

An ecological perspective on behaviour

Children and young people's development occurs within the context of **multiple environments**.

Factors in these environments **influence student outcomes** including their development, learning, behaviour and wellbeing, and interact with their individual characteristics (age, gender, socio-economic status, temperament, mental health).

Immediate environments such as relationships with family, peers and teachers have the most influence and often closely interact.

Indirect environments also influence student outcomes, such as a school's ethos, policies, curriculum, links with support agencies or teachers' experience.

Cultural, political and economic factors influence student outcomes including school systems' educational policies addressing student behaviour or access to services.

As students age they may interact differently with their environments, as a result of their increasing independence, which can influence their **development over time**.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SCHOOLS?

Supporting students beyond only addressing their individual behaviour, i.e. using an ecological perspective, provides a student-centred, school-family-community approach.

THIS APPROACH CAN HELP STAFF TO UNDERSTAND AND IDENTIFY:

- ▶ underlying causes of student behaviour
- ▶ links between learning, development, behaviour, health and wellbeing
- ▶ opportunities to provide targeted intervention and support to students

Reference: Bronfenbrenner U. Ecological models of human development. International Encyclopedia of Education. 1994; 3:1643-1647.

Ecological factors influencing student behaviour and wellbeing

