Infancy and Childhood: Cognitive Development

- **Schema**
  - a concept or framework that organizes and interprets information

- **Assimilation**
  - interpreting one’s new experience in terms of one’s existing schemas
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- Accommodation
  - adapting one’s current understandings (schemas) to incorporate new information
Cognition

- All the mental activities associated with thinking, knowing, remembering, and communicating
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- **Object Permanence**
  - the awareness that things continue to exist even when not perceived
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- Conservation
  - the principle that properties such as mass, volume, and number remain the same despite changes in the forms of objects
Social Development

- Stranger Anxiety
  - fear of strangers that infants commonly display
  - beginning by about 8 months of age

- Attachment
  - an emotional tie with another person
  - shown in young children by their seeking closeness to the caregiver and displaying distress on separation
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- **Egocentrism**
  - the inability of a child to take another’s point of view
- Theory of Mind
  - people’s ideas about their own and others’ mental states—about their feelings, perceptions, and thoughts and the behavior these might predict
  - Hiding a stuffed animal in a small scale room and in the same place in the big room.
- Autism
  - a disorder that appears in childhood
  - Marked by deficient communication, social interaction and understanding of others’ states of mind
## Piaget’s Stages of Cognitive Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical Age Range</th>
<th>Description of Stage</th>
<th>Developmental Phenomena</th>
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| Birth to nearly 2 years | Sensorimotor  
Experiencing the world through senses and actions (looking, touching, mouthing) | •Object permanence  
•Stranger anxiety |
| About 2 to 6 years | Preoperational  
Representing things with words and images but lacking logical reasoning | •Pretend play  
•Egocentrism  
•Language development |
| About 7 to 11 years | Concrete operational  
Thinking logically about concrete events; grasping concrete analogies and performing arithmetical operations | •Conservation  
•Mathematical transformations |
| About 12 through adulthood | Formal operational  
Abstract reasoning | •Abstract logic  
•Potential for moral reasoning |
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- Baby Mathematics
  - Shown a numerically impossible outcome, infants stare longer (Wynn, 1992)

1. Objects placed in case.
2. Screen comes up.
3. Object is removed.
4. Impossible outcome: Screen drops, revealing two objects.
4. Possible outcome: Screen drops, revealing one object.