

Table of contents-

Page 2 - Exploring Maslow's hierarchy of needs (part 1)
Page 3 - Reference list from part 1
Page 4/5 - The Concept of Holistic Child Development (part
Page 6 - Reference list for part 2
Page 7/8 - Maslow's significance in understanding child development (part 3)
Page 9 - Reference list for part 3

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Level 1: Physiological needs

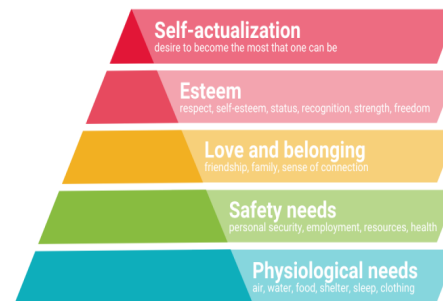
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Maslow's (1943, 1954) hierarchy of needs highlights the importance of the most basic of needs to the most advanced needs; this is shown using a pyramid to rank the needs accordingly. According to Maslow's (1943, 1954) hierarchy of needs pyramid, the need for air, water, food, shelter, sleep, and clothing is deemed the most important human right. This physiological need is a biological requirement for human survival. It is impossible for the human body to function in the correct way if psychological needs are not met. Maslow states that all later needs become secondary until these basic needs are met. Once an individual's physiological needs are fulfilled, the importance of security and safety becomes increasingly apparent. This shift in focus highlights the necessity for a stable environment where individuals can feel protected and secure, allowing them to thrive and pursue higher-level needs in their personal development journey. With these basic needs in place, it ensures the best possible outcome for each individual person. If all needs are met, it gives that individual clarity that they live to see another day.

After the previous 4 levels are completed and esteem needs are marked off. One can proceed to the last section of Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid. Channel (2024) states that the last group of needs in the pyramid is where the self-actualisation needs live. Self-actualisation is the natural human drive to achieve one's full potential and help show what is capable. Maslow defined this as "the desire for self-fulfilment and to become more and more of what one is and everything that one is capable of becoming." Self-fulfilment is the ability to focus on this need to achieve one's own personal growth and to reach full potential. Self-actualisation can include a variety of needs, some of which are the need to feel appreciated and recognised, meaning that others notice and appreciate one's achievements. Another basic need is the need for creativity, which underlies improving skills and planning new ideas and solutions to help overcome this. The last group of needs highlighted by Channel (2024) states that the importance of personal growth is a huge factor that motivates someone to learn more about themselves. This can be by attempting an activity or task that can be uncomfortable or out of someone's comfort zone. Doing such things will help to improve one's own self-esteem. In order to do this, a person needs to take the time to recognise their own faults in order to work from them and achieve new skills from them. Self-awareness can be achieved in different ways; some may need a little extra support in order to do this; therefore, they can access different courses such as leadership training courses, management training courses, and emotional intelligence courses. Self-actualisation needs are often only fulfilled by a small number of individuals, typically because some skills can be difficult to keep on top of. Most find it difficult to reach self-actualisation goals if their other needs are not cared for.



Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Emmanuel Olivier (no date)

Level 4: Esteem

The fourth group of needs in Maslow's hierarchy pyramid covers the importance of respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, and freedom. Lumen (no date) states that esteem reflects the human need to feel valued and acknowledged by others; this is often through one's success, achievements, or social status. This group of needs also includes self-esteem, which is about how much we value and accept ourselves. If there's an imbalance along the line, it can lead to low self-esteem. People who suffer from low self-esteem issues might find that getting praise or recognition from others, like awards, only helps for a short period of time, even when they may feel good about themselves. CCN (2023) states that Maslow quoted, The need self-esteem leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy of being useful and necessary in the world.

Level 2: Safety needs

The second group of needs in Maslow's hierarchy highlights the importance of safety needs; these needs underpin the importance of personal security, employment, resources and health, as stated in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (2024). According to the Interaction Design Foundation (2020), safety needs are the second most important aspect and need to be implemented in day-to-day life. Safety is one of our evolutionary needs, which plays a part in our everyday decision-making. Safety is an evolutionary need often referred to as a 'fight or flight' approach. The 'flight or flight' approach by the Interaction Design Foundation (2020) explains that environmental information is used to determine if one is safe or not, which will in most cases lead to staying or, if unsafe, encouraged to leave. In addition to this, CFI (2024) states that a person requires security in order to survive and prosper in modern societies. This refers to the necessity for job stability, a reliable income, and access to savings. A common way to attain economic security is by understanding the different effective investment studies. There are many instances where individuals rely on safety needs. In order for a person to achieve stability and security, it is prominent that they prioritise their own physical safety beforehand.

Level 3: Love and belonging

Referring to Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid, the third group of needs highlights the importance of love and belonging. Within the pyramid, it states that love and belonging consist of 3 key components: friendship, family, and a sense of connection. Thoughtco (2024) states this need can include romantic relationships as well as relationships with close relatives and friends. The need to feel loved and feel a sense of belonging also involves our basic need to feel included. TSW (2024) states that anxiety, isolation, and depression are all negative milestones in a person's life. This is why social needs are prominent. When these basic needs aren't fulfilled, one can experience a decline in their mental health and wellbeing.

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The Concept of Holistic Child Development

This essay aims to explore three main components, these being relationships between parents, carers, and/or other professionals; safety within early years; attachments within early years settings or any other adults/children; and the importance of social and emotional relationships built during a child's early years. According to Vocabulary (2024), a concept is defined as a general thought or idea based on a thing or a group of things; this can be taken from specific instances or occurrences. A concept is an idea that originates from the mind.

There are many concepts involved with the holistic development of a child. Foundation Education (2023) states that the holistic development of a child is an educational proposal that underlies the importance of creating a nurturing environment for a child. This doesn't only include their physical health but also their emotional and psychological well-being. In the early years, it is very common to focus on these key stages as they contribute to a child's overall development. By addressing these important needs in the development of children, we as individuals create a supportive network that encourages children to learn and thrive in a structured manner. This approach enables children to get the most knowledge academically, but also socially and emotionally, preparing them for their future.

Practitioners must consider the safety aspect when exploring the concept of holistic development. ECLKC (no date) refers to safety as being everyone's responsibility in early years settings. Early years settings make it their main priority to ensure children are safe. They do this by ensuring there are no hazards by making staff actively aware of hazards and supervising areas. It is vital that everyone communicates any safety concerns in order to work together and ensure this problem is dealt with appropriately. This team effort is essential for creating a secure environment for children to learn and grow. Blossom (2024) states that each nursery provider and manager have a legal responsibility to ensure each nursery is a safe and enabling environment for both staff and children. There is a clear difference between statutory requirements and good practice. It is a legal expectation that nurseries have the relevant health and safety procedures that both staff and parents are actively reminded of. As well as reminding parents and staff about these procedures, it is important that they are also aware of any changes that might occur within each procedure, especially if changes have been made regarding an incident.

Attachments are also a very important part of a child's holistic development. NSPCC (2021) states that attachment is a clinic term that describes "a lasting psychological connectedness between human beings." Bowlby (1997) attachment theory highlights why it is so incredibly important for a bond to be created between a child and their caregivers. If this bond is affected or lost, it can lead a child to experience emotional and psychological challenges that they may take into adulthood with them; this could affect their relationships later on in life. Forming an attachment for a child can be a slow and gradual process. However, parents and children can develop an emotional connection even before birth. There are often times where a parent or caregiver may struggle to develop this bond. This is commonly seen when they face mental health challenges or lack a stable support system. With this being said, Ncbi (no date) states that children who have a secure household and attachment are generally able to validate their feelings and emotions by being comforted by their caregivers when

upset. This is known as a secure base, which is then explored when not in distress. With this being said, some children also experience an 'avoidant' attachment pattern. These children appear to be able to self-regulate without the attachment and comfort of a caregiver. During this time, a child may act distant and avoid as much contact with their caregiver as possible.

Social and emotional development is also a very important part of a child's holistic development. The Department for Education (no date) states that the social and emotional development of a child is crucial for ensuring each child has a healthy and fulfilling life. Development is basic and not only for the well-being of a child but also hugely impacts their cognitive growth. When children develop these strong social skills, they are more prepared to navigate relationships and experiences throughout their lives. A supportive environment that helps and nurtures can enable a child's ability to learn. Surrey County Council (2024) states that this environment would include a consistent routine; routines help children to feel secure as they start to recognise parts of the day's structure and anticipate what comes next. This helps to reduce anxiety in children. This can be implemented in a child's setting or home with a visual timetable to help those who have trouble communicating through the use of speech. In order to support this, children need continuous support in being able to recognise their feelings and finding ways to validate these effectively. To be able to ensure this, Fennies (2024) states that relationships are important and practitioners are continuously working on this through every interaction during the day. This happens during everyday care routines. Once the completion of interactions is successful, they promote a positive environment where children feel supported and can reach their full learning abilities. With this being said, it shows that when a child has one's full, focused attention, it demonstrates both respect and love, which are crucial needs within a child's development. Being a part of caring activities like feeding and changing a child requires complete focus. This approach not only creates a nurturing environment but also brings a relaxed environment for a child. By being fully present during a child's upbringing, we can manage our time and energy more effectively.

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Maslow's significance in understanding child development

The aim of this essay is to cover examples of experience during early years practice. This essay will relate to the points included in Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs pyramid. Within Maslow's hierarchy of needs, it defines the five basic needs of a child's development. Very well mind (2024) states that Maslow's hierarchy of needs was first introduced in his 1943 paper "A theory of human motivation" and again in his book "Motivation and personality." Maslow's hierarchy suggests that before advanced needs are met, all basic needs must be met first. During Maslow's time, schools focused on the problematic needs of a child. Maslow began researching and was very interested in learning about how and what we can do in order to ensure people are happy and well cared for. Maslow believed that everyone has an inborn desire to be self-actualised while being all they can be. In order to ensure this goal is met, Maslow believed that everyone needs to reach their own basic goals first; this includes the need for food, safety, love and self-esteem.

During early years settings, Maslow's hierarchy of needs is often used during day-to-day practice without intent. Rasmussen University (2024) states that those who work within a childcare role will know that each child requires a loving and safe environment. Although practitioners already do this, Maslow's hierarchy of needs proves that this is only one of the basic things that children need. Maslow's hierarchy has been proven to be very beneficial by a wide range of industries over the years. With this being said, it is crucial that practitioners understand children's basic needs. The Department for Education (no date) states that supporting children is especially important, as these first interactions with a child will likely be a child's first experience of any education that doesn't come from their home environment. Therefore, practitioners should ensure it is their focus to create not only a safe and positive environment but also an inclusive experience for each child. Care Learning (2024) agrees and states that Maslow's hierarchy is vital to all practitioners working within early years to provide a foundation of a nurturing and supportive environment. The practitioner's role should also include that they ensure children receive nutritious meals and time to rest.

Hunter (2024) states that early years practitioners can create a safe and stable environment by "paying close attention to the environment in which children are cared for to support their emotional wellbeing." With this being said, it is proven that the physical surroundings of an early years setting can highly influence the wellbeing of all who enter the space, including children, parents, and staff. In order for any child to feel safe and settled during their time in an environment, a sense of organisation is key. This is incredibly important to use in practice, as some children may experience disorganisation at home. If a nursery setting provides a structured environment, children are more likely to feel a sense of safety and wellbeing among their peers. It is important to note that children do not have the ability to communicate like adults do and find it very difficult to communicate their feelings, which in turn shows through a child's behaviour. In order for a child to feel safe and secure, the environment needs to fulfil their needs. If the environment a child is placed in is calm, tidy, and peaceful, it is more likely to feel safe and secure compared to a setting that is untidy and chaotic. Vain

(2023) agrees and states that a safe environment is essential for a child's physical and emotional development. Development is how children develop both physically and emotionally, as well as how they communicate, think, and socialise. During a child's early years, children learn most through play and interactions, whether that will be through a parent or attachment figure in their lives.

PennState Extension (2024) states that giving children appropriate choices helps children to feel powerful and in control of their decisions. Tapestry (2024) agrees that decision-making is a vital life skill. This is a skill that is introduced as an infant and is then developed and adapted through childhood and then further as an adult. When children learn that their decisions are listened to and respected, children begin to gain confidence within their own abilities. This encourages them to explore their thoughts and feelings more deeply, developing greater self-awareness. As they become more aware of their own preferences and ideas, they also start to develop their own unique style, which is an essential part of growing up. Additionally, this approach helps children experience trust and responsibility. When children feel that their voices matter, they are more likely to take ownership of their choices and actions. Tapestry (2024) This not only builds their self-esteem but also equips them with the skills children need to navigate social interactions and challenges as they grow. Ultimately, developing an environment where children feel heard and respected is crucial for their emotional and cognitive development. Milller (no date) states that 'Once you trust your child with a decision, let them do it themselves. It will help them build skills and self-confidence. When they're young, start with small decisions'.

In conclusion, Maslow's hierarchy of needs is significant to early years practice because Maslow organised his needs in a hierarchical order where one level needs to be met before another can be achieved. Future Learn (no date). This relates highly to early years practice because practitioners enable every child's needs to be met no matter the circumstances and ensure there is time for each child.

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