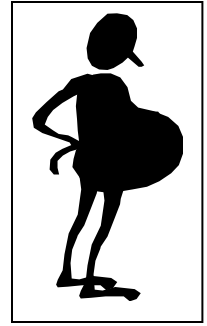


Environmental Influences on Child Development

The prenatal environment:

- The chemical balance of the mother's body and the presence of conditions or potentially toxic substances that can alter development processes.
- Examples are the mother's use of drugs or alcohol, viral or bacterial diseases, and direct traumatic injury to the fetus.



The physical environment

- The air the child breathes, the nutritional value of food the child eats.
- Exposure to conditions that can lead to disease, accident, or injury, including child abuse and neglect.

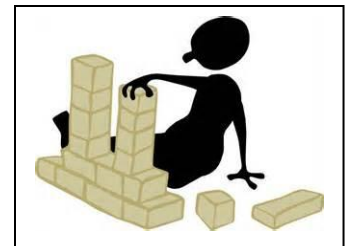


The social/cultural environment

- Consists of the norms, values, belief systems and morals.
- Standards of behavior that regulate life in the cultural group in which the child is raised.

The learning environment

- The degree and type of stimulation available in the child's immediate environment.
- Sensory input promotes and shapes cognitive development.
- Stimulation, in adequate quantity and intensity, promotes establishment of, and "shapes," neural pathways in the brain.



The emotional environment

- The nature of the child's interpersonal relationships.
- The degree of nurturance available to the child.
- The emotional environment shapes personality and affects the development of self-esteem, identity, trust, the ability to enter into intimate relationships, and personal resilience.

