

Child Psychology

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Child psychology does not really refer just to one area of expertise, but to several. It encompasses both cognitive psychology of children, as well as developmental and therapeutic psychology. As a graduate student in child psychology, I can tell you that this is one of the most exciting fields to be in to, because the possible career paths are endless, and the subject matter is just so darn fascinating. Basically, child psychology encompasses not just how children think, but how their brains develop, how they see the world around them, and how they learn to respond to new experiences, both good and bad.

One of the most exciting things about child psychology is working as a therapist for adolescents or children. This is one of the most crucial times in a persons life, and when children undergo bad experiences, or react in unhealthy ways to their surroundings, it can do damage which will affect them for life. As a child psychologist, you would have the opportunity to help children deal with all types of emotional and real world issues, from the psychological effects of divorce, to the psychological effects of sexual abuse. Although this job is not for everyone – there is nothing more terrible than hearing about the suffering of a child, except of course being that child – the opportunity to use child psychology to make a lasting difference in the life of a young person is something that some of us just can not pass up. Of course, child psychology is used by more than just professionals. Parents, teachers, school counselors, and even law enforcement people can benefit from a knowledge of child psychology. For parents, this is especially true. Many parents with the best of intentions unwittingly screw up their children irrevocably through their inadequate grasp of child psychology. They might do it by inadvertently rewarding behavior that should be punished, or by punishing behavior that should be rewarded, by being too distant from their child, or by not giving him or her the space that a young person needs to grow. Many teachers, similarly, can do horrors if they do not really grasp the intricacies of child psychology. They may cause one kid to act out as the class clown, another to become a bully, and still a third to shut down and not respond to classes any more. This is why anyone who deals with children must understand child psychology!