



THE IDEAL CHILDHOOD

INTRODUCTION

Our vision of an “ideal childhood” comes from varying perspectives, cultural, ethnic, linguistic and social backgrounds. Our unifying thread: a view that the ideal childhood involves nurturing the whole child through enriching interactions with the world around them.



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**Combined-Integrated
Doctoral Program in
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1. FULFILLMENT OF BASIC NEEDS

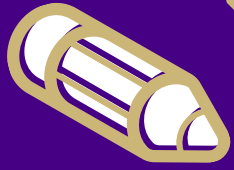
- As a foundation, an ideal childhood requires the fulfillment of the most basic human needs, such as safety, food, shelter, clean water, and sanitation.
- Research has consistently documented lasting negative effects of a failure to satisfy these necessities during early childhood, with implications for cognitive and social-emotional development and physical growth.
- Beyond these obvious physical requirements, another basic necessity of an ideal childhood is time and space to play, which affords the opportunity to explore the environment, attempt new skills, build physical strength, and negotiate with peers.

2. RELATIONSHIP WITH CAREGIVERS AND FAMILY

- A child’s relationship with their caregivers and family forms the foundation for how the child learns to interact with the world and interact with other people.
- It is important for the child to have a nurturing emotional climate at home where the child feels secure, safe and loved. Through reliable and secure emotional connection, the child learns that the world is not to be feared, but is a place full of opportunities.
- In an ideal childhood, caregivers take care of their own mental health and well-being.

3. COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

- Supportive relationships include children’s caregivers, whose focus is providing a safe and stable foundation where a child can explore and extend. The child should have a particular relationship, or multiple relationships where the child perceives and feels that they are truly cared for and loved. The desire would be they would grow feeling valued and acknowledge from the earliest stages in life.
- The goal would be to wrap around the child, creating a collection of moments worth remembering guiding them through challenges, failures, successes, praises and losses into a foundational sounding board full of positive potential.



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Factors that contribute to a healthy childhood experience include:

Meeting the child's basic physiological needs and ensuring all his/her fundamental human rights including play are honored. He/She should have a secure psycho-emotional space for interacting with his/her caregivers, allowing for a wider network of supportive relationships that pass on values and cultural lessons. Ultimately, the child's relationship framework serves as the foundation for the sense of autonomy and trust that will color his/her life.



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4. VALUES AND LESSONS

- It is important that children learn fundamental humanitarian values of love, compassion, peace, and honesty. Additionally, the value of diversity and in return appreciating and respecting other's diversity of race, ethnicity, orientations, identities, beliefs, and cultures.
- In an ideal childhood, the child learns the value of failure and recognizes it not as an end but a beginning for future successes.
- Through these values, it is hoped that they will treasure their family, friendships, community, and the natural environment around them. That they will become civic-minded, global citizens.

5. AUTONOMY, SELF-BELIEF AND IDENTITY

- Autonomy and trust are two fundamental psychological needs. The independence to carry over tasks, establish relationships and having the legitimacy to give space to emotions are the building blocks of cultivating trust with the self and others.
- Through acquisition of life-skills and through reference to past success, the child gains a better sense of competence in different tasks and situations.
- Children should explore different viewpoints of the world, while establishing connection to their family history, culture and home. This connection to their personal identity shapes their purpose and path over the lifespan.

CONCLUSION

- Childhood is constructed from positive child-like experiences and life-long lessons which are worth remembering.
- Childhood should be seen as a journey rather than a destination.
- The essence of childhood is the process of engaging with a world that supports and fosters development of the whole child.