Part 4 **DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**11 Social-emotional development in children**

Temperament

* There is a divide between psychologists emphasizing the importance of temperament and those emphasizing the importance of attachment. This is a nature-nurture debate.
* Temperament is the infant personality, influenced primarily by genetic make-up. Three robust factors of temperament have emerged: effortful control, negative emotionality, and extroversion.
* There appears to be reasonable continuity between infant temperament and adult personality.

Attachment and attachment theory

* Attachment quality is also a major influence on infant development. Attachment theory proposes an evolved innate tendency for attachment formation and a set of environmental prequelae that lead to secure attachment, most importantly maternal sensitivity.
* Attachment theory also posits a set of sequelae of secure and insecure attachment, with secure attachment conferring a set of advantages on the developing child.
* Attachment security in infants can be measured using a controlled observation called the Strange Situation, which produces mild anxiety then tests proximity-seeking, separation and stranger anxiety, and response to reunion.
* The Strange Situation classifies children into secure and a range of insecure attachment types.
* Research supports the advantages of secure attachment for infant development and partially supports the importance of maternal sensitivity. The evolutionary roots of attachment are fairly resistant to empirical study.

The effects of early separation experiences

* Day care has generated heated debates amongst developmental psychologists, with research showing both positive and negative effects.
* Institutional care in infancy is associated with more serious effects including attachment disorders, although early adoption reverses these effects in many cases.

The development of peer relations in children

* Children demonstrate an early interest in peers but friendships usually do not form for some years. Adults scaffold early peer interactions.

Children’s popularity status can be classified into a range of types based on peer ratings. Children with high-popularity status tend to be attractive and conventional.