



#### BRONFENBRENNER AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE HEAD START PROGRAM

Urie Bronfenbrenner's in-depth studies on the effects of students' learning environments inspired him to co-found the Head Start program in 1965. The Head Start program "provides grants to local public and private non-profit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families, with a special focus on helping preschoolers develop the early reading and math skills they need to be successful in school" (About). The Head Start program has enrolled more than 27 million children since its founding 47 years ago. In conjunction with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administration for Children and Families, the Head Start program continues to fund education for students nationwide.

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# URIE BRONFENBRENNER



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1 March 2012

# Ecological Systems Theory

## A CHILD'S ENVIRONMENTS

Everything surrounding a child plays a role in his or her development and education. Bronfenbrenner, a world-renowned child developmental Psychologist, created the Ecological Systems Theory (which resulted in the model below) to provide an explanation for why different children learn in different ways. Students' learning styles and multiple intelligences directly correlate with the environment in which a student exists.

### MICROSYSTEM

A child's microsystem is composed of his or her immediate relationships. These individuals include parents, teachers, day-care providers, friends, family, and any other individuals with whom the individual may spent a significant amount of time.

### MESOSYSTEM

The mesosystem surrounding a child is often the most influencing of all. It is defined by the relationships of those individuals in the microsystem. These include relationships between parents and parents, parents and teachers, friends and friends, friends and parents, and any familial relationship with which the student may be surrounded. It is interesting to observe the effects of the

increasing rate of divorce on the learning abilities of a student.

### EXOSYSTEM

The exosystem is composed of the environments in which a child exists. These include, but are not limited to, church, school, community, doctors offices and other medical centers, and mass media. All of these environments have a direct influence on a child, but the child does not

directly interact with each environment. It is the effect on the child's brain in thoughts, opinions, and beliefs that indirectly affect the learning process and the ability to learn.

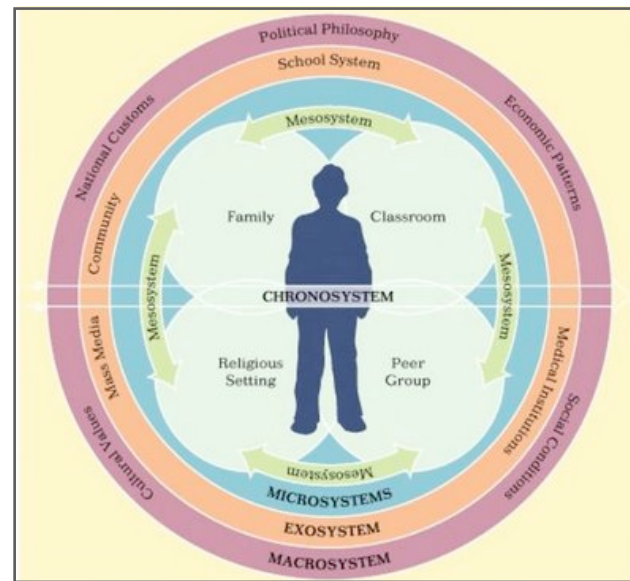
### MACROSYSTEM

The macrosystem is the large-scale environment that affects not only the child, but also each environment in which the child is involved. Political ideas and governing bodies, economic systems, cultural beliefs, customs,

and traditions, and other social queues are all elements of the macrosystem.

### CHRONOSYSTEM

The chronosystem is the environment in which all of these systems exist. It encompasses the give and take of a student's microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem.



## THE BRAIN BEHIND IT ALL..

Urie Bronfenbrenner was born in Moscow, Russia, on April 29, 1917, and moved to the United States at the age of six. Bronfenbrenner attended Cornell University, where he completed a double major in psychology and music, and continued his graduate studies at Harvard University and the University of Michigan. Immediately following his graduation, Bronfenbrenner was drafted into World War II, where he served as a psychologist for the Army Air Corps and Office of Strategic Services. Bronfenbrenner and his wife, Liese, had six incredibly gifted children. Bronfenbrenner worked as a Professor of Psychology at both the University of Michigan and Cornell University. Bronfenbrenner died September 25, 2005 from complications of diabetes.