

Human Development

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MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Introduction- This infographic examines Abraham Harold Maslow's model of hierarchy of needs theory.



Stoyanov (2017) explains that physiological needs are of greater importance than any other need, and are the fundamental bodily requirements necessary for survival, including essentials like food, water, air and health. Maslow explains that, when these needs are removed, a person's primary focus is to secure these basic resources, as nothing else will matter, a child who is hungry or tired, for example, will struggle to focus on learning and interacting, (Stoyanov, 2017). According to Welsh Government (n.d) children are more likely to reach their full potential and are healthier if they receive a nutritious breakfast before the school day begins, hence the Welsh Government's initiative currently providing free breakfast for children of school age. Another initiative of Welsh Government supporting Maslow's theory was to address child poverty, providing school age children with free school meals improving food and nutrition in schools, supporting higher standards of learning and achievement and prioritising children's health, (Welsh Government News, 2022). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) declares that children have the right to life with governments ensuring they support children to reach their potential and survive, (UNICEF, 1989). Maslow observed that once physiological and safety needs are satisfied, secondary needs begin to emerge, physiological needs remain priority over all other needs and satisfying these needs impact physical health and well-being (Stoyanov, 2017). However Lindon (2012) explores the idea that a child's development is shaped by genetic makeup before birth and that experiences build upon this in contrast to Maslow's theory that lower needs need to be satisfied to aid development and growth, Arnold Gessell believed that child development was controlled by information within the genes and that the environment played a part in development but the need for change and progression came from within the child's biological programming, (Lindon, 2012).

Stoyanov (2017) notes that Maslow identifies safety as a primary need for the child, safety from danger, the environment but also from poverty, and essential for parenting well balanced children. Children need a secure, stable and predictable environment where unexpected or harmful events are unlikely to occur (Stoyanov, 2017). Johann Petalozzi explains how a secure home environment is the foundation of happiness and serves as the base for learning, (Pound, 2006). The UNCRC (article 27) supports Maslow's theory and states that children have a right to a standard of living that meets their social and physical needs which supports their development. Research highlights the importance of parental warmth, security, stability, consistency, and clear boundaries in supporting children's development. When caregivers provide a dependable sense of safety, children feel more confident to explore, discover, and take risks, fostering learning and growth (Wilson 2016). Jerome Burner suggested that children without basic needs including shelter, stability and warmth have limited intellectual stimulation and would be significantly disadvantaged especially without the support of early years practitioners and teachers, (Lindon 2012). The Wales Safeguarding Procedures specify the critical roles and responsibilities of practitioners to protect children by addressing their needs, including ensuring the individual's safety if the child is experiencing or likely to experience significant, ongoing harm, (safeguarding.wales, n.d.).

The next essential need is for love, affection, and a sense of belonging (social needs). According to Maslow, rejection of this need is a leading cause of emotional maladjustment and severe psychological issues, (Stoyanov, 2017). Lindon (2012) supports this idea referring to John Bowlby's theory of attachment where mothers are considered the most crucial influence in a young child's early life providing love, care and warmth. Wilson (2016) notes how Bowlby's theory explains how separation from the mother and a lack of secure attachment, impacts the child's emotional and social development and learning. The need to belong suggests that, beyond caregiver relationships, interactions and connections with non-family members are also important from early stages of development, (Over, 2016). Barbra Tizard challenges Bowlby's theory, that nurturing and love is partly shown by the mother and that fathers and close members of the family and familiar adults will equally fill the need for love and belonging, (Lindon, 2012). Flying Start is an early years program initiated by the Welsh Government, specifically designed for families with children under the age of four living in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales. Part of their aim is to encourage bonding and attachment promoting inclusion, fostering strong parent-child relationships that lead to secure emotional connections for children, (Welsh Government, 2017). According to Kemple (2016) children who participate in programs aimed at strengthening their social and emotional skills demonstrate better academic outcomes.

Maslow identifies the next level of needs as the need for self-esteem, control and recognition. Pound (2006) explains how Jean Piaget describes how children need to be in control of their learning, being curious and constructing knowledge independently, through uninterrupted sessions of exploration through play, supporting the child's power and self-esteem through learning. Erik Erikson believed that children need authentic choices along with clear, consistent, and reasonable boundaries, while also recognizing and accepting their shifts between independence and dependence, (Pound 2006). The Curriculum for Wales aims to support the development of high self-esteem in children by focusing on holistic, inclusive, and child-centered education. It emphasizes a well-rounded approach that values children's individuality, strengths, and contributions, fostering a sense of belonging and worth, (Welsh Government, 2020). In addition to this children need to feel valued through praise and recognition of their achievements, Robins (2012) notes how praise is a strong motivator acknowledging children's positive behaviour or accomplishments fosters confidence and boosts their self-esteem.

Maslow's final need is for self-actualization, the need for development, creativity and growth and a longing need for accomplishment. Children need freedom to be creative to explore allowing progression and development. The Curriculum for Wales allows for children to unleash their creativity and is driven by children's voice emphasizing a holistic approach to education, fostering a sense of freedom and curiosity in learners, the curriculum focuses on creating engaged, motivated, and independent learners who are encouraged to explore their interests and knowledge, (Welsh Government 2022). Pound (2006) supports this need explaining that the curriculum needs to be relevant to engage learning and development with hands on enriched experiences available for children to explore. Jean Piaget describes how children as scientists, actively participating in their own learning being more engaged and ready to learn, (Pound, 2006). The UNCRC (article 29) notes that every child has the right to an education that develops their talents, abilities and personalities, (UNICEF 1989), however Maslow explains that all children have the potential to develop their talents, abilities and personalities to reach self-actualisation but at times the inability to do so is disrupted by failing to satisfy lower more important needs, (Stoyanov, 2017).

Conclusion- Maslow's hierarchy of needs explains how fulfilling each level of need is essential for children's holistic development.

Part 2- The Significance of Maslow's Model to Support Holistic Child Development.

Hodgkins and Prowle (2023) describe holistic child development as a focus on a child's overall well-being and growth, considering their emotional, physical, social, cognitive and spiritual needs. This approach considers how these areas interconnect and examines how each area of development influences the others, (Brodie, 2018). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs supports the concept of holistic child development, prioritising children's needs and explains that physiological needs carry more importance than self-actualization, that learning, development and growth is only possible when essential needs are satisfied, addressing the importance of a holistic approach to child development, (Stoyanov, 2017).

Maslow notes that physiological needs form the foundation for all other areas of development, these are basic needs (food, water, health, sleep), (Stoyanov, 2017). From when babies are born adults provide the care that is required to satisfy these needs, addressing their social, emotional, physical, cognitive and language needs through care and nurturing impacts their health and well-being, (Brodie, 2018). Babies have a natural ability to communicate these needs from birth, and this skill is essential for their development and learning, greatly impacting social and emotional and physical development, (McMahon and Dyer, 2019). Expressing their needs and communicating through quality experiences involving proto-conversations, coos, cries, and joint attention, are an important part of a child's social and emotional development and is the beginning of establishing secure relationships which strengthens their growth, (Brodie, 2018). Brodie (2018) notes how the caregiver must be responsive with consistent engagement through, talking, eye gaze and cuddles to strengthen emotional and social development securing attachment. During the first months of baby's life with time spent through interaction, communication, play and physical care routines, attachment becomes stronger between mother and baby, (Lindon, 2012). Wilson (2016) explores John Bowlby's theory that mothers are potentially the crucial ingredient in a baby's social and emotional development, and through this attachment with mother being the provider of food, life and safety, the child begins to feel secure.

Maslow suggests that once physiological needs are met the need for security (emotional, physical and psychological safety) becomes a priority, (Stoyanov, 2017). A secure attachment brings emphasis on developing relationships and emotional safety. Lindon (2012) believes attachment contributes towards children's confidence and the need for their primary relationships to be stable and consistent. Their emotional security relies not only on receiving physical comfort and care but also on feeling emotionally present and valued by their primary caregiver. This emotional confidence and safety have a substantial impact on holistic development, and the foundation that encourages exploration, discovery and risk-taking, promoting learning and growth through all areas of development, (Wilson, 2016). Hodgkins and Prowle (2023) explain that children who feel safe and supported are more prepared to begin forming their own relationships and friendships strengthening their social development. This supports Maslow's view of holistic development, where security and protection are essential before social needs, as a child cannot learn without feeling safe and able to trust their environment and those around them.

Skills within social development along with other areas are explored within Maslow's next area of need referring to love, belonging and inclusion. Social competence refers to the ability to reach personal goals in social situations while fostering positive relationships. It includes the social, emotional, and cognitive skills and knowledge children need to succeed in their interactions, (Kemple, 2016). According to Stoyanov (2017) Maslow believes that if a child feels loved they are more able to socially interact and contribute to social experiences within their learning. A sense of belonging described by Wilson (2016) comes from the confidence of successful positive social interactions where children gradually form beliefs and values about their own self-worth, shaped by others' ability and willingness to offer care and protection. Forming trusting and affectionate relationships makes a child feel included and can contribute towards developing increased resilience and self-regulation skills (Hodgkins and Prowle, 2023). Children also need to build relationships and friendships with their peers to achieve a sense of belonging within a group, Lindon (2012) explains how children need to be in each other's company regularly as part of feeling included in games and shared interests to form

friendships, this supports their engagement with others, empathy, self-esteem, cooperation and ultimately supports holistic development. Vygotsky believed that children learn through social experiences and discovery, and the relationships that develop between adult and child in a secure, stable, learning environment mean that adults play a significant role in educating children, (Lindon, 2012).

According to Stoyanov (2017) self-esteem fosters emotional, social, and cognitive growth, leading to feelings of strength, competence, and a sense of being valued. Control and power are emphasized within this need. Lindon (2012) highlights the importance of a flexible learning environment that gives children the power and control to physically explore and use resources, supporting cognitive development and helping them make sense of their learning to reinforce holistic development. As their competence and self-esteem grow, children become more aware of their rights and responsibilities and spirituality and the need to experience them within their own world (Kemple, 2016). Erikson firmly believed that this was important for children's development by giving children genuine but simple choices, setting clear, reasonable and consistent boundaries fosters confidence through their holistic development, (Pound, 2006). Pound (2006) also notes how Erikson describes how children need recognition and the adult's role in recognising children's accomplishments, through praise and support focusing on what the child can do not and not what they can't, encouraging achievements and confidence to further investigate and learn.

Stoyanov (2017) explains how reaching self-actualisation encompasses growth and empowers the child to reach their full potential across all aspects of child development. Reaching self-actualisation children are ready to challenge themselves, test their abilities and solve problems as part of their cognitive development, through being secure within all lower needs (Wilson, 2012). Piaget describes how children need to be in control of their own learning and understanding, constructing and gathering knowledge, and refers to the child as a 'scientist' within their development, (Lindon, 2012). Wilson (2012) suggests children need various opportunities to present their discoveries to negotiate through indoor and outdoor creative play. Welsh Government (2023) state that the indoor and outdoor environment should play a central role in providing learners with authentic

experiences, promoting holistic development.

In conclusion, holistic child development emphasizes the importance of nurturing all aspects of a child's growth, emotional, social, cognitive, and physical. Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides an understanding of this process, with each level building on the previous one to support the child's overall well-being. Through this holistic approach, children can develop the confidence, competence, and resilience needed for future growth and development.

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Part 3 – Examples Within Early Years Practice Including the Significance of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Child Development.

Mealtime

According to Maslow a child's learning and development is greatly impacted by a lack of physiological needs, he explains that children who are hungry will struggle to concentrate and achieve, (Stoyanov, 2017). The UNCRC (United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child), article twenty four, explains that children have the right to be healthy where government should provide a clean environment, good quality health care, food and water. Children should also be well educated regarding well-being and their health encouraging them to maintain their own health, (UNICEF, 1989). Welsh Government supports both Maslow and the UNCRC by funding free breakfast to all primary school aged children in an attempt to raise standards of learning, development and achievement, (Welsh Government, n.d).

Mealtimes support physical development which is part of Maslow's physiological needs. The use of cutlery exercises children's fine motor skills and helps to develop and strengthen their pincher grip required for holding pencils and various marking equipment. As children develop and grow mealtimes provide opportunities for children to strengthen their gross motor skills, carrying water jugs and trays, (Early Years Careers, n.d). According to Pound (2006) children need to be in control of their learning, carrying water jugs and food trays during mealtimes provides opportunities for children to be independent and to find things out for themselves (e.g experimenting with weight and balance), this aligns with Maslow's ego stage of needs.

Transitions

Children can find change challenging and stressful, this puts emphasise around the practitioner to take time to understand and know the differences between each individual child and to tailor the approach and teaching accordingly, (El-Moslimany, 2018). Welsh Government (2019) encourage primary school settings to communicate with parents and staff members also pupils to create a 'One Page Profile' for each child, including positive information regarding the child's likes/dislikes, also what and who is important to them. This information highlights the

best way to support the child's development over all areas and contributes towards their well-being especially through transitions. Transitions within childcare brings focus on fostering relationships between children, parents, and practitioners, (Hostettler Scharer, 2018). Maslow's need for safety and stability explains how children need an orderly, safe environment away from unexpected and unmanageable dangers, but also the safety and stability that comes from trusting adults and forming relationships, (Stoyanov, 2017). Hodgkins and Prowle (2023) believe that when children feel supported and safe they will show a readiness to build relationships. During transition the child needs to receive a warm and empathetic response from the adults in the new environment, they will begin to trust relationships and that their needs will be met, fostering a sense of security and belonging within the child, which will support and strengthen the child's emotional and social development. Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory suggests that a stable and secure relationship with at least one caregiver is essential for healthy social and emotional development (Hostettler Scharer, 2018). Children who have secure attachments to their primary carers feel free to take risks, discover, learn and explore knowing that they can return to the consistent, secure adult, (Wilson, 2016). Brodie (2018) explains how attachment forms the foundation of emotional development.

Outdoor Play

When children have reached self-actualisation within Maslow's hierarchy of needs, all other needs have been satisfied and within this need children have the ability to reach their full potential, (Stoyanov, 2017). Outdoor play provides opportunities for challenge and risk, children are free to explore and learn to further their development, Hodgkins and Prowle (2023) note how children should challenge themselves and their abilities to problem solve as it is an important aspect of their cognitive development and growth. Outdoor play is crucial for children's well-being, emotional, social, physical and spiritual development, exploring outdoors can enhance a child's confidence through exploratory play, (Gov.wales, 2018). Playing outdoors provides opportunities to develop a child's physical skills as well as knowledge and understanding of the world as they naturally incorporate movements including jumping, running and climbing into their play, (Luchetti, 2023). The adult's

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role includes supporting and encouraging children to explore and engage within their play allowing children to be curious and encouraging independent, natural learning, (Gov.wales, 2018). Welsh Government (2020) have designed a curriculum that supports pupils to become capable lifelong learners, showing creativity and confidence which supports Maslow's need for self-actualisation. Froebel describes children as curious, creative and active learners with the outdoor environment being central to the child's learning and development. His ideas coincide with Maslow's, explaining that children who have well developed social and emotional skills thrive across all areas of development, (Tovey, 2013). Children's confidence through satisfying lower needs allows them to be inquisitive, Piaget stated that children need to explore and discover to aid their development, (Pound, 2006).

Conclusion – Maslow's model explains how satisfying children's needs strengthens their ability to reach their full potential across all areas of development.

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Appendix

I have not used AI.