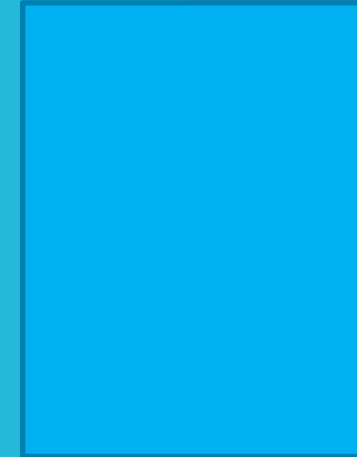
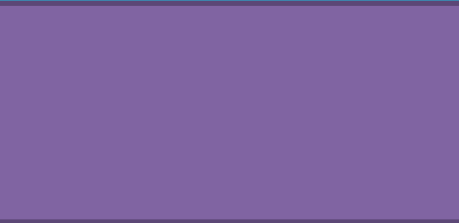




Prifysgol
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ECAY6005: Relationships, Communication and Families in Contemporary Society

Family Theory

2024

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



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Scope

- “Family theory focusses on the dynamic interactions among family members, describing changes in typical patterns of parent-child relationships, and the characteristics of family interactions that enhance or disrupt development”.

Newman & Newman (2011)

Scope

- “From an evolutionary perspective, families have evolved as the social context to support human development. Human infants have few innate reflexes, but they have a wealth of sensory and motor capacities to engage in social interactions, and an enormous capacity to learn”.
- “Families have evolved as contexts within which infants and children are protected from harm, nurtured, educated and socialized into their cultures”.

Newman & Newman (2011)

Related Terms

- Dissolution
- Mutation
- Adolescence
- Reproductive Health
- Sexuality
- Fertility
- Child Development
- Demography
- Child Parent Relation

Theoretical Evolution

- Family Theories have been developed in sociology, cultural anthropology, psychology, psychiatry, and cross-cultural psychology.

Theoretical Evolution

Social Darwinism

19th Century

A form of social DARWINISM theorized that the structure and function of family adapted, as a social organism, to the environment.

Marxist Theory

19th Century

Employed the concept of ECONOMIC DETERMINISM to explain how economic resources determined social power, which in turn determined class struggle.

Durkheim

19th Century

Explained the existence and the changes in family structure and function in terms of the family's functional role in the preservation of society.

Durkheim

19th Century

Functionalism analyzed the role of family as part of a greater whole, in which an equilibrium with other social institutions is established

Systems theory

20th Century

This contrasted with biological or economical determinism of social Darwinism and Marxist Theory

Structural-functional

Late 20th Century

Parson's perspective viewed society as an organism striving to resist change and to maintain itself in a state of equilibrium.

Structural- Functional Theory

- A major influential theory of family
 - Structure refers to members of the family (parents, child, and kin)
 - Function refers to how families satisfy physical and psychological needs for survival and maintenance.
- “The adaption of the family unit to the industrial revolution required a nuclear family structure that could carry out societal functions and satisfy the physical and psychological needs of family members”

Nuclear Family

- The term nuclear family refers to the 'Typical Norm'
 - Man
 - Woman
 - Child (boy)
 - Child (girl)
- Decided as such to determine that the human race can re populate by means of reproduction.
- However, as seen throughout this module, the nuclear family is becoming less 'typical'.
- This has raised questions, driven change and formed new concepts of family, but does not come without complications.

The New 'Norm'

- As with any new concept, such as same sex marriages, transgender parents and cohabitation, it depends on society as a whole to accept these new concepts in order for them to be categorised as the 'norm'.
- This does not come without stigma, labelling and marginalisation.
- The Equality Act 2010 protects us from discrimination
- What are the 9 protected characteristics?

Protected Characteristics

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The Family Dynamic

- Family dynamics refers to the patterns of interactions among relatives, their roles and relationships, and the various factors that shape their interactions.
- Because family members rely on each other for emotional, physical, and economic support, they are one of the primary sources of relationship security or stress.

'Dysfunctional' Family Dynamics

- Regardless of the characteristics that make up a family, it is important to consider the behaviours of those within a family dynamic.
- A dysfunctional family is a family in which conflict, misbehaviour, and often child neglect or abuse on the part of individual parents occur continuously and regularly, leading other members to accommodate such actions.
- Children sometimes grow up in such families with the understanding that such a situation is normal.

Intervention

- There can be varying degrees of involvement social services have with a family and sometimes it can happen when a family least expects it.
- Early Help
- Known as 'front door service'
 - Children and their families are monitored through universal services such as the school, school nurse and/ or health visitor

Intervention

- Child in Need
- Social Worker is allocated
- Statutory visits (4 weekly) both announced and unannounced
- 'child in need' meetings where parents MUST agree to certain things that are made into a safety plan
- Engagement at this point is voluntary (if parents do not engage the local authority could take further action)

Intervention

- Strategy Meeting
- If the child in need plan is breached or there are concerns of significant harm
- Request submission for a multi-agency meeting within 5 days.
- Information about the child and family will be shared and they will decide if a section 47 assessment (child protection enquiry) is required.
- Assess if legal action is required
- Recommendations made

Intervention

- Child Protection
- A child protection conference is arranged after a section 47 assessment concludes that there is evidence that a child is at risk of significant harm.
- Decided if the child is put on a protection plan based on 4 categories: Neglect, Physical Harm, Emotional Harm, Sexual Harm
- Each professional will give their view using a score system. 0 – 10 (0 worst situation, lots of concerns, 10 best situation, no concerns).
- There must be a unanimous decision (chair has overriding vote if no decision can be made)
- A review conference will be within 90 days and reviewed every 6 months (ideally for no longer than 2 years)
- If the child is put onto the child protection register, a core group meeting will follow involving all people in the child's life (social worker, school, parents)
- Plan will be shared with professionals within 24 hours

Systems Theory and Social Work

- When applied to Social Work, systems theory is a practice that enables professional to look holistically at a clients condition and environmental factors to gain a better understanding of any issues they may face or hardships they may have.
- Systems theory is an interdisciplinary study of systems as they relate to one another within a larger, more complex system.
- The key concept of systems theory, regardless of which discipline it is being applied to, is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
- When holistically examining how smaller systems come together to affect the greater complex system, certain characteristics of the whole (the complex system) can not be easily explained or rationalised when looking singularly at any one of its systems – its parts.

Systems Theory – Explained



Holistic Insights

- As working professionals, we want the best outcome for the individual, in this case, the child.
- Working with children is never straight forward or indeed, the same.
- Every child is different, with different circumstances, situations and needs.
- Let's look at some practical ways that we can work with children and young people.

Family Tree - Genealogy

- Social workers and psychologists use a special type of family tree, called a genogram, to help paint a picture of a person and the influences and support they have in their lives.
- It's literally a diagram, showing all your relationships, but it's also a map of a particular moment in time.
- Creating a family tree with a child and their family, allows us as professionals to firstly, understand who they are talking about and secondly, who influences their lives.



One Page Profile

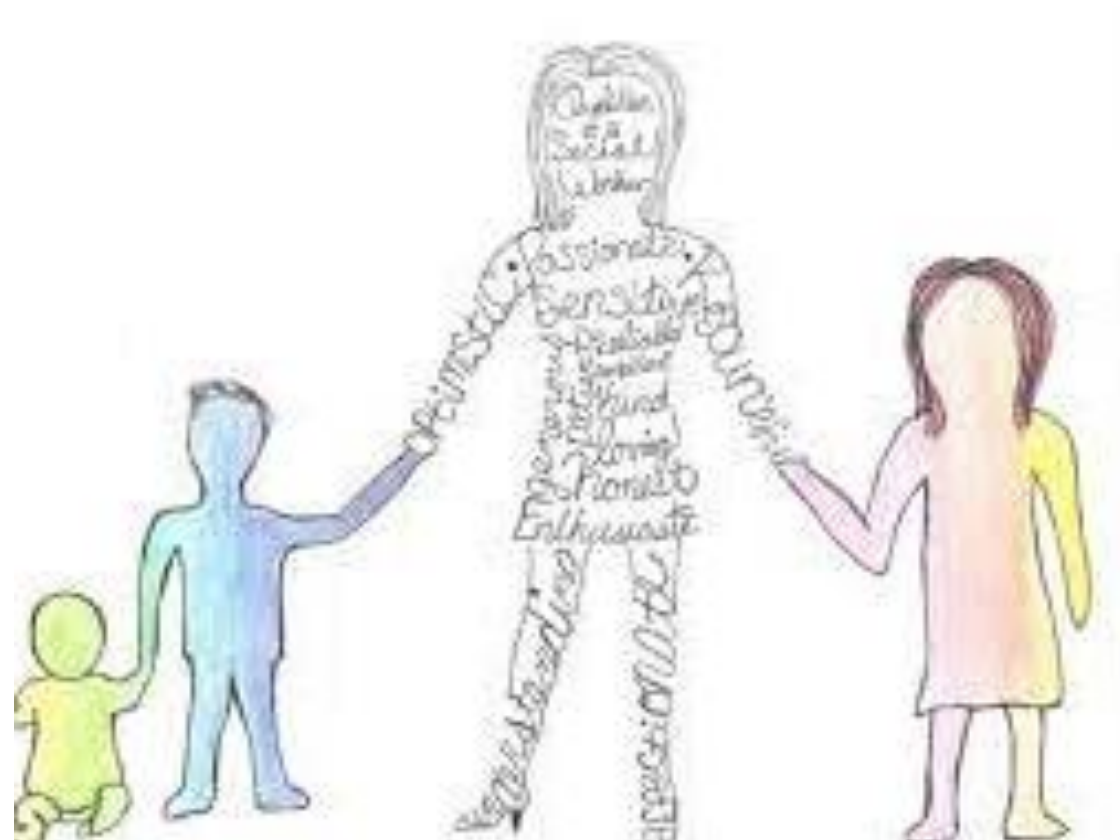
- A one-page profile is a simple summary of what is important to a child or young person and how they want to be supported. It can help them get more person-centred care and support to achieve their goals.
- A one-page profile captures all the important information about a person on a single sheet of paper. Information is recorded under three or four simple headings, for example:
 - What people appreciate about me
 - What's important to me
 - How best to help and support me
 - My goals and wishes for the future
- One-page profiles should only contain positive information and can be for anyone of any age from preschool to adult. They help those around a person to understand them better and know how best to support them.
- The child or young person should be involved as much as possible in the development of the one-page profile.

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Communication via Drawings

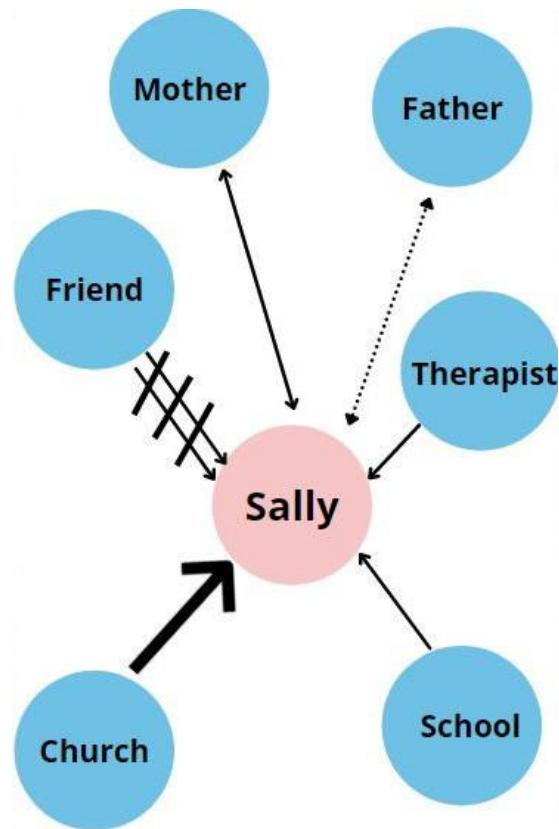
- The drawings of young children have attracted and interested many professionals in the field of social work. Researchers, psychologists, teachers, and parents have done various researches to clarify the meaning and interpretation of children's drawings.
- Through the process of observing and analysing the drawings of young children, insights can be gained as to the social/emotional, physical, and intellectual development of each child



Eco-Mapping

- Ann Hartman developed the ecological mapping system in 1975
- They show the social and personal relationships of an individual.
- This system gives us a visual representation of the key relationships a child or an individual has based on a strength based and person-centred perspective.

“The ecomap is a simple paper and pencil simulation that maps in a dynamic way the ecological system is represented. Included in the map are the major systems that are part of the family’s life. It pictures the important nurturant or conflict-laden connections between the family and the world. It shows the flow of resources, or the lacks of deprivations”.



Play Therapy

- Play Therapists are skilled professionals, who work with children (and their families) to work through difficult situations and experiences such as bereavement, abuse and neglect, depression and anxiety, family conflicts, psychological issues or other traumatic experiences.
- They use play to help children express and understand their emotions and experiences, and learn how to cope with difficult situations.



Animal Assisted Therapy

- Many social workers find that animals are good assistants in the communication process.
- The beneficial effects of animal- assisted therapy have been recognised since 1945, when therapy dogs were first trained to provide comfort and motivation to injured World War 2 survivors
- Adaptions to these observations have been made, animals are now being taken into all environments, including schools to help with learning to read, relaxation and communication.
- Therapeutic riding has also been recognised as a technique to help people with physical, developmental and emotional health challenges.



Communication

- Can you think of any other forms of therapeutic communication?
- For our next session, think about a form of communication that you would like to use in practice.