One of the important attributes of theory is the ability to help explain and predict outcomes. Within development, this couldn’t be truer. Developmental theories have helped researchers and professionals alike be able to understand how influential factors impact development and lead to positive and negative outcomes later on in life.

For this assignment, you are to select one of the provided case studies and analyze it using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory (revisit chapter 1). When analyzing the case study, you will address **each level** of the theory and indicate how factors from within the system impacted the development and outcome of the individual within the case study.

* **Microsystem**: examples include but are not limited to family members, teachers, friends, and neighbors; how do these factors interact with the individual and how does the individual impact these factors?
* **Mesosystem**: this level emphasizes relationships among members of the **microsystem**, such as the dynamic between parents and the child's teacher; are there dynamics that play a role in how the individual developed?
* **Exosystem**: here the environment can directly influence the individual, but the individual does not have a reciprocal role; an example would be a parent's place of employment; what factors within this system impacted the individual?
* **Macrosystem**: this level reflects the cultural influences of the individual, such as their socioeconomic status (SES) or race; again, the individual may not impact this level, but this can influence them; how and why did aspects of the macrosystem impact the individual's development?
* **Chronosystem**: here the historical context and change over the individual's lifespan can exact influence, including policy and social norms; for example, the legalization of same-sex marriage may influence an individual's willingness to be open about their sexual orientation and seek out a family. Utilizing the individual's age, what historical contexts may help explain the how and why of the individual's development?

These are just some sample questions you can ask as you evaluate the individual's development from each level of the ecological theory.

Now, the case studies are not fully complete and there are always additional factors that influence our choices and behaviors. You can speculate additional factors that are not listed, but be sure they are backed up with research and tie into ecological theory. While you can address the other family members that are listed within the vignette, the name in **bold** is the person of interest and whom you should center your analysis on.

**Guidelines**

Research will be crucial to help create your argument for why you think the case study person ended up the way that they did. You will need at least **three (3) scholarly sources** from peer-reviewed publications, such as academic journals, books, and textbooks. In-text citations and the reference page need to be presented in APA format.

Other requirements: 3-4 pages in length (cover and reference pages **NOT** included); APA formatting (abstract and running head are **NOT**required). Font size 12. Double-spaced. This paper will be submitted through the Canvas assignment link and run through Turnitin for plagiarism; please review the information on academic dishonesty within the syllabus.

**Case Study #1**

**Christina** (age 13, African-American) has lived with her grandmother, aunt, and younger siblings since she was 8. She currently has no contact with either her mother or father and last interaction was prior to placement with her grandmother. Christina and her siblings were removed from the parents due to reports of neglect, physical abuse, and parental drug use. Christina struggles at school and often receives referrals for aggressive and disobedient behavior toward teachers and students. She was arrested recently for physically assaulting another youth at the park near her house; this appears to be an escalating pattern. When questioned about her future, Christina reports her desire to move out of her hometown and become a fashion designer. Grandmother, Gladys (age 55, African-American) reports that Christina is very defiant at home and often sneaks out of the house. She is afraid that her granddaughter is using drugs and alcohol and is unaware of her sexual status. Gladys reports that while she attempts to provide supportive structure and rules, she also wants to be a grandma rather than a mother. Aside from raising Christina, Gladys is also raising Christina’s brothers, Stephen (age 9) and Jamaal (age 6); parenting again appears to be taking a toll on Gladys’ health.

**Case Study #2**

**Tim** (age 35, Asian) is single and currently works as a department manager for a successful architectural firm. Tim is considered an immigrant as he was brought over to the US with a missionary group when he was 4 after witnessing his parents being killed during a civil war in his country. He was quickly adopted by his parents, Kathy and Brian (ages 65 and 67, Caucasian). His parents report that he was initially withdrawn and isolated during the first few years, barely reaching out to his new family the first year. He was suspected of having a speech delay due to lack of any communication (including his native language) and struggled to learn English. However, he found similar interests, like drawing and sports, with his adoptive older brothers and started to ‘come out of his shell.’ He showed interest in tennis, playing for the varsity team in high school, and found a surprising talent as a piano player and joined a jazz band, which he still plays with as an adult. Tim excelled in high school and college, eventually receiving his master’s degree and was valedictorian of his graduating class.

**Case Study #3**

**Dylan** (age 45, Caucasian) is a heroin addict who has been in and out of rehab facilities and prison since he was 17; he has a 1 year old daughter with a women he dated for a few months, but he is not allowed contact due to his unreliable behavior and constant drug use. He dropped out of high school when he was 17, after the first failed attempt at in-patient treatment. Dylan engages in other drug use – prescription pills, marijuana, and cocaine – but prefers heroin and other opioid-based drugs. Dylan has a twin brother, Daniel (age 45, Caucasian) who is a happily married father of three and owns his own graphic design firm. The parents, Harriet and William (ages 70 and 72, Caucasian) both report being invested and supportive of both of their sons’ interests (i.e. football, photography) during childhood and adolescence as Harriet was a stay-at-home mother and William emphasized family by working a lot from home during the boys’ childhood. They grew-up in a middle class suburb with the Neighborhood Watch and regular neighborhood gatherings. Harriet reports that Dylan struggled with change and seemed anxious with any new situation, whereas Daniel was very adaptable and rolled with any situation.