including novel physical environments and play with peers (Cabrera et al., 2007; Hazen et al., 2010). In a German study, fathers’ sensitive, challenging play with preschoolers predicted favorable emotional and social adjustment from kindergarten to early adulthood (Grossmann et al., 2008).

Play is a vital context in which fathers build secure attachments (Newland, Coyl, & Freeman, 2008). It may be especially influential in cultures where long work hours prevent most fathers from sharing in infant caregiving, such as Japan (Shwalb et al., 2004). In many Western nations, however, a strict division of parental roles—mother as caregiver, father as playmate—has changed over the past several decades in response to women’s workforce participation and to cultural valuing of gender equality.

National surveys of thousands of U.S. married couples with children reveal that fathers’ family roles have changed substantially over time. As Figure 6.3 reveals, though their involvement continues to fall far short of mothers’, today’s fathers spend nearly three times as much time caring for children as fathers did in 1965—largely due to the dramatic rise in maternal employment (Pew Research Center, 2015b). Paternal availability to children is fairly similar across U.S. SES and ethnic groups, with one exception: Hispanic fathers spend more time engaged with their infants and young children, probably because of the particularly high value that Hispanic cultures place on family involvement (Cabrera, Aldoney, & Tamis-LeMonda, 2014; Hofferth, 2003).

A warm marital bond and supportive coparenting promote both parents’ sensitivity and involvement and children’s attachment security, but they are especially important for fathers (Brown et al., 2010; Laurent, Kim, & Capaldi, 2008). See the Cultural Influences box on the following page for cross-cultural evidence documenting this conclusion—and also highlighting the powerful role of paternal involvement in children’s development.

**Siblings.** Despite declines in family size, nearly 80 percent of U.S. children grow up with at least one sibling (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b). The arrival of a new baby is a difficult experience for most preschoolers, who often become demanding, clingy, and less affectionate with their parents for a time. Attachment security also typically declines, especially for children over age 2 (old enough to feel threatened and displaced) and for those with mothers under stress (Teti et al., 1996; Volling, 2012).

Yet resentment is only one feature of a rich emotional relationship that soon develops between siblings. Older children also show affection and concern—kissing and patting the baby and calling out, “Mom, he needs you,” when the infant cries. By the end of the first year, babies usually spend much time with older siblings and are comforted by the presence of a preschool-age brother or sister during short parental absences. Throughout childhood, children continue to treat older siblings as attachment figures, turning to them for comfort in stressful situations when parents are unavailable (Seibert & Kerns, 2009).

Nevertheless, individual differences in sibling relationships emerge soon after the new baby’s arrival. Certain temperamental traits—high emotional reactivity or activity level—increase the chances of sibling conflict (Brody, Stoneman, & McCoy, 1994; Dunn, 1994). And maternal warmth toward both children is related to positive sibling interaction and to preschoolers’ support of a distressed younger sibling (Volling, 2001; Volling &