How to study children...

3 Issues:

- What do we want to study?
- How do we study it?
- How do we interpret what we find?

Defining “a Child”

- Abilities or restrictions?
- Individual or part of a system?
- Universal norms?
**Developmental Domains**

- **Physical**
  - Body structures & motor development
- **Cognitive**
  - Mental processes (perception, memory, thinking, language)
- **Social-Emotional**
  - Emotions, personality, & social skills

**Source of Development**

- **Endogenous** (Nature)
  - Biology & maturation
  - Emphasis on individual
- **Exogenous** (Nurture)
  - Caregivers & stimuli
  - Emphasis on context
- **Interactionist**
  - Ecological approach
  - Influences work together

**Bronfenbrenner’s System Theory**
Influences on Caregiver Behavior

- Perception of development as continuous or discontinuous (stages) quantitative or qualitative

- Perception of cause maturation or experience endogenous or exogenous

- Situational priorities
Research Focus

- Normal vs. atypical
- Optimum vs. problematic
- Outcome vs. experience

Research Goals

- Description
- Prediction
- Causation

Research Designs

- Descriptive
  - Norms (central tendencies)
  - Variability (standard deviation, range)
- Correlations
  - Relations between variables
  - Existing variables
- Experiments
  - Compare groups
  - Independent (created) variable
  - Assess causality
  - Quasi-Experimental
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