

The interplay
between theory and
practice.



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Section A ??“ Evaluate the importance of understanding the interplay between theory and practice. Practitioners must be well informed and knowledgeable about the interplay between theory and practice in order for children and their families to benefit fully from the early years experience. Theorists play a large part in practitioners understanding of how children develop and think and assist in planning and supporting the holistic development of children in our care. In order to best serve the community and for best practice, it is important for practitioners to be up-to-date and have an understanding of current research, local legislation and inclusion policies.

John Bowlby??™s attachment theory examines the inter-relationships between people e. g families and close friends. He states that children need to form a solid bond with at least one principal care giver for their social and emotional development to progress, and that any relationships that follow will be built on the basis of that relationship.

Attachment theory has become one of the important theories in understanding children??™s social development and how children form bonds and make friends. Bowlby??™s theory was criticized in its early stages, referring to children??™s varying temperaments, cultural differences, the intricacy of social interactions and influences in the child??™s environment. This criticism led to extensive research, and attachment theory was duly modified, but the general ideas have remained and become widely accepted. Bowlby??™s theory and the subsequent research have been the foundation for formulating current childcare policies which support children in developing social skills and attachments.

Piaget's cognitive development theory implies that all children pass through four developmental stages in a specific order and at a specific rate. He suggested that children only progress to the next stage in their development as and when they reach the maturity level and master the tasks of the previous one. These four stages are: sensor motor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational stages. Recent theorists have criticised this view and suggest that children's cognitive development can be explained by stages that are more fluid. Researchers have proven that children's development is not always consistent and they do not perform at the same rate through each stage. They believe Piaget has understated the social influences on cognitive development and he underestimated the competency of young children and babies. However, Piaget's research and theory of cognitive development has influenced modern educational policies and curriculum, informed practitioners in planning and had an impact on the modern milestones and norms which are referred to today.

In order to understand child development and support children as they progress the practitioner must understand these and many more theories. Practitioners need to adjust their teaching methods to suite each individual child and ensure that their specific needs are met. Practitioners also need to understand the developmental norms and milestones in order to identify those children who may have barriers to their learning and support them in reaching their full potential. Practitioners also need to understand the effect of culture, environment and family dynamics have on children when reflecting on their practice.