factual information. Implications for teachers and parents are discussed.
  16. **The IQ Puzzle**, Sharon Begley, *Newsweek*, May 6, 1996. 96  
*Scores on intelligence tests have risen dramatically* in many countries. Does this mean that children today are smarter than ever? Sharon Begley discusses the possible reasons for these gains—including the popularity of video games and cereal boxes with mazes and puzzles for children—and also addresses *the debate on whether IQ tests truly measure intelligence*.

# UNIT 3



## Social and Emotional Development

Five articles follow a child's emotional development into the larger social world.

### Overview

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#### A. THE CHILD'S FEELINGS: EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Early Experience and Emotional Development: The Emergence of Wariness of Heights, Joseph J. Campos, Bennett I. Bertenthal, and Rosanne Kermoian, *Psychological Science*, January 1992. 100

How do we become afraid of heights? Are we born with the fear, or do we learn it through life experiences? This article by prominent researchers describes careful *experiments designed to determine whether babies are born with a fear of heights or if they acquire it only after learning to crawl* and the experience of moving around in the world.

18. The Moral Power of Good Stories, William Kilpatrick, *American Educator*, Summer 1993. 104

Stories help to make sense of our lives, claims William Kilpatrick, and they offer children vivid examples of morals and good values. This essay urges educators and parents to use *stories as a powerful means of communicating about character and virtue* to children.

#### B. ENTRY INTO THE SOCIAL WORLD: PEERS, PLAY, AND POPULARITY

19. The EQ Factor, Nancy Gibbs, *Time*, October 2, 1995. 114

Recent brain research suggests that emotions, not the traditional IQ rating, may be *the true measure of human intelligence*. This article examines this latest trend in the assessment of human ability to cope successfully with challenges.

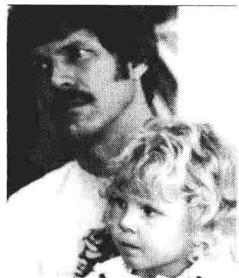
20. Children without Friends, Janis R. Bullock, *Childhood Education*, Winter 1992. 121

According to research, *having friends is crucial for normal development*. This article describes the *sociometric status* of different kinds of children—the *popular*, *rejected*, and *neglected*—and the implications of not having friends. Suggestions are given for teachers to identify and help children without friends.

21. Girls and Boys Together . . . but Mostly Apart: Gender Arrangements in Elementary Schools, Barrie Thorne, from *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School*, Rutgers University Press, 1993. 126

*Gender segregation*—boys playing with boys, girls with girls—is very common during the elementary school years. How might this affect *boys' and girls' social and interpersonal development*? Barrie Thorne describes how not only peers but teachers as well contribute to gender segregation.

# UNIT 4



## Parenting and Family Issues

Five articles assess the latest implications of child development with regard to attachment, marital transitions, day care, and discipline.

### Overview

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|   | 136 |
| 22. Little Big People, Lucinda Franks, <i>New York Times Magazine</i> , October 10, 1993.   | 138 |
| Is childhood as we knew it a thing of the past? The author argues that <i>children "enter the world of maturity long before they are mature."</i> In this provocative essay, the author claims <i>children are growing up faster and faster</i> , largely due to many <i>parents who communicate with their children as if they were equals</i> and who impose <i>increased academic pressures</i> . In addition, <i>television and movies</i> increasingly expose children to mature adult themes. |     |
| 23. Fathers' Time, Paul Roberts, <i>Psychology Today</i> , May/June 1996.   | 142 |
| Paul Roberts presents evidence on <i>fathers' roles in the family, their influence on children's emotional and intellectual development, and their distinct interaction styles</i> . Roberts also describes how <i>fathers have only recently received attention from researchers</i> , showing that they are no longer subservient in the parenting realm.   |     |
| 24. Life-Span Adjustment of Children to Their Parents' Divorce, Paul R. Amato, <i>The Future of Children</i> , Spring 1994.   | 149 |
| Paul Amato presents comprehensive evidence on children's adjustment to divorce, including their <i>academic, social, and psychological well-being in childhood and as adults</i> . Amato also describes how <i>children's adjustment depends on many factors</i> and explains that <i>differences are generally small between children of divorce and children from intact families</i> .   |     |
| 25. How Children Learn to Resolve Conflicts in Families, Susan Crockenberg, <i>Zero to Three</i> , April 1992.  | 170 |
| According to Susan Crockenberg, <i>children learn how to settle conflicts from early experiences in the home</i> . When faced with a child's behavior problem or conflict, parents can model and provide their young children with practice in <i>conflict negotiation skills</i> by using strategies that include <i>directives, explanations, and compromise</i> . Acquiring these skills early should have many long-term benefits.  |     |
| 26. Why Spanking Takes the Spunk Out of Kids, Nick Gallo, <i>Child</i> , March/April 1989.  | 173 |
| Spanking is a very common form of discipline, but is it effective? Perhaps more importantly, does it do short-term or lasting <i>psychological harm</i> ? Nick Gallo addresses these issues and offers <i>alternative techniques</i> to help people realize that <i>discipline</i> does not mean spanking, but it does mean instilling <i>self-control</i> in the child.  |     |

# UNIT 5



## Cultural and Societal Influences

Ten selections examine how society and culture impact on the development of the child.

### Overview

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#### A. SOCIAL ISSUES

27. **School and Family in the Postmodern World**, David Elkind, *Phi Delta Kappan*, September 1995. 178  
David Elkind describes how *schools and education have undergone, in the postmodern era, major changes due to broader changes in the family and society*. One such change is that schools now assume many parental functions.
28. **Buried Alive**, David Denby, *The New Yorker*, July 15, 1996. 184  
In a thoughtful essay, David Denby argues that *today's youth are buried by "an avalanche of crud" from popular culture—television, films, toys, and video and computer games*. Denby offers many novel ideas about the impression this culture may leave on *children's character and their views of reality*.
29. **Why Leave Children with Bad Parents?** Michele Ingrassia and John McCormick, *Newsweek*, April 25, 1994. 191  
In 1993 alone there were one million confirmed cases of *child neglect and abuse in the United States*. Yet in many states the *child welfare system often strives to keep families intact rather than put children in the care of foster parents* (who came into greater demand in the late 1980s when crack use increased dramatically). The authors raise difficult issues about America's care for children at risk.
30. **Child Labor in Pakistan**, Jonathan Silvers, *The Atlantic Monthly*, February 1996. 196  
The *exploitation of children as laborers* illustrates the *influence of economic and political factors on how children are viewed and treated* in a society. Jonathan Silvers describes how Pakistan's recent laws limiting child labor are generally ignored, leaving an estimated 11 million children toiling in that country's factories.
31. **Violence, Reel to Real**, John Leland, *Newsweek*, December 11, 1995. 207  
John Leland looks at *the debate on violence in film and television* and *challenges the research conclusion that there is a clear causal relationship between televised violence and real-life aggression*. Leland *critiques many of the famous studies* on the topic, as well as discussing the recent controversy over the V-chip.
32. **Get 'em While They're Young**, Karen Stabiner, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, August 15, 1993. 211  
Karen Stabiner describes how *advertisers set their sights on young children*, using sophisticated tactics to *shape their consumer habits and tastes to cultivate lifelong loyalty to their products*. Also discussed are *techniques that parents can use to protect children from the early onslaught of advertising* aimed at those too young to understand that commercials are designed to sell a product.

## **B. SPECIAL CHALLENGES**

33. **Victimization of Children**, David Finkelhor and Jennifer Dziuba-Leatherman, *American Psychologist*, March 1994. 217  
This eye-opening article presents statistics showing that children are more prone to victimization than are adults. *Victimology of childhood* falls into three broad categories—*pandemic victimization* (e.g., assault by siblings, parents, peers), *acute victimization* (e.g., physical abuse), and *extraordinary victimization* (e.g., homicide). The authors call for more research and theory on childhood victimology, using a developmental perspective.
34. **Resilience in Development**, Emmy E. Werner, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, June 1995. 228  
Many of the studies that focused on children and youths who overcame great odds have been relatively short term. Emily Werner discusses a study that analyzes *child resiliency and development over a period of three decades*.
35. **Young Children with Attention Deficits**, Steven Landau and Cecile McAninch, *Young Children*, May 1993. 232  
*Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)* is a frequently misunderstood, complex disorder. This review article *describes ADHD, its possible causes and treatments, and the effects of the disorder for children in the classroom setting*.
36. **Life in a Parallel World**, Sharon Begley and Karen Springen, *Newsweek*, May 13, 1996. 239  
An increasing number of children are diagnosed as *autistic*, a disease whose cause is unknown but that leaves children *socially withdrawn with poor communication skills, compulsive behavior, and, occasionally, savantism*. This article describes *recent changes in the definition of autism and some theories of its cause*.
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# CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT 97/98

*Fourth Edition*



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# Conception to Birth

- Prenatal Development (Articles 1-4)
- Birth and Babies (Articles 5-7)

Our understanding of conception and prenatal development is not what it used to be. We are now witness to dramatic changes in reproductive technology. Advances in this new "prenatal science" include fertility treatments for couples who have difficulty conceiving and a host of prenatal diagnostic tests, such as amniocentesis and alpha-fetoprotein testing, which assess the well-being of the fetus as well as detect genetic or chromosomal problems. These technological developments are discussed in the articles "Making Babies" and "Waiting Game."

Perhaps the oldest debate in the study of human development is the "nature versus nurture" question. Scientists have moved beyond thinking of development as due to either genetics or environment, now recognizing that nature *and* nurture interact to shape us. Each human is a biological organism, and each is surrounded, from the moment of conception, by environmental forces. John Horgan's essay, "Eugenics Revisited," helps us to consider the nature and nurture of our IQ, mental health, sexual orientation, and other aspects of who we are. This selection is especially valuable because it helps the reader appreciate several crucial facts about the nature/nurture debate. First, although both genes and experience are crucial in shaping us, many scientists have recently emphasized the power of genes. However, the research evidence shows that there are fewer certainties about genetic influence than some scientists might imply. Second, findings from the nature/nurture debate can always be interpreted from more than one perspective to support more than one view. Finally, whether we embrace genes or environment as the primary factor in determining development, there may be ethical, political, legal, and societal consequences of taking a particular stance.

Students of child development should realize that the classic nature/nurture controversy applies as much to prenatal development as to other stages of childhood. While prenatal development is largely the result of the unfolding of an individual's genetic blueprint, the fetus is also in an environment within the mother's womb. Hence, the

