

**Counseling 448:  
Developmental Stages and  
Significant Stressors to Child  
Development**

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**Perspective for the Helping  
Professional...**

*"It is better to build a child  
than repair a man"*

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**Counseling vs Psychotherapy**

Counseling is more for:

- Less seriously disturbed
- Personal, social, emotional, cognitive, educational problems
- Preventive and developmental concerns

Psychotherapy is more for:

- The more seriously disturbed
- Personality disorders
- Psychotherapeutic concerns

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### **Counseling vs Psychotherapy**

Counseling is more for:

- Educational and human services settings
- Conscious concerns
- Teaching and psychoeducational methods

Psychotherapy is more for:

- Medical settings
- Unconscious concerns
- Healing methods

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### **On Counseling... Counseling Concerns for Children**

Concerns can be classified into one of five categories:

1. Interpersonal conflict, or conflict with others.
2. Intrapersonal conflict, or conflict with self.
3. Lack of information about self.
4. Lack of information about the environment.
5. Lack of skill

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### **Erickson's Eight Stages of Personality Development**

1. Trust vs. Mistrust (First Year of Life)

- if needs are generously met, infants come to trust their environment and self which leads to faith in predictability of the environment and optimism about the future.
- Mistrust leads infants to be suspicious, fearful and concerned with security,

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**Erickson's Eight Stages of Personality Development**

2. Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (First three years)

- If child fails to master basic skills such as walking, toilet training etc will lead to shame, doubt and a sense of inferiority

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**Erickson's Eight Stages of Personality Development**

3. Initiative vs. Guilt (Ages 3-6)

- Parent support and encouragement for manipulating and conquering new initiatives promotes growth
- Scolding new initiatives generates strong feelings of guilt, worthlessness and resentment

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**Erickson's Eight Stages of Personality Development**

4. Industry vs. Inferiority (7-Puberty)

- New expectations encountered at home and school that require assimilation into the adult world.
- If children are stifled in their efforts they may conclude that they are inadequate, mediocre, inferior and lose faith in their power to become self-sufficient.

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**Erickson's Eight Stages of Personality Development**

5. Identity vs. Role Confusion

- At puberty the critical issue of this stage is to find one's identity by integrating a number of roles such as student, brother, friend etc. into a coherent pattern of identity.
- Failure to forge an identity leads to role confusion and despair

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**Erickson's Eight Stages of Personality Development**

6. Intimacy vs Isolation

- In young adulthood, in order to love we must feel secure in our own identity
- Failure at intimacy brings a painful sense of loneliness and the feeling of being incomplete.

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**Erickson's Eight Stages of Personality Development**

7. Generativity vs Stagnation (ages 25 to retirement)

- The challenge is to remain productive and creative in all aspects on one's life, i.e., career, family and community.
- Stagnation results when life becomes a drab routine and one feels dull and resentful

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## **Erickson's Eight Stages of Personality Development**

### **8. Ego Integrity vs Despair**

- Integrity is an acceptance of one's life, a sense that it is complete and satisfactory; with the integrity to face death with a minimum of fear.

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## **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

- Needs of Infancy: Physiological and Survival
- Needs of Early Childhood: Security
- Needs of Later Childhood: Love and Belongingness
- Needs of Adolescence: Ego and Esteem Needs
- Needs of Adulthood: Self-Actualization

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## **Stressors in Children**

### **Equation of Potential Emotional Disorder...**

$\text{Stress} + \text{Physical, Social, Emotional, Cognitive Vulnerability}$

$\frac{\text{Coping Skill} + \text{Social Support} + \text{Self-Esteem}}$

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### **Specific Stressors: Abuse**

- The most stressful experiences for children is to be abused by their caretakers.
- It distorts the child's sense of right and wrong.
- It complicates the child's identification with the same -sex parent.

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### **Specific Stressors: Threats and Bullying**

- The threat of violence is stressful
- Of a national sample studied 38% said they avoid certain locations in school to avoid being hurt or bothered
- 20% were occasionally fearful
- 4% stayed home to avoid being hurt or bothered

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### **Specific Stressors: Competition**

- Youth are threatened by academic competition and failure
- Youth who believe in luck and fate drift into hopelessness; those who believe in personal responsibility try harder

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**Specific Stressors:  
Socioeconomic Inequalities**

- The stress of poverty and discrimination is paralyzing
- Poor children have a special need for independent self-appraisal

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**Specific Stressors: Parent  
Loss or Absence**

- Physical loss through divorce or death
- Mental/emotional loss through chronic illness, psychosis, depression, alcoholism

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**Specific Stressors:  
Helping Professional Stress**

- Physical, dental exams; shots, hospitalization; interviews or testimony of abused children;
- Preschool children:
- Use sentences that do not exceed more than 3-5 words.
  - Use the child's terms
  - Do not ask "Do you understand?" Ask the child to repeat the message.
  - Use statements rather than questions

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**Specific Stressors: Television Stress**

- Prolonged viewing of crime stories and violence increases aggressiveness
- Long hours of watching television has an effect on a child's cognitive, emotional, and social development

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**Specific Stressors: Gender Role**

Female preadolescents experience greater stress than males in areas such as:

- acceptance by peers,
- relationships with the opposite sex,
- feelings of isolation and loneliness, and
- disagreements with parents

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**Developmental Tasks Early School Age (Four to Six Years)**

Thinking (Cognition)

- Practices followed at home come under closer scrutiny at pre-school
- Parent idealistic hopes are tempered by the reality of school performance
- Family, school, peer group, neighborhood & TV influence a child's self concept
- Moral codes begin to guide behavior such as telling the truth, respect for authority, understanding concepts of right and wrong

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**Developmental Tasks Early School Age (Four to Six Years)**

Feeling (Emotional Skills)

- Awareness of sex-typed expectations for dress, play, and career aspirations
- Emotional changes highlight the relevance of one's own sex in overall self-concept.
- Children are likely to have personality characteristics similar to those of the more dominant parent
- Understand emotional responses such as anger and distress; begins to empathize with another child's feelings

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**Developmental A Tasks Early School Age (Four to Six Years)**

Relating (Social Skills)

- Interact with same-sex friends; reject members of the opposite sex
- Aware of the importance of acceptance by adults and peers outside the family, especially teachers and classmates

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**Developmental Tasks Elementary School Age (Seven to Eleven Years)**

Thinking (Cognitive Skills)

- Well-adjusted children develop a number of important cognitive abilities such as social perspective taking, interpersonal problem solving and information processing.
- Enjoys classifying and ordering things, develop ability to assess and monitor knowledge; can use various strategies to solve a problem

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**Developmental Tasks Elementary School Age (Seven to Eleven Years)**

Feeling (Emotional Skills)

- Need for peer approval; the peer group begins to establish norms for acceptance and rejection
- Many express loneliness, social dissatisfaction and difficulty making friends. Self-evaluation becomes the framework for self-confidence or self-doubt, anxiety, inferiority and inadequacy

Note: A child's temperament is generally determined by age 2.

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**Developmental Tasks Elementary School Age (Seven to Eleven Years)**

Relating (Social Skills)

- Close friendships with same interest and activities;
- Peer approval becomes powerful influenced based on attractiveness, intelligence and social status
- Self-evaluation by grades, teachers' comments; parental approval and peer approval; positive or negative self-image
- Team play emerges

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**Developmental Tasks: Early Adolescence (12 to 18 Years)**

Thinking (Cognitive Skills)

- Ability to hypothesize logical sequences of events;
- Can foresee consequences of actions; detect logical consistency; think in realistic ways about self, others, and the world

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