Developmental Psychopathology
Developmental psychopathology: not really a particular theory, but more of an approach or a framework. Associated with a number of people, Dante Cicchetti, Alan Sroufe, Arnold Sameroff, Eric Mash (the co-author of your textbook) and a number of others. Views the study of psychological problems in the context of normal human development, relating these problems to factors that both precede and follow their development.
Developmental outcomes are seen as the result of a number of interacting factors: behavioral, emotional, neurobiological, genetic, familial, and social and culture, and the effect of any one influence depends on the context provided by all the other influences.

Focuses on risk and protective factors in development.
• Systems
  – Distinction between “closed and open systems.”
    • Homeostasis: the tendency of a system to resist change through negative feedback mechanisms.
    • Allostasis: a more generalized version of homeostasis. The entire system’s (organism’s) adaptive response to environmental challenge and change. Idea of “allostatic load.”

  – Development from a dynamic systems perspective
    • Learning to walk (work of Evelyn Thelen)
Two key concepts

• Equifinality—Common developmental outcomes (including psychopathologies of various sorts) may develop via different developmental routes

• Mutifinality—Common developmental conditions may lead to different outcomes
• A major goal of DP is to understand normative developmental processes in order to understand the development of emotional/behavioral problems.

• Another goal is to understand continuities and discontinuities in development. Which behaviors stay the same and which change over time.
Idea of developmental pathways or trajectories. Embodies ideas of multifinality and equifinality.
Which pathways lead to similar outcomes?
What are the variations in outcome associated with a given pathway?
What factors determine the choice of a given pathway?
What factors determine a child continues on the path initially chosen or is deflected off that path?
When do pathways become fixed?
References

