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Human development portfolio

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs is an important theory in human development and psychology. Maslow developed this theory in 1943 and he suggested a pyramid to describe the way humans operate, the lower levels are more basic needs and a person's desire to meet these needs are strong and should be met before moving up the pyramid to higher growth. This Infographic will explore each section of the pyramid in more detail, these are Physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualization. (Trivedi & Mehta, 2019)

In conclusion Maslow's hierarchy of needs shows the importance of people having their basic needs met before progressing toward higher levels of development on the pyramid and having them met consistently. Physiological and safety needs are key for learning, while connection and esteem support emotional growth and a person's mental health. The model suggests that unmet needs like physiological needs can limit a person's ability to succeed and thrive in life. Self-actualization shows that the journey that a person can be on to being a better self is only achievable only when earlier needs are met consistently. Understanding these stages supports better development and stronger relationships.

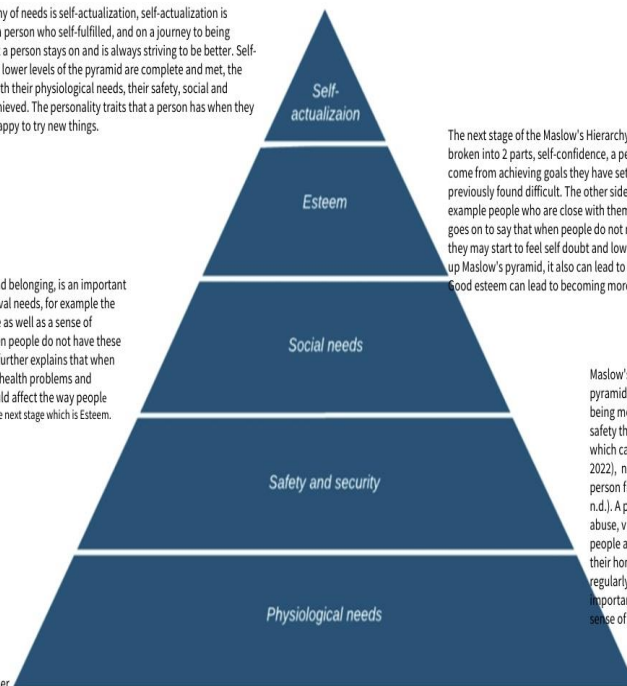
The last part of Maslow's pyramid of hierarchy of needs is self-actualization, self-actualization is described by Calm Editorial Team (2024) as a person who self-fulfilled, and on a journey to being complete. self-actualization is a journey that a person stays on and is always striving to be better. Self-actualization can only be achieved when the lower levels of the pyramid are complete and met, the article says that if a person is not satisfied with their physiological needs, their safety, social and esteem then self-actualization cannot be achieved. The personality traits that a person has when they are on this journey are curiosity and being happy to try new things.

Maslow's social needs can be referred to as well as the love and belonging, is an important point in the pyramid for people as it is more than just survival needs, for example the physiological needs. Relationships are important to people as well as a sense of belonging in community, CFI Team (n.d.) explains that when people do not have these needs met, they can experience loneliness. Hopper (2024) further explains that when people do not have key relationships, they can experience health problems and wellbeing issues such as mental health conditions, this could affect the way people move up and down Maslow's pyramid and could not move up to the next stage which is Esteem.

The next stage of the Maslow's Hierarchy of needs is Esteem, Maslow suggests that esteem can be broken into 2 parts, self-confidence, a person feeling happy and confident in their abilities, this can come from achieving goals they have set for themselves and being able to do something they have previously found difficult. The other side of esteem is esteem that people receive from other, for example people who are close with them, or could be bosses in work (Hopper, 2024) the article goes on to say that when people do not receive validation and praise from people close to them they may start to feel self doubt and low in confidence, which can lead to people not being to move up Maslow's pyramid, it also can lead to people not trying new things in life and becoming isolated. Good esteem can lead to becoming more self-resilient.

Maslow's safety needs are second on the hierarchy of needs pyramid, once people are satisfied with their physiological needs being met they start to search for safety in all environments, without safety the brain can stay in a heightened frame of threat detection, which can lead to high blood pressure (Harvard Health Publishing, 2022), not allowing the brain to function properly and stop the person from learning (Interaction Design Foundation, n.d.). A person's physical safety can include being safe from abuse, violence and dangerous situations day to day. This means that people are not living in a home that is neglectful, having care givers in their homes and lives ready to meet their needs regularly unconditionally (Age UK, 2023). Overall, safety needs are important to develop and sense of happiness in their lives, creating a sense of safety.

The different physiological needs children have are sleeping, eating, drinking and breathing and shelter, all things children need to survive, the most basic needs. children need these needs met before they can move up the pyramid. (Richards, P. and Cadiot, 2015). The physiological needs are the foundation of Maslow's pyramid of hierarchy of needs and are the most important to survival. Kenrick et al. (2010) argues that you can jump between the stages of the pyramid day to day, for example children can be hungry and still learn, they further suggest the pyramid does not have to be followed in such a linear way. However, Channell (2025) explains that by not meeting a child's physiological needs the child will struggle to engage in any higher-level needs, the brain switches priority to surviving therefore safety and esteem become less important.



Component 2

Introduction

According to HEI Schools (2022) holistic child development is the overall emotional, social, mental and physical growth of the child. Focusing on a holistic approach to the child's education not just improve the child's academic advancements, but their whole development in the wider world, for example their wellbeing, which can support everything in a child's life. The article further suggests that when holistic child development is at the forefront of a caregiver's mind children can thrive. This essay will explore holistic child development with links to Maslow's hierarchy of needs model. According to NSPCC Learning (2021), attachment in childhood can affect childhood development to which will also be explored in this essay, attachment theory explores how a child's development can be hindered by insecure attachment, and how children can thrive when they have secure attachments.

What does holistic child development include and how can it be supported?

According to Admin (2023), holistic child development includes physical development, which is a key part to childhood development, physical development includes a child's fine motor skills, gross motors skills, the hand eye coordination skills and most importantly the health of the child. Then comes cognitive development which refers how a child's brain processes information such as language skills and how children think and react and the child's memory. It also includes how children communicate with others. Finally, we have the child's Social and emotional development which includes a child's ability to understand and manage their emotions such as anger and happiness and how children can form relationships with others. All of these link with one another can affect each other's development, for example a child who is dysregulated will struggle to be kind and that can affect the social and emotional development stunting relationships.

According to TeachKloud (2023), to support the holistic development of children practitioners should be equitable and child Centred to what the child needs to thrive, and people around the child be actively responding to what the child needs to grow. According to Olsen (2023) children should be active participants in their daily learning and

environments, this is named child agency, Olsen says environments should be enabling for the child, which can support all holistic development for children. QMU (2023) says that holistic child development is key in early years in supporting a strong start to life and giving children a chance to live a long happy life.

Birth to 5 Matters (n.d.) suggests that educational settings have a key role in supporting holistic child development, they can support their physical development by providing rich gross motor and fine motor activities, their cognitive development by providing challenging and enriching learning opportunities, and their social and emotional development by allowing them to play with their peers

Maslows hierarchy of needs linked to holistic development

Care Learning (2024) suggests that Maslow's model of hierarchy of needs and holistic child development are interlinked and that Maslow's model supports child development as it explains what children need to grow physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually.

Egersdorff and Mundy (2017) explains that the physiological needs of the child which are the basic survival needs such as food, water, sleep and air, without these the child can struggle to concentrate and regulate their emotions, linking it to holistic development these issues can affect cognitive development. Without enough food children's growth can affect their physical development which can lead to gross and motor skill issues. Another example is if a child is tired, this can affect their physical development to (Setyawan et al., 2021)

The next two tiers on Maslow's model are safety and esteem needs, According to TeachKloud when children feel safe and looked after they can start to explore their environments more, which can support their physical and cognitive development, by socialising with peers and learning. Unsafe environments around the child can lead to behavioural issues and developmental delays, leading to poor cognitive development and poor social and emotional development, affecting holistic development.

Overall, Maslow's model shows that children's holistic development is best when their basic physical, emotional, and social needs are met first by adults around them such as caregivers

and practitioners. when looked after properly, children can fully engage in their learning, build confidence and build lasting friendships.

Attachment and holistic development

According to bowlby (2012) the way children form attachments with care givers can shape the way they develop and the way they behave.

A child with a secure attachment to their care givers receive sensitive, consistent and responsive care. Bowlby says that children who have secure attachments are more likely to explore their environments which can lead to holistic cognitive development and physical development. These children also have healthier relationships with their peers, and new adults they meet, for example teachers and practitioners.

Bowlby further says that children with insecure attachment styles can have their development affected by stress, worries and trauma. Children with insecure attachment styles can have poor relationships, struggle with stress and self-regulation, and avoiding exploring. All these factors can impact the child's holistic development.

Conclusion

When considering all these factors together, they show a clear picture of the way children develop holistically. Maslow shows what children need to thrive in their lives, from basic survival needs to Love and belonging. Attachment theory shows that lots of these needs are met through consistent loving care giving, and shows what impacts that inconsistent care giving can have on the holistic development of children. When children's needs are met individually to what they need, they are more likely to develop healthily and more likely to thrive in life.

Component 3

Reflection one- food first policy

Description

When I first started in the pupil inclusion centre it was the first time in a professional setting that I encountered a food first policy (food, drink and chewing gum), the policy aims for the children to have small snacks during the day to try and avoid hunger related stress, and low levels of behaviour that can escalate into more serious behaviour. The children are also offered a healthy breakfast on entry to school.

Feelings

At first when I went into the unit, I was a bit confused by the policy, especially after when a serious incident occurred the staff were offering food straight away, I questioned why child A was getting a toastie after punching child B, but after discussions and training on a trauma informed approach and more understanding of child psychology and physiological needs, I got the policy and was more happy to apply it.

Evaluation

The food first policy is in line with the model of Maslow's hierarchy of needs where children's physiological needs should be met before practitioners put demands on them including behavioural demands (Community Playthings, 2017). The children also appear happier when offered food and drink after an incident takes place, which calmed them down quicker.

Another difficulty we found was that children were asking for food sometimes during inappropriate times for example during a task or 10 minutes before dinner, we as staff had to find a happy balance to apply this policy and make sure that the policy was applied consistently (Watts, 2022) otherwise children would get frustrated, and sometimes they still do.

As the policy is to care for the children, Capes (2024) suggests that the children can feel safe and cared for which can lead to relationships, which directly links to Maslow.

Analysis

Allen and Smith (2015) suggest that chewing gum can also help children attention and listening skills, and their ability to regulate themselves throughout the day, our pupils enjoy chewing gum which suggests this to be the case. This is offered to pupils, with their parents' prior consent.

SENSible SENCO (2023) suggests that pupils with additional learning needs should have their basic physiological needs met first before practitioners place any learning demands on them, otherwise practitioners are setting the pupil up to fail.

Conclusion

Reflecting on my settings food first policy I can see that in meeting children's physiological need to eat, we can reduce quick irritation that leads to fighting, swearing and not listening, reducing these behaviours has led to a nurturing environment where children can learn and grow.

Action plan

To ensure that I always have children's physiological needs in the back of my mind before dealing with children, always trying to think, what does this child need?

Reflection two –soft start approach

Description

In 2024 our headteacher introduced a soft start to the school day, for every class in the school, day to day in my setting this looks like dimmed lights with soft music in the background when the children enter between 9:00 and 9:15 and are offered low demand activities like colouring in and Lego.

Feelings

You can see that this approach works straight away, the pupils come in and are calm and not expected to work straight away with demand. This approach makes me happy as there is no pressure to get children on task or making sure, they are learning, only to support pupils to regulate and be available just for a chat if the children need one.

Evaluation

Watson (2024) suggests that the soft start approach can help children transition into the classroom as this is a challenge for many pupils, which I believe we as a setting have found. Which has had a direct impact on the number of incidents we have seen in the setting which has been fewer.

A few pupils require a longer soft start to their day, for example one pupil comes into school and goes straight into a 1-1 low demand ELSA session. This can cause issue if we are short staffed therefore pupils do not get the adult attention, they need to start their day positively, however this happens very rarely.

Analysis

Kline (N.D) says that children cannot thrive in the classroom without feeling safe, which directly links to Maslow's hierarchy of needs as safety is an important stage in moving

up the pyramid, therefore practitioners should always try and aim for a nurturing environment, which is why my school introduced the soft start.

Watson (2024) further says that a soft start approach can reduce student anxiety as they come into the classroom, promote the social and emotional development of pupils, and promote a calm environment by creating a relaxing atmosphere, this links to Maslow again as it links to children's safety needs (Parsons, 2024)

A soft start approach to the day can also reduce pupils' anxiety, which can be linked to higher levels of blood pressure which can create possible health problems down the line for pupils, an elevated blood pressure can also make children stressed which can affect learning (Astudillo *et al.*, 2024)

Conclusion

Overall, a soft start approach aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs model as it promotes safety and connection, I firmly believe the positives of this approach outweighs the few negatives. This approach aims to reduce the anxiety pupils feel, which can make behaviour better.

Action plan

I would like to observe pupils more closely as they enter school to identify any triggers.

Reflection one- key adult

Description

My setting uses a key adult approach which means that every child has a key adult that will say hello to them in the morning and do a morning check in, recently one of my children was really struggling in the morning, so I spent 1-1 time with him until he was regulated.

Feelings

I was happy I could support this child to co-regulate so that he could have a successful day.

Evaluation

This approach sometimes does not work if the member of staff is not in school, however this happens rarely, the children have verbally said before they enjoy having a key adult.

Analysis

Primary Behaviour Support Service (2020) suggests that a key adult approach can help students develop key relationships and they are good for pupils with attachment issues this links to Maslow as pupils can develop attachments to help them feel safe.

Conclusion

This showed the key adult approach supports children with their regulation and can lead to a calmer school day.

Action plan

I will develop my co regulation techniques to provide a better experience for the children.

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