Early Experience & Later Development

Major Issues

• Is it possible to overcome devastating circumstances experienced during infancy?
• Can we predict developmental outcomes given status during infancy?

Effects of Parent-Child Separations

• Temporary Separations
• Extended Separations
  – Children of the Creche
  – Romanian Orphans
  – Well-run orphanages
• Isolated Children
  – Czech twins
  – Genie
Extended Separations

✓ Children of the Creche (Dennis)
  1. Lower intellectual Development
  2. Effects depend on subsequent environment
     a. Early adoption
     b. later adoption
     c. Continued institutionalization
        - Gender effects

Romanian Orphans (Chisolm, 1998)

Early adoptees (<4 mos)
Late adoptees (> 8 mos)
Canadian born nonadoptees

Romanian Orphans (Chisolm, 1998)

Tested at age 4 1/2
Procedure
    Parent interview
    Separation-reunion
Romanian Orphans (Chisholm, 1998)

Romanian orphans

A. Adopted early (<4 mo) vs late (>8 mo)
   - Differences in attachment (in strange situation)
   - Late: Lower IQ scores

But, are differences due to age or time in
institution?

Well-staffed Orphanages

• Children raised until 2 yrs
• Environment
   – Positives: Well-fed, staff well-trained, toys, etc
   – Negatives: Staff-turnover, staff-scheduling
• Study
   – Compare return to home after 2, adopted (2-8), remain in institution

Well-staffed Orphanages

• Positive effects for leaving but depended on where.
   – Adopted had higher IQ and Reading than those returned to biological parents
   – Adopted - mutual attachments regardless of age at adoption
   – Biological returnees - attachment decrees with age of return
Isolated Children

- Czech Twins
  - Discovered at 6 yrs - malnourished, limited speech, fearful, etc
  - Removed from home to children’s home
    - Placed with younger children
    - Well-fed and cared for
  - Result: Overtime return to normal level of intelligence and performance

Isolated Children

- Genie
  - Found at 13
  - Never reached normal levels
    - Low level of language
    - Did form attachments but always needed care
  - Why the difference between the Czech boys and Genie?

Children of Violence
Garbarino & Kostelny, 1996

- Palestinian Intifada
  - Witness violence
  - Lose family members
  - Experience injury
  - Family members arrested
Sample
◆ 150 children, 2 parents
◆ Young (6 - 9 yrs)/old (12 - 15 yrs)
◆ Male/female
◆ Low/Hi violence

Measures
◆ Demographics
◆ Behavior checklist
◆ Violence ?
◆ Conflicts scale
◆ Parenting stress index

Risk Factors (0 - 9)
◆ Violence risk
◆ Family risk
  ◆ Violence toward child
  ◆ Maternal depression
  ◆ Maternal sense of incompetence
Political Violence (Garbarino & Kostelny, 1996)
The relationship of Gender & Risk factors to behavioral outcomes

Child Behavior Problems as a Function of Number of Risk Factors and Gender

Political Violence (Garbarino & Kostelny, 1996)
Relationship of Age & Risk factors to behavioral outcomes
Child Behavior Problems as a Function of Number of Risk Factors and Age

Vulnerability and Resilience

- Risk Factor: personal characteristics or environmental circumstances that increase the likelihood of negative outcomes.

- Resilience: The ability to recover quickly from adverse effects of early experience or persevere in stressful situations

Sources of Risk & Protective Factors

- Characteristics of the family (see p. 273)
  - < 4 children
  - sibling spacing
  - alternate caregivers

- Characteristics of the community
  - Poverty
  - Social support networks
  - School

- Characteristics of the child
  - Temperament
  - Intelligence
TRANSACTIONAL MODELS OF DEVELOPMENT

Child characteristics INTERACT with characteristics of the environment

Why do some children have long term negative consequences?

Intifada Research
Children with full range of Intifada-related risk fall below clinical level IF
• The risks are in context of a functional family system

In-Class Assignment
1. Give 2 reasons why some children and not others have long term effects from being in orphanages.
2. A parent asks you how they should choose a daycare for their 6 month old. What 2 pieces of advice (or questions they should ask the daycare) would you give?