

Human Development Portfolio

By
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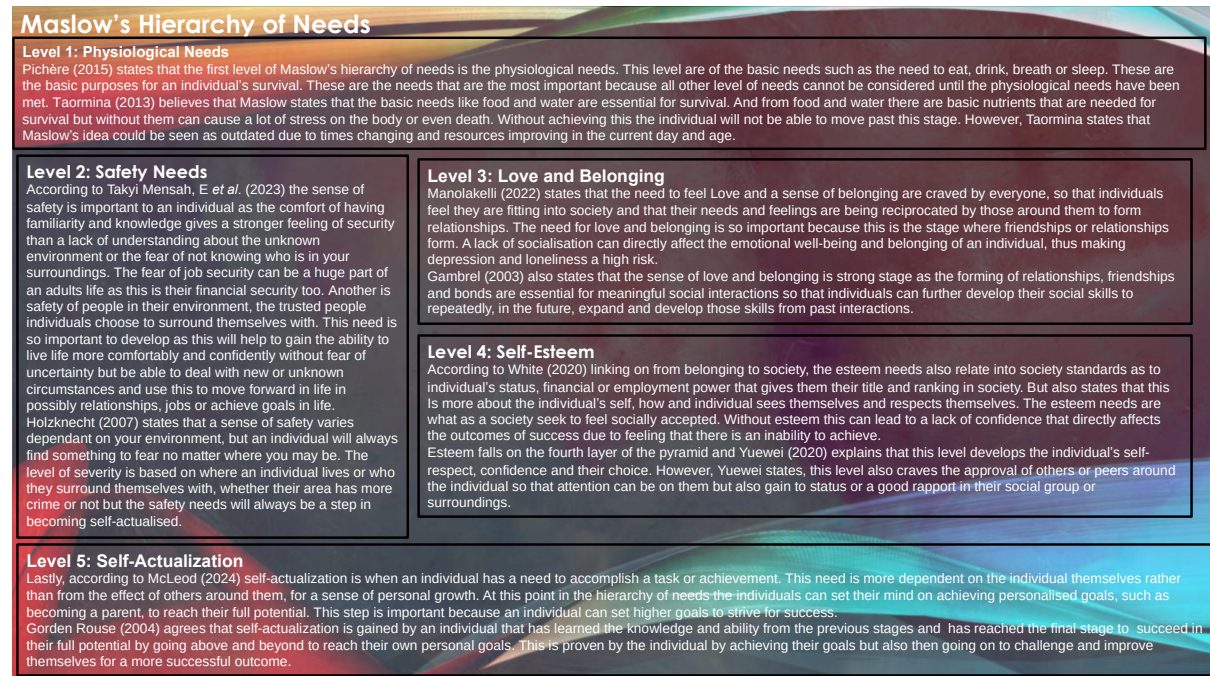
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Word count

1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Infographic – 908 words
2. The Concept of Holistic Child Development -1100 words
3. Maslow's Significance in Understanding Child Development – 947 words

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs



Holistic development is a vital part of development for young learners to help them move through the stages of life. Holistic development is making sure that within education and the early years, that practitioners help children develop their learning and progress by helping with their emotional, physical, social and intellectual well-being. To support this is Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which are physiological, safety, love and belonging, self-esteem and lastly self-actualization. These needs can be a key factor in a child's development as this is a theory that can be used to understand the individual child and where they are in their developmental pathway.

As stated by Queen Margaret University (2023) holistic development is so important in early years because this is the stage where children will take in almost all their learning. To give themselves a head start into their future and to positively impact their well-being. As practitioners it is vital to help young learners to succeed and develop to give children a chance to reach their full potential, but also to help them gain a set of skills that will benefit them through life. This can be supported by ensuring that practitioners pinpoint the areas such as their physical development, cognitive development and social-emotional development. Also, holistic development is a key factor in brain development, to making connections and building their ability to take in as much information as practitioners give children. However, it is important to remember that as practitioners in the early years to help develop all areas of holistic development but also to understand the child.

Husni (2022) also states holistic development is to see a child as a whole, finding their individuality through the purpose of life, by understanding a developing relationship with those around them, values and morals and understanding their place in their environment. In society, education has been viewed as not fulfilling the needs of a child so to incorporate holistic development is seen as an alternative method into supporting children's education through rich experiences and a child-centred approach to further learning following the child's interest.

Some theorists have specifically outlined what is needed for a child to develop and learn through life, according to Siltan (2011) states Maslow's hierarchy of needs consist of what a human needs to feel whole to reach Full potential or self-actualisation. The hierarchy has very similar needs to holistic development requirements such as the physical needs are the basics like food, water and shelter. Safety needs encouraging safe surroundings supporting emotional security and social development. Love and belonging to form relationships with those around them and to support attachment. Esteem needs to develop self-confidence which supports cognitive and emotional growth. finally self-actualisation, all the needs before this have been met leading a Child to understand their potential through the holistic approach nurtures a child to their potential.

Edalat (2017) states that Bowlby and Ainsworth understand the importance of a secure attachment between young children and the adults around them to support their emotional development and well-being. A secure attachment is a start to allow children to explore their surroundings with confidence so that they can develop their cognitive but also physical development. A child forming attachments can support their ability to make healthy relationships. Otherwise, if they don't have this stability and secure support it can harm their emotional well-being and lead to mental health problems. Having a supportive caregiver as a role model for a child the parent or caregiver represents the 4 stages of attachment. The first being a secure attachment and the other 3 being insecure attachment, avoidant, anxious and disorganised. It is up to the parent to model positive attachment behaviour to ensure the best outcome for the child.

Another theorist is Bronfenbrenner, according to Gal (2017) Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach was to understand the child's development by following 4 concepts. Which is process. The process is the activities the child will be introduced to and the interactions they experience. Person is dependent on the child such as age, gender or physical appearance. Context, being where the child will participate and the environment, they will be in. Lastly the 4th concept is time. The time the activity or interaction will take.

Furthermore, Care Learning (2024) states that Bronfenbrenner has different layers to his ecological system model, these systems are Microsystem, which is inner layer that looks at the child's environment and interactions with family, school or childcare and peers. The next layer is Mesosystem, this layer consists of how interactions about the child, directly affect the child such as the discussions between teacher and parent or peers from outside the family having influence on the home life. The third layer is the exosystem, this involves the social system that the child does not have direct contact with but may still influence the decisions for or around the child. The fourth layer being the macrosystem where a child will see the cultural norms in society or the laws that will protect their education and shape them. And lastly chronosystem which will be a shift in their life like starting school or parental division.

According to Oke (2021), Some barriers to holistic development in the early years are parental obligations. Parents have work commitments that make it difficult to maintain their involvement in a child's holistic development within their education. Another may be that parents don't feel the need to be involved as the educational system should maintain the development themselves. Another barrier stated by Evans (1997) is funding. Due to a lack of funding for interventions or support this directly affects the children as they will not receive the support, they need to help them develop. Griffiths (2022) states poverty is another barrier as if the child is in a disadvantaged area this may affect future outcomes for the child due to less opportunities. Allan (2024) agrees that poverty rates are the highest they've been, and this is directly affecting children's development, and their basic needs are not

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being met as 1 in 10 children spoke how they did not eat at least once a week.

Griffiths (2022) also mentions the effect covid had on children. The negative impact of covid saw that child development took a major downfall as children who were in deprived areas were found to be overweight and less than only two-thirds of children returned with a healthy weight.

In conclusion, a holistic approach in early years helps the development of young children to benefit their future and self. The holistic approach has been used in studies and contributed to many theorists' ideas to support children.

Maslow's Significance in Understanding Child Development

There are many areas of child development that Maslow has had great significance and input. In this essay play, transition and poverty will be discussed and how Maslow's research has developed the way we support children today.

Stated by the Unicef (no date) children have the right to play and be involved in a range of play activities. According to Brodie (2018) children find many ways to learn but a huge factor into child development is play and play interactions. It difficult to define play, however, play is necessary for children and babies, as this will be most of their learnt interaction time, but this will have to be an engaging play as young children may not have the ability to say they are not interested. Brodie (2018) also states that play should be led by the child and the child's interest than adult interference as the child will learn more from their led play as this will be more fun and focused on the child's whole interest rather than an adult stopping the child's creativity. The Welsh Government (2015) states that from education the provision and learning we offer should be holistic and focus on the children. Play can be a vital part of young children's learning as it can teach children concentration, perseverance and have children pay attention to detail. Children will also learn to become self-aware and learn social rules.

As stated by Egersdorff (2017) Maslow's hierarchy of needs come into play, as Maslow emphasizes the importance of meeting the human needs before a child can engage in an activity. So, play is a major part of a child's process of learning and self-regulation. Children engage in play when it isn't led by an adult as it becomes not on their own terms, play will be seen as a more engaging task when the child leads the play themselves. So, if a child isn't getting this type of play, then they are not meeting Maslow's requirement for physiological needs.

Dunlop (2002) Transitions in early years can be difficult for young children and they will be exposed to many different types of transition throughout their day whether be in education or within the family. Children may have other experiences before starting school if they have been in a daycare or some setting that may prepare them for educational transitions leaving those children to understand transition. Furthermore, Dunlop (2007) states that transition for a child is made for them parents decide that a change of environment such as school, will be a positive change due to their experience being positive or from positive feedback for their peers or family about a setting. However, for the child this can be very stressful as so much is different around them, a new environment, new adults, new peers and new timings which can disrupt their thinking process.

The curriculum for non-maintained settings (2022) agrees that transition whether it be bereavement, family separation or change in settings this is a major change for a child to handle. It is essential that transition is planned for with the needs of the individual children in mind as all children are different and may require different support. Children in Wales (no date) state that in a listening environment, children have the right to feel safe and confident in their surroundings and to have time to express themselves how they choose.

According to March (2021) their article gives an example of a child struggling when it comes for breaks within the school day. The child was left feeling scared and unsafe in their environment, staff stepped in to ensure he had a safe space for him and interventions to improve his sense of safety which the child responded positively to. The child was able to fulfil this need but also break through a barrier to enable trust in the practitioners and is now able to move onto the next stage in Maslow's theory.

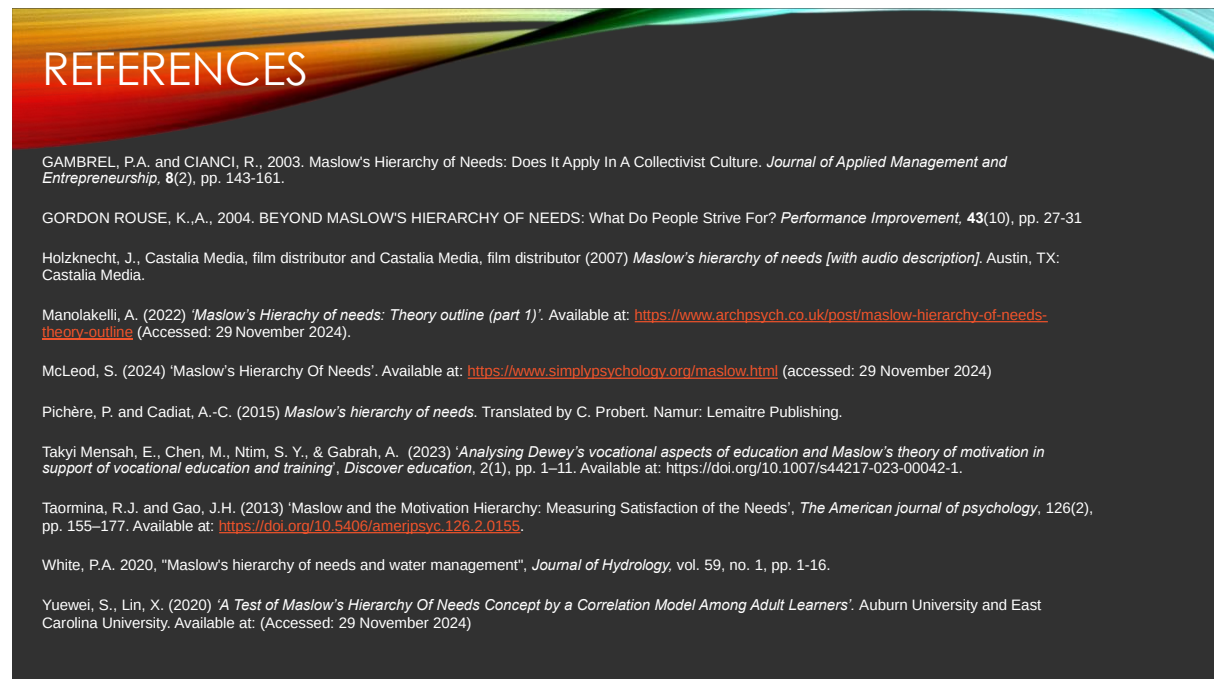
Poverty can have a huge impact on a child alone but also to the family and surroundings. In a case study provided by Lydon (2022) a child mentioned when her parents separated, she noticed that financially her mother was fine, but her father struggled on his own and had to move in with the grandmother. She remembers that she noticed her father panic when it came time to having to pay for things such as food. This making the child very aware of finances and having empathy to accommodate her father.

Similarly, Child Poverty Action Group (no date) states that poverty means children and families going without the necessities like going to bed hungry or school because they've had to skip a meal, have broken shoes so that their feet are socked through but cannot afford new ones. This can affect their future as their education will be impacted as on average children who are living in poverty don't succeed in education. This then directly impacts their future of poor health due to insufficient living standards due to costs and their mental health will be at higher risk of psychological distress. Maslow links in well according to Lygnegård (2013) as poverty affects the lower level of the pyramid of needs making this difficult for children exposed and living in poverty to move up and develop the necessary needs to move their way up the pyramid.

In conclusion, Maslow's significance to understanding child development is a crucial factor to measure where children fall on the pyramid and where they need support to work on progressing through the needs. Maslow's theory also helps to understand where children are through the different stages of early years practise.

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