

## **Cover Sheet**

### **Human Development**

For this assessment I have submitted the following:

**Part 1:** Develop an infographic to explore Maslow's model in depth.

**Part 2:** Explore in depth the concept of holistic child development with links to Maslow's model and other developmental theorists.

**Part 3:** Offer three examples from early years practice to highlight Maslow's significance in understanding child development, one of which should link to transitions.

I have not used AI.

**Part 1 - Infographic****Word Count: 1072****Abraham Maslow**

Abraham Maslow is a theorist known for creating the 'Hierarchy of Needs'. He was born in 1908 in Brooklyn, New York to Russian parents whom had an uneducated Jewish background. He studied a degree in law, though chose to move to a psychology degree. It was whilst working in the area of animal behaviour, where he discovered an interest in human sexuality. He began to consider the social, physiological and emotional needs in humans which led to his development of the 'Hierarchy of Needs'. Johnston et al.,(2018).

**Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs****Physiological**

The need for air, food, water and health.

These are the basic needs for human survival. Maslow believed that before any other stages of development, the basic needs of a human need to be met. 'A person who is lacking food, safety, love and esteem would most probably hunger for food more strongly than for anything else'. Maslow (1943).

**Safety**

The need for safety, shelter, stability.

Maslow considers the idea of safety in society and what that means to a human. For a child, there is a need for loving, supportive parents, who feel safe within themselves. 'Injustice, unfairness, or inconsistency in the parents seems to make a child feel anxious and unsafe.' Maslow (1943). Children require routine and see parents as their protector. Without this support and stability, they may see the world as unsafe place, which would affect the child developing onto the next step of the 'Hierarchy'. Maslow's ideas can be seen in the United Nation Rights of the Child, UNICEF(n.d). The rights outline the safety, social and cultural rights of every child which is supported by Welsh Government through legislation and the new curriculum.

Welsh Government share the belief of keeping children and people safe. They developed the Social Services and Wellbeing Act, (2014) and Working Together to Safeguard People guidance. They were created to guide those who work closely with vulnerable people, such as social care, education, health and police with good safeguarding practice. The Act outlines the job roles and responsibilities to ensure children and vulnerable people are kept safe, this includes working in partnership and engaging with families. (Wales Safeguarding Procedures, n.d)

**Social**

The need for love, belonging, inclusion.

Maslow talks of the need for belonging within society and the need for inclusion, 'He will hunger for affectionate relations with people in general, namely, for a place in his group, and he will strive with great intensity to achieve this goal'. Maslow (1943). He stated that the need for love did not just include sex, it is about finding like-minded people. Inclusion could include activities, or religious groups. A space to build on shared ideas and interests which, in turn, gives a sense of belonging.

### Ego

The need for self-esteem, power, control, recognition.

'Maslow believed to be able to reach the next stage of self-actualization, a human must experience achievement, independence, and recognition. He states, 'satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy of being useful and necessary to the world.' Maslow (1943). Maslow felt that power and recognition from others would build a human's self-esteem.



### Self-actualization

The need for development, creativity, growth.

'A Theory of Human Motivation' (1943) discusses the idea of a human wanting to become the best version of themselves. Maslow saw self-actualization as the highest point of human fulfilment. With all other needs met, he believed a human would develop a sense of restlessness and a desire to explore their passions. He writes, 'A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately happy. What a man can be, must be.' Maslow (1943).

### Further Discussion

Although the Theory is discussed as a hierarchy, Maslow considers how a human may move between the different stages throughout their life time. For example if a person lost their home due to job loss, they would no longer feel secure. It could affect their self-esteem and their ego, requiring the human to revisit these stages to build themselves back up. A human may zig-zag through the 'Hierarchy of needs' though out their lifetime. They could potentially never reach 'self-actualization' if they have suffered trauma throughout child and adulthood.

Maslow critiques his writing when discussing the stages of fulfilment, he argues, you do not need to be at 100 percent on every stage to develop onto the next need. 'In actual fact, most members of our society who are normal, are partially satisfied in all their basic needs at the same time.' Maslow (1943).

The report considers how the hierarchy may look different to those with different needs. Maslow talks of people who devalue food as their hunger has always been satisfied, however, a human who has always struggled for food, would consider physiological as a priority for happiness and fulfilment. Maslow (1943).

Maslow's findings were criticised for being over simplified and idealistic. The article 'A Theory of Human Motivation' was short and lacked detail, because of this, Maslow became his own critic and wrote a book 'Motivation and Personality' (1954). Within the book Maslow responds to criticism and delves into more detail of the hierarchy structure and self-actualisation, sharing more detail of people who reached the top of human needs. (Stoianov, 2017)

### Present Day

Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs', although produced in 1943, is still used throughout the childcare and education sector. Maslow's ideas can be seen within the United Nation Rights of the Child. Furthermore it has much relevance in regards to modern day needs, with the addition of technology and social media becoming prominent in the 21st century. There is regular conversation between professionals, governments and families about the use of technology and how it can have negative effects on children's wellbeing and their development. Welsh Government now face the challenge of supporting children to use technology in ways that will build knowledge, self-esteem and wellbeing, 'we recognise the importance of cyber resilience and have evolved activities in this important area ensuring children and young people are educated in using digital tools and the internet safely and appropriately.' Welsh Government (2024). Lack of support for children could result in future loss of money and homes due to online fraud, poor self-esteem, poor health and poor diet due to over use of social media. By building good knowledge, supporting children through the new age of technology, could help them to reach self-actualization in their adulthood.

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**Part 2****Word Count: 1100****Explore in depth the concept of holistic child development with links to Maslow's model.**

This essay will explore the concept of holistic child development with links to Maslow's model of the 'Hierarchy of needs'.

Holistic child development sees child development as a whole process. It is believed, children do not develop one area at a time, they develop cognitively, physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually and morally all at once. The statutory framework principles for the early years foundation stage (n.d) state that every child is an individual and learn differently dependant on age and stage, with all areas of learning and development being important and intertwined. An example of this could be, a child eating their snack. The child is learning physically to feed themselves, cognitively and intellectually to request their choices and recognise food, socially to sit with others and share and emotionally build their confidence through developing independence. Babies do not develop in a step by step process, such as learning to walk then learning to talk. They are building their knowledge in these areas simultaneously. It is considered how a child whom may be less developed in one area, may be affected in other areas of development. It is therefore suggested, how care and learning go hand in hand in regards to development when taking a holistic approach. (Brodie, 2018). This demonstrates that the Childcare Practitioner has a key role in supporting children through development, by showing care, inclusivity and understanding.

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs support holistic development, with the idea that there is need for food, health, care, shelter, love, self-esteem to support a child in reaching their milestones. Maslow shares the idea of step by step development, with the belief a human cannot develop onto the next stage of fulfilment without having built up from the stage before. He believed, if a human is hungry they will not be concerned about other steps of fulfilment such as, developing relationships, stability or shelter, their main focus would be finding food. (Maslow, A.H, 1943, p.5). It can be argued

however, that attachment is key to development and come before the most basics of needs, which is food.

Although controversial, Theorist Harry Harlow's experiments on baby rhesus monkeys, gave an insight into the theories of attachment. The experiment involved placing a group of baby monkeys with a wire 'mother' that produced milk and a cloth 'mother' that did not produce milk. The baby monkeys opted to stay close to the cloth 'mother' rather than feed from the wire 'mother', suggesting that a baby would choose the comfort and attachment of their mother over food. (Van Rosmalen et al., 2022.) This further solidifies the idea of the link between care, attachment and holistic development.

Theorist, Loris Malaguzzi created the 100 languages. He believed children learn in many different ways, have many different ideas and should not be restricted by adult ideology. 'They tell the child: that work and play, reality and fantasy. science and imagination, sky and earth, reason and dream are things that do not belong together. And thus they tell the child that the hundred is not there. The child says: No way. The hundred is there.' (Malaguzzi, 2022). He believed children shared joy through creativity, music, imagination and invention. A belief that is shared through holistic child development. Malaguzzi built the Reggio Emilia pre-schools in Italy, known for their child led approach. Children are involved in the planning of activities and practitioners are required to create an environment that is inviting and builds a sense of belonging for all. Reggio Emilia values share the idea of family, child, local community and staff links as a way of evaluating. (Reggio Emilia Approach, 2019.) With the close involvement of parents and the community, the practitioner is able to get a full insight of each child. They are able to plan an environment that is fully reflective of the children's development needs and interests, providing a range of activities and choice that supports holistic development. This approach stems back to attachment. Involving families can enhance the parent-child relationship, as the parent and child will have a shared, common interest. This is supported by current UK ideas, 'Partnerships with parents can be truly effective only when parents and practitioners work together to enable children to create meaningful connections to their wider world and to foster a love of learning.' (Birth to 5 Matters, 2021, p.28)

It is evident how the Reggio Emilia Approach supports Maslow's Hierarchy of need with its value's focusing on an environment which provides, safety, shelter and stability. The involvement of families, and the community provide a feeling of belonging, inclusion and love. From this the children can develop their self-esteem, take control of their own learning through the child led approach and achieve recognition when their ideas show results or create 'wonder'. This holistic way of learning could eventually lead to Maslow's idea of Self-Actualisation with the child confident and eager to develop their ideas.

Current Practice within Flying Start, Newport takes a child centred, holistic approach. Policies and procedures have been created following the guidance of Welsh Government. Welsh Government Curriculum gives the practitioner the template and requirements to build a curriculum suited to the setting and children attending. The guidance requires the practitioner to support children with the focus on three principles to support holistic learning. They are, enabling adults, engaging experiences and effective environments.(Welsh Government, 2023.) The Practitioners within the setting are required to observe, respond and reflect in order to support holistic learning. Each child has a key worker who will build a positive relationship with parent and child in order to help the child settle, develop, and build confidence. Through this practice, practitioners are able to create an environment that is suited to individual needs, enables free choice and builds on holistic development.

It is clear to see how holistic child development is supported through theorists which include Maslow, Uk Government and Welsh Government. Holistic learning enables to the child to explore all areas of development with the support and care of family and the childcare practitioner. It can be argued that settings such as Reggio Emilia can be difficult to replicate due to high cost. It can also be challenging for the practitioner to manage their time, evaluate and plan, particularly if there is staff absence. The links between the theorists and legislation mentioned, are the need for love, care and attachment. The childcare practitioner has a key role in supporting the child, as secure attachment can build self-esteem, which will, in turn, develop the child's confidence to explore, experiment and learn.

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**Part 3****word count: 1098**

**Offer three examples from early years practice to highlight Maslow's significance in understanding child development.**

This essay will offer three case studies from early years practice to highlight Maslow's significance in understanding child development.

**Transition**

The Early Years Practitioner is preparing to meet their key child on her first session of playgroup. The EYP has prepared for the child's visit by reading the 'All about me' filled in by the child's parent, it includes information of the child's favourite activities, comforters, names of family members and important information, such as, allergies. The EYP sets out toys the child might like and a photo of the child's family is hung on the 'family tree'. The EYP has already met the parent at a Welcome meeting where they offered reassurance, explained transition times and advised the parent to bring any comforters for the child. The parent is encouraged to phone at any time if they have concerns or questions.

The EYP has considered the child's need for safety and stability by encouraging short visits to playgroup, whilst the child familiarises their self with their new surroundings. The policies and procedures of the setting value partnership with parents, viewing the parent as key in providing knowledge of their child. They state that the practitioner will be honest and communicate effectively and are open to new ideas to support transition. (Newport City Council, 2025.)

Around the time of transitioning to nursery or reception, a child's brain is still at the stage of seeking attachment and wanting to avoid separation. It could therefore be considered that, ideally, a child should not be separated until their brain is developed to understand transition. However, there are many legitimate reasons as to why a child may have to go through short periods of separation. (O'conner, 2017.)

It can be seen how transitions can be challenging for a child of such a young age so should be handled with care. This supports Malow's theory who believes the need for safety and stability is the second stage of development needed for human fulfilment. As the child begins to settle, and adapts to new routine, they will begin to feel safe. The EYP has shown links to Malow's ideas of social development, by setting out the environment with activities the child would enjoy, allowing the child to access her own comforters and has added photos of the child and her family to the setting to support the feeling of belonging with links to home.

## **Play**

The Flying Start playgroup offers free-flow play opportunities. Children are able to come and go from indoors to outdoors throughout the session, independently, with access to activities and equipment planned from observation, response and evaluation by the EYP.

During the session, children take part in physical activity, building obstacle courses, taking risks by climbing, discovering nature, and mark making. Inside the children have access to role play, a sensory area, arts and craft, building and a cosy area with books. The

The example shows the children are active throughout the session and have a wide choice of activities. They are able to follow their own interests and build on their own ideas with the range of equipment provided.

Maslow's theory of the need for air and health is shared by Welsh Government who want to encourage health and an active lifestyle. It states, evidence shows that play can contribute to long-term and instant physical and mental health, well-being and resilience. (Gov.Wales, 2014.) Play also develops a child's confidence and self-esteem as they make new discoveries and explore the world around them. It links to Maslow's idea of looking at the whole person. It is not just about looking at basic needs, but providing opportunities for the child to be creative and test their ideas which could eventually lead, in Maslow's opinion, to self-actualization.

UNICEF (n.d) states, 'Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.' It can be argued that the Welsh Government need to do more into supporting all children, as Flying Start provision is offered to

children only in catchment areas that are deemed the most deprived, meaning there are children who are missing out on the same play opportunities due to the area they live in.

### **Snack Time**

The children are sat at the snack table. The Early Years Practitioner has prepared a healthy option of, fruit, toast, milk and water. The children are making their own choices of fruit they would like from the plate. A child, who has always refused fruit in the past, watches as the other children choose their snack. When offered, the child chooses to taste some orange. For the first time the child tastes fruit.

Welsh Government has shown support of Maslow's ideas of physiological needs. The Welsh Government Healthy Delivery Plan sets out a two year plan to reduce obesity in Wales. Using the 'Eat-well Plan' evidence to support this, the plan aims to target children and babies, stating that a healthy, nutritious diet and active lifestyle can have a positive impact on mental health, brain function and wellbeing. Welsh Government believe teaching and supporting children and families, particularly within the first 1000 days of a child's life, will create healthy habits and have long term benefits throughout adult life. Gov.Wales (2025).

The Trussel Trust argues that people in Wales are struggling to put food on the table, as they state 'Appalling levels of hunger and hardship in Wales should serve as a wake-up call for all political parties in Wales. We are calling on all political parties and election candidates in Wales to prioritise tackling hunger and hardship in Wales.' (Trussell.org.uk, 2024). This statement is emotive and shows the need for food within Wales. It could be argued that the Welsh Government need to focus less on what the children are eating and more on how they are eating if parents are unable to afford the basics.

It can be seen how the playgroup is supporting both ideas, by providing food to all the children who are attending. The EYP has ensured every child will have eaten that morning. They have also followed Government guidelines by providing a snack that is healthy. Giving the children choice, and surrounded by their peers, children are more likely to try new foods.

It is evident from these examples, how Maslow's ideas are reflected throughout childcare practice, with focus on health, care and wellbeing. With all these needs met the children are able to develop in confidence and self-esteem, with an eagerness to play and learn.

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