1.1: Principles of Development

There are several underlying principles of development to keep in mind:

- Development is lifelong and change is apparent across the lifespan (although this text ends with adolescence). And early experiences affect later development.
- Development is multidirectional. We show gains in some areas of development while showing loss in other areas.
- Development is multidimensional. We change across three general domains/dimensions; physical, cognitive, and social and emotional.
  - The physical domain includes changes in height and weight, changes in gross and fine motor skills, sensory capabilities, the nervous system, as well as the propensity for disease and illness.
  - The cognitive domain encompasses the changes in intelligence, wisdom, perception, problem-solving, memory, and language.
  - The social and emotional domain (also referred to as psychosocial) focuses on changes in emotion, self-perception, and interpersonal relationships with families, peers, and friends.
- Development is characterized by plasticity, which is our ability to change and that many of our characteristics are malleable. *Early experiences are important, but children are remarkably resilient (able to overcome adversity).*
- Development is multicontextual. We are influenced by both nature (genetics) and nurture (the environment) - when and where we live and our actions, beliefs, and values are a response to circumstances surrounding us. The key here is to understand that behaviors, motivations, emotions, and choices are all part of a bigger picture.

Now let's look at a framework for examining development.
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