

Theories of child development

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Theories of development that have influenced current practice (CYP 3. 1 LO2.

3)Area of development: CognitiveTheorist: Jean PiagetTheory: ??? Children construct or build up their thoughts according to their experiences of the world around them. ??? The child??™s conclusions or thoughts are known as ??? schema??™. ??? The child adapts their schema when new information is received. ??? As the child develops so does their thinking ??? Children go through 4 fixed stages to developing independent thinking:

- o Sensori-motor (0-2 yrs) ? Development of object permanence ? Begins to use symbols
- o Pre-operational (2-7 yrs) ? Uses symbols in play and thought ? Egocentrism ? Centration ? Animism ? Inability to conserve
- o Concrete operational (7-11 yrs) ? Ability to conserve ? Begin to solve mental problems using practical supports
- o Formal operational (11-15 yrs) ? Can think about situations that they have not experienced ? Can juggle with ideas in their minds

Area of development: CognitiveTheorist: Lev VygotskyTheory: Vygotsky believed that ??? Children??™s social environment and experiences are very important ??? Children were born to be sociable ??? That by being with their parents and then with friends, they learnt skills and concepts ??? Saw children as ??? apprentices??™ learning and gaining understanding through being with others.

(Known as scaffolding) ??? Maturation was an important element in a child??™s development ??? Carers needed to extend their learning so that they could use their emerging skills and concepts ??? He defined this idea as ??? zone of proximal development??™. ??? Stressed the importance of social interaction ??? The need for adults to work alongside children ??? Children could guide and develop each other??™s potential

theories link to practice in your setting: ??? Child Initiated Play o Every day the children are given the opportunity to learn through play. o Each session last for 1hr 20 minutes and includes activities in all areas of EYFS o The activities are the same each day ???“ the theory being that by the end of the week the child would have learnt how to do the activity and would then be able to use their experiences to extend the activity. o During these sessions, staff sit alongside the children extending the activity they are doing by asking questions or suggesting ideas. o The children are also given the opportunity to explore and extend what they are doing. o The children are also encouraged to play with each other.

Area of development: Psychoanalytic Theorist: Sigmund Freud Theory:

Personality is made up of 3 parts ???“ the ??? id??™, the ??? ego??™ and the ??? super ego??™. Not all of these parts are present at birth but develop with the child. He made a link between unconscious thoughts and actions. ??? The id o Instinctive part of personality o Governed by the needs of the body o Doesn??™t consider how meeting needs will affect others (selfish and passionate) o Getting needs/desires met known as ??? gratification??™ o Freud suggests that babies are born only with the ??? id??™ ??? The ego o Planning role o Works out how to meet needs & desires of ??? id??™ o Develops from ??? id??™ in first few months o Often thought as being common sense part of personalities ??? The superego o Develops later in childhood o Tries to control ego o Comprises of conscience and ego-ideal o Conscience will punish ego (source of guilt) o Ego-ideal will reward ego (source of pride and confidence) Examples of how this theory links to practice in your setting: Child x often comes into school without having had

breakfast. He is obviously hungry. He will refuse to do anything until his needs are met.

If he does not get his cereal he will scream and shout and throw things around, oblivious to how his behaviour is affecting those around him. To enable this child to be able to settle and access the curriculum, he is given cereal, in the area, away from the classroom. Once finished, he is returned to the classroom to do his work. Area of development: Humanist Theorist:

Abraham Maslow Theory: People have certain needs that need to be met before they can fulfil their potential. Maslow called these the ??? Hierarchy of Needs??™. [pic] Examples of how this theory links to practice in your setting:

We have an area specifically designed to meet the needs of the children in our setting. The classrooms have plenty of light but also have areas that can be made darker and quieter to meet the needs of the children with sensory issues. We have two snack times, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, along with a half hour for them to eat lunch followed by a half hour playtime.

Due to the needs of our children, the adult to child ratio is high and each child gets plenty of time to spend forming strong relationships. Area of development: Social Learning Theorist: Albert Bandura Theory: Bandura believed that ??? Children learn by observing others (observational learning) ??? Observational learning is spontaneous ??? Children naturally learn by imitating rather than being shown or taught ??? Can occur without reinforcement ??? Children need to be able to notice an activity and be able to remember it accurately (cognition) Examples of how this theory links to

practice in your setting: All staff in our setting act as role models to the children. Modelling good behaviour and showing good manners eg, greeting the child each morning – “good morning xxx, nice to see you today”, always saying please and thank you at the appropriate times. etc. They also model behaviour when talking to other adults, eg during hello time when trying to get a child to say “Hello Mr Page”, this would be modelled by the adults saying good morning to each other, then saying “hello” to the child again, hoping to get them to give the correct response. Area of development: Operant Conditioning Theorist: B F Skinner Theory: Learning is based on consequence/reinforcement of behaviour Children learn through exploring the environment and then drawing conclusions based on consequence of behaviour Consequences of actions are divided into 3 groups

- o Positive reinforcers ? Most effective way of encouraging new learning ? Make people repeat behaviour when they get something they want, eg adults attention, sweets, favourite book
- o Negative reinforcers ? Make people repeat behaviour ? Behaviour is repeated to stop something happening eg learning to use feet to slow down if bike is going too fast
- o Punishers ? Stop people from repeating behaviour eg will learn to stay away from fire if they get burnt

Children need frequent positive reinforcement as this helps them to learn wanted behaviours. Immediate positive reinforcement is important as the child will be able to link the reward with the behaviour more easily. If there is a delay in giving the positive reinforcement the child may not link the reward with the behaviour.

Examples of how this theory links to practice in your setting: For some children in our setting we use positive reinforcement in the form of now and

next boards ??“ we put on a symbol of what we want the child to do now eg work at table and then a picture of what they can do next (the reward for doing the work) eg a picture of lego or a book or the sensory room. Area of development: BehaviouristTheorist: J B WatsonTheory: Behaviourists believe thatYou learn to act in a certain way because past experiences have taught you to do or not to do something. This is known as conditioning. J B Watson believed that children and young people could be classically conditioned ie trained to give a certain response to a specific stimulus.

For example ??“ at snack time the children are told its snack and they need to go and sit at the table and wait to be given fruit and drink. If at the same time as being told this, a bell is rung, the children will eventually learn that when they hear the bell they need to go and sit at the table and wait for the fruit and drink without being told to do so. Examples of how this theory links to practice in your setting: In our MLD class, when it??™s time to tidy up, music is put on.

The children have now learnt that when they hear that specific piece of music they need to stop what they are doing and tidy up. Area of development: Social PedagogyTheory: ??? An approach to caring for children which combines education and care ??? It is a holistic and thoughtful way of working ??? Aim is to find ways of working with children and young people that improves their life chances and social outcomes.