

## TOWARDS TRAUMA-BASED CARE: ERIKSONIAN PERSPECTIVES ON CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A COLLECTION OF PERSPECTIVES

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Erik Erikson has been a part of our child and youth work intellectual heritage for decades. His famous life course theory, "Eight Stages of Man," with key developmental themes assigned to identifiable stages influenced how we view child and youth development and development throughout the life course. Terms like industry and identity reshaped our vocabularies and our thinking. Perhaps most important, Erikson's theory provided invaluable insights as to how healthy development should proceed and what kinds of interpersonal and environmental experiences could either promote or impede it.

Much has transformed in society and in the process of development since Erikson's initial formulation in 1950. These changes, along with advances in developmental psychology, make it timely to reassess these well-known themes and their applications to the developmental challenges facing youngsters in this twenty-first century. One of the major challenges is how to properly treat the ever-increasing number of children and youth who have experienced trauma. Violence, abuse, neglect, warfare, and natural disasters are examples of shattering experiences that children and youth who come into care have experienced.

Fortunately, the concept of trauma-based care has emerged, with a focus on providing treatments and experiences that directly address the outcomes of having experienced trauma. A revisiting of Erikson can illuminate for us how the major tasks and themes of development can, if supported by trauma-based care practices, contribute towards reversing the damage and put youngsters on a positive developmental path towards adulthood.

The purpose of this special collection of papers on Erikson thus is to remind us how Eriksonian theory and concepts apply to children, youth, and young adults today, and to update Erikson's ideas themselves and come to an understanding of the contemporary contexts and processes of child and youth development. In that way we honor Erikson for his brilliance and insights so that rather than having his theory slip into disuse, it can continue to illuminate our field and practice for many more years. Erikson's notions of basic trust, autonomy, mastery, industry, and identity still relate to understanding the traumatic experiences affecting children and youth today and should help them overcome their traumatic pasts. Promoting resilience is one way to set young people on a positive path to a better future, no mat-

ter what the past, and Erikson's thinking, both past and updated, is relevant to this.

This collection consists of three papers. In the first, "Is It Still Industry: A New Look At Erikson's Relevance to School Age Youth with Implications for Practice," Karen VanderVen looks at the concept of industry as characterizing the school-age years, using her own newly developed criteria for reexamining Eriksonian theory. Industry is still important, but there are other important issues for school-age children to deal with as well. Moving upwards in the developmental progression, in "Erikson and Adolescent Development: Contemporary Views on an Enduring Legacy," Matthew Bundick and Peter Benson bring new perspectives to the concept of identity that Erikson had linked to adolescence. They show how Erikson, contrary to common belief, recognized identity's complexity. The authors point out how the concept of psychosocial moratorium relates to the current strengths-based approaches to development, such as the Search Institute's well-known Developmental Assets Framework.

Completing the trilogy is "Erikson's Young Adulthood and Emerging Adulthood Today," by Marilyn J. Montgomery and Jeffrey Jensen Arnett. The concept of emerging adulthood has been one of the most widely recognized advances in developmental theory, and as the authors point out, young adulthood in society today, and the tasks associated with it, have changed a great deal since the 1950s. Child and youth workers will find this piece enlightening because it explains where children and youth may be going developmentally. It will enhance the workers' self-understanding that is such an important part of child and youth work and necessary as they help children deal with any traumatic experiences they have experienced.