These studies have examined these young children’s representations and processing of small exact numbers, as well as their capacities in an approximate number system in which very large numbers can be represented and discriminated from each other (Carey, 2009; Feigenson et al., 2013; Hyde and Spelke, 2011; Pinhas et al., 2014). In contrast, babies who see an inanimate rod move on the same trajectory toward an object are surprised if the rod changes its trajectory to pursue the object but not if it continues on the old trajectory toward a new object. The emergence of the ability to make this distinction is tied to the baby’s own capacity to reach for objects; babies need experience reaching on their own to recognize the intent behind reaching in others (Gerson and Woodward, 2014). The nonpartisan Urban Institute publishes studies, reports, and books on timely topics worthy of public consideration. The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders. Contents. Executive Summary What Do We Know about Instability? In this synthesis paper, we build this knowledge base by exploring the extant literature on the effects of instability on children’s developmental outcomes and academic achievement. In our discussion, we review and synthesize research evidence on five identified domains of instability that have been well established in the literature: family income, parental employment, family structure, housing, and the out-of-home contexts of school and child care. Cognitive development and intellectual development really focuses on the way changes in the brain occur related to how we think and learn as we grow. Children do not just know less than adults do, there are differences in the very way that they think about and understand their experiences. The Chart below provides a better picture of what we mean by cognitive development.