

Novel Behavioral and Psychological Screening Strategies for Children and Adolescents in Medical Contexts

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Objectives

- Overview of how psychosocial factors interact with chronic illness in youth
- Application of mental health screening in medical specialty clinics
- Application of cognitive assessment of neurological disorders in at-risk youth
- Implementation of mental health screening and physician resources in primary care

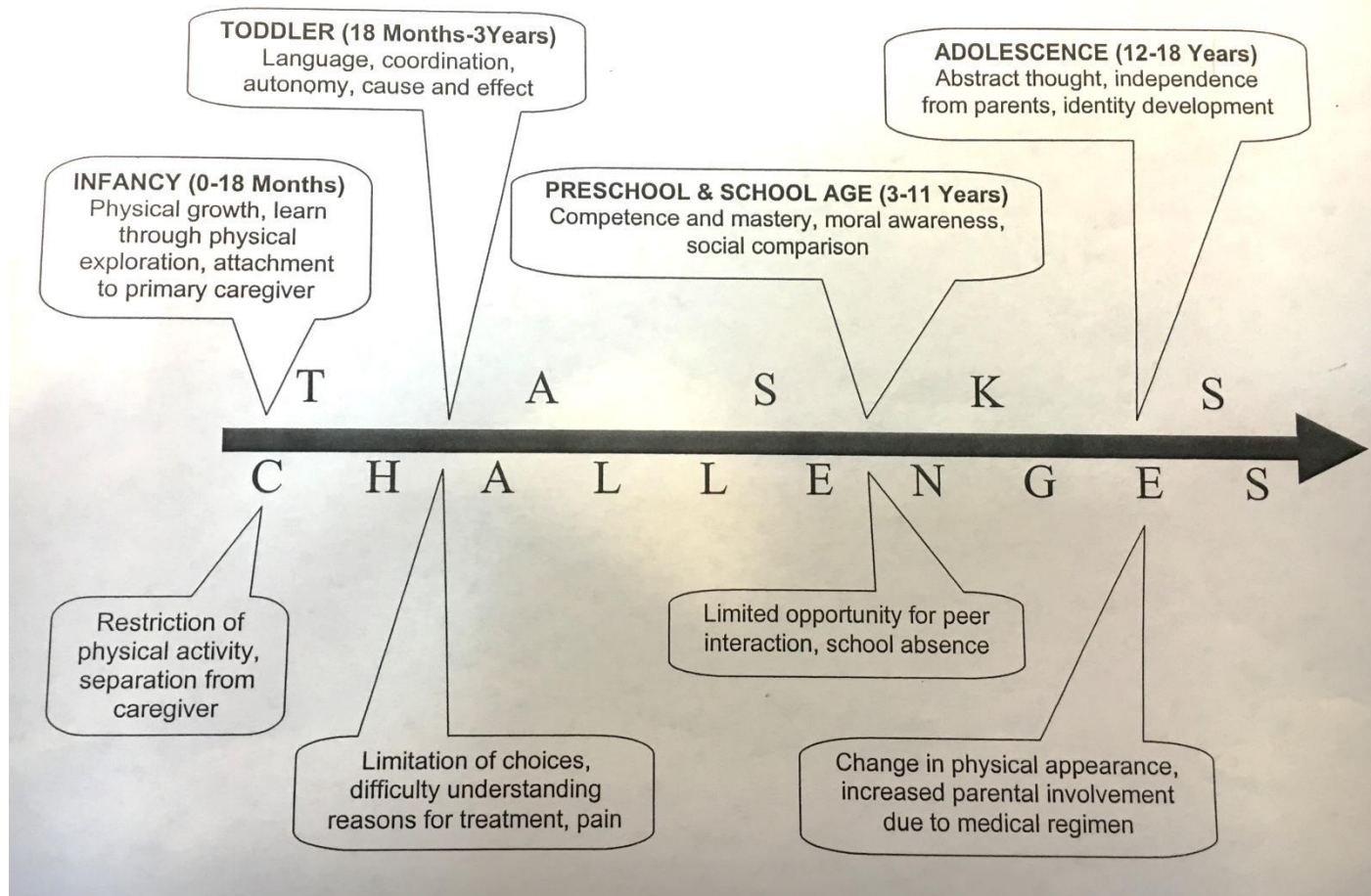
Psychosocial Factors and Chronic Illness

- Chronic illness is a health problem that lasts 3 months or more, affects a child's normal activities, and requires extensive medical care.¹
- Phases²
 - Acute = diagnosis phase with fear, stress, adjustment
 - Prolonged stress = extended treatment, recovery, survivorship
- Chronic conditions may be associated with chronic stress

¹Mokkink et al. (2008), ²Compas et al. (2012)

Development in the Context of Chronic Illness

Major developmental tasks, and corresponding challenges posed by illness, from birth through age 18



From Handbook of Parenting: Theory and Research for Practice (2004). Hoghughi and Long (Eds).

Psychological Difficulties and Chronic Illness

- Recent literature suggests youth with chronic illness
 - May have higher rates of psychological difficulties
 - Social situations challenging as youth grow older¹
 - Isolation, social anxiety, embarrassment, avoidance of social situations
 - Sense of unfairness
 - Overall impact on quality of life
- Poor psychosocial functioning may worsen disease course

¹Arnone & Fitzsimons (2012)

Psychological Health and Physical Health

- Poor psychological health can be associated with poor physical health
 - Stress
 - Increased likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors
 - Exposure to maltreatment

Summary

- Chronic illness in youth poses additional challenges to the typical tasks of development, creating increased likelihood of psychosocial difficulties
- Psychosocial difficulties can increase the likelihood of experiencing poor health or disease or can worsen pre-existing conditions
- Screening and identifying psychosocial difficulties routinely can enhance the likelihood that youth will receive treatment and decrease the negative sequelae associated with poor psychosocial health