

GLOSSARY: CHILD DEVELOPMENT PODCAST

Domain:

Within the context of child development, domains refer to specific areas of development: cognitive, social/emotional, language/communication and physical.

In Utero or Intrauterine:

From the Latin, in utero means “in the womb” and refers to the period before birth. In utero and intrauterine are used interchangeably.

Developmental Disruption:

This occurs when trauma, attachment issues or in utero exposure to alcohol or other substances interrupts the normal developmental processes of early childhood. Such interruption can result in splintered development (defined below).

Synchronous Development:

This refers to similar development or growth across all domains at essentially the same rate. For example, a 3-year-old child is physically on target and is demonstrating the language skills of a 3-year-old. Therefore, this child is developmentally “in sync.”

Splintered Development:

The child’s development is on target in some domains (see definition of domains above) but behind the typical level of development for the child’s age in other domains. In other words, children with splintered development perform at their age level in some areas but at the level of a younger child in one or more other areas.

Chronological Age vs. Developmental Age:

Chronological age is based on the date of birth. For example, if you were born 35 years ago, your chronological age is 35.

Developmental age refers to the age level at which a child functions emotionally, physically, cognitively and socially. A child may be 10 years old at the time of adoption but developmentally may display the behaviors and capacity of a much younger child.

Regulatory Skills:

Regulatory skills are an individual’s ability to control one’s own emotions, thoughts and behaviors. For example, a child’s ability to control discomfort when frustrated is a regulatory skill.



Cognitive Skills:

Cognition is the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. The term “cognitive skills” refers to the ability to learn, think, explore and solve problems.

Developmental Trauma:

This refers to chronic abuse and neglect in early childhood at the hands of a parent or other significant caregiver. Developmental trauma generally is characterized by multiple, adverse episodes. It puts children at risk of future emotional, social and physical challenges.

Maladaptive Techniques:

A child using maladaptive techniques exhibits behavior that is reactionary rather than effective because the child is developmentally unable to respond in an age-appropriate manner. Dr. Perry discusses running away and disruption as examples of maladaptive techniques or behaviors used to deal with frustration and disappointment.

Scaffolding:

This refers to breaking up a complex activity into tasks and providing guidance and support while the child masters each task. Scaffolding involves both modeling and demonstrating how to solve a problem or how to complete a complex task. An example of scaffolding is in Dr. Perry’s discussion of the multiple tasks needed to get ready for school.

