

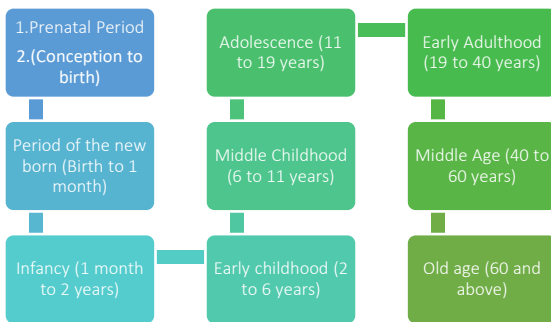
LESSON 26

DEVELOPMENTAL PATTERNS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

SUMMARY

Development of a human being from a conception to a full-grown adult is a subject that has fascinated people over generations. Not only is this knowledge useful as a tool for understanding self, but also for guiding the development of children.

Stages in the lifespan



Patterns of development

Development, which essentially means change, is the result of the complex interactions between many processes –

Biological processes <ul style="list-style-type: none">involve changes in appearances, physical changes due to growth of an individual.
Social Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none">involve changes in the child's relationship with other people, emotions and personality. These are also termed as Psycho-social processes of behavior.
Cognitive processes <ul style="list-style-type: none">involve changes in thinking, intelligence and language of the child. Perception, attention, forgetting, knowing, understanding, problem solving, reasoning, memorizing, imagining, all reflect cognitive processes.

Growth and development in early childhood

Growth and Development are complementary processes. **Growth** indicates the quantitative changes in the body such as height and weight. **Development** refers to both the qualitative and quantitative changes, (e.g., language acquisition). It can be defined as a **progressive series of orderly coherent changes.**

Principles of development

- Growth and development follow an orderly sequence.
- Each child normally passes through a number of stages, each with its own essential characteristics.
- There are individual differences in rate and pattern of development.
- Though the human being develops as a unified whole, yet each part of the body develops at a different rate. There are two major sequences:
 - Cephalocaudal** – development proceeds from head to toe.
 - Proximodistal** – development proceeds from center to extremities (sidelines).
- Development is essentially the result of the interaction between maturation and learning.

Factors affecting growth and development

Heredity - it determines our body-built and intellectual capacity, as well as many other physical, mental and psycho-social behavior traits.

Prenatal environment - If the mother is getting poor nutrition or is emotionally upset or smokes, drinks, or takes some medicine or suffers from certain diseases; the growth of the child can be adversely affected.

Nutrition - Proper nutrition is essential for the healthy development of a child. A malnourished child's growth is either stunted or lopsided.

Mental level - Higher intelligence is associated with faster development while lower intelligence is associated with retardation in various aspects of development.

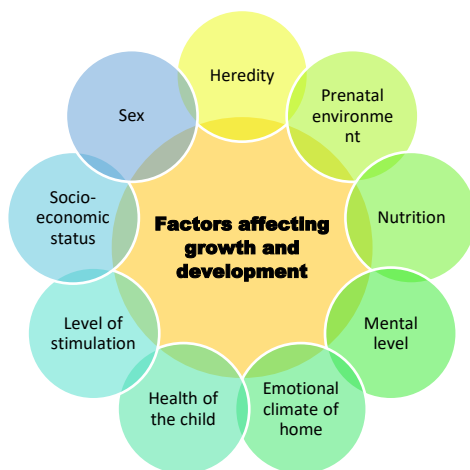
Emotional climate of home - If there is a lot of discord/fight at home or the child is not given enough love and attention or there is physical/mental abuse of the child, then the child's development is adversely affected. The affectionate, tolerant or respectful attitudes towards others in the family have a positive impact on children.

Health of the child - If the child frequently falls sick, or suffers from some disorder, or is disabled or has disturbed endocrine functioning, his development is likely to suffer. Any inner physiological disorder affects the development.

Level of stimulation - The amount of stimulation an environment provides, the opportunities for exploration of environment, opportunities of interaction with other people—all influence the rate of development.

Socio-economic status - It determines the kind of nutrition, stimulation, facilities and opportunities the child gets and therefore, affect the rate of his development. It also means the social reputation and the financial conditions of the family.

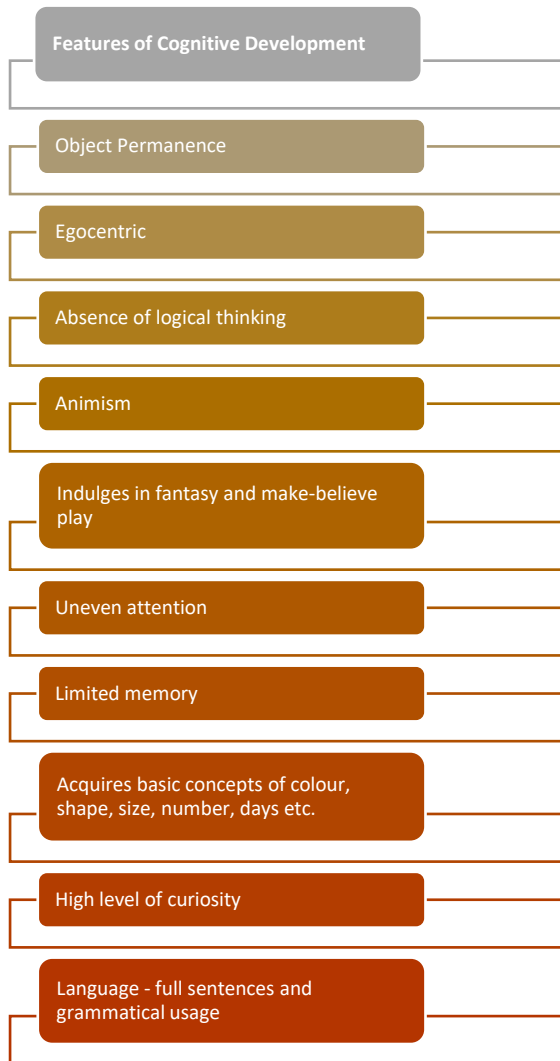
Sex - All children follow the same sequence of development. However, certain skills develop faster in girls and vice-versa. Sex is also a factor that sometime decides the potential of the child in some aspects of development.



Characteristics of development in early childhood

Early childhood as stated earlier is the period from 2 to 6 years of age. This period is sometimes referred to as **preschool period**. In this stage children become more self-sufficient, begin to take care of themselves, acquire language,

become a part of the group, become more coordinated, develop school readiness skills (following instructions, identifying letter etc.) and obtain a higher degree of self-control.



Features of Social Development

At 2 years

- Features of Social Development

At 2 years

- Does opposite of what he is told

At 2-3 years

- Copies parent's action
- Is dependent, clinging
- Is possessive
- Enjoys playing alongside a child

At 3-4 years

- Learns to share
- Shows cooperative play with other children
- May enter nursery school
- Begins to identify with same 'sex parent'
- Practices sex role activities

At 4-5 years

- Prefers to play with other children
- Becomes competitive
- Prefers sex appropriate activities

Evaluate yourself

1. Discuss the biological, social and cognitive patterns of development.
2. List at least nine factors that affect growth and development.
3. Describe the emotional development in early childhood.