

Gender Acquisition in Early Childhood

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Introduction

Gender identity is defined as the identification of a human being as being male or female. The knowledge that we have about gender acquisition is still not as accurate as we would like. Biological and environmental factors are at play and not one or the other seems to be completely wrong. Biological views relating to [gender](#) identity are supported by chromosomal and hormonal based differences. Environmental perspectives emphasize on modeling and experience (individual and cultural) affecting gender acquisition. However, the only unbiased way to assess gender identity is by taking into account both biological and environmental factors (McCabe, 2007). This paper focuses on gender identity in early childhood development.

Biological Factors in Gender Identity

Gender is determined during fertilization with the sperm carrying the distinguishing chromosome. If a the male sperm carries an X chromosome then the child develops female organs whereas if the male sperm carries a Y chromosome male reproductive organs begin to form. Testosterone, though previously seen as the male hormone, is secreted in both males and females and is related to sexual desire. Men, however, have a higher amount of testosterone than woman. Hormonal imbalances dealing with testosterone may change physical features in females and males. Hypogonadism which

affects both males and females is caused by low sex hormones affecting the productivity of sexual organs. People with this abnormality are treated with sex hormone replacement therapy which catalyses their sexual development (Warne, Grover & Zajac, 2005). Due to a circumcision surgery gone wrong a 7-month old baby's penis was accidentally removed. After the incident the questions arose as to which s...

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