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Human Growth and Development

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### **1) Physical and Physiological Changes that Occur in Early Childhood.**

The human body goes through different stages, including physical and physiological. It is important to have some kind of understanding of these processes since they are part of our daily lives. Some knowledge of this can help us better deal with children and how they are developing. In this paper, we are going to discuss some of the physical and physiological changes that occur in children.

Some of the changes a human body goes through include average growth. Children grow about 2½ inches and 5-7 pounds per year. Girls are slightly smaller and lighter than boys and have more fatty tissues while boys have more muscle tissues.

The brain and nervous system continue to development. The most rapid growth in the *prefrontal cortex* appears between 3-6 years. Myelination is the process through which axons are covered with a layer of fat cells increasing the speed and efficiency of information traveling through the nervous system. The process of myelination is linked to attention, hand-eye coordination, higher-level thinking skills, etc.

When a child is three years old, they are able to make simple movements. They become more adventurous and are more stable at the age of four, and they take more risks at the age of five

as their coordination continues to improve. Understanding the different stages of development are important since they can help us be better parents and professionals.

## **2) Factors that Contribute to Toddlers' Risk of Illness and Death.**

There are many factors that contribute to toddlers' risk of illness and death. For example, in the United States the main cause of death is accidents especially drowning. Other causes of death include congenital malformation, malignant neoplasm, and homicide.

Another factor that contributes to toddlers' risk of illness and death is smoking. Children are at more risk of developing health problems such as asthma or wheezing.

Children in poverty are a highest risk of getting into accidents, health issues and death more frequently than children with higher-income families do. They die from preventable infectious diseases such as diarrhea, and malnutrition. In poor countries a lot of parents have no access to a nutritious diet, sanitation, education, health services, etc. These scarcities and lack of knowledge can affect their children drastically. In the last decade, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of young children who have died because HIV/AIDS was transmitted to them by their parents. These situations mostly occur in countries with high rates of poverty and low level of education.

### **3) Children's Theory of Mind**

Young children are curious about the nature of the human mind. They have a theory of mind, a term that refers to awareness of one's own mental processes and those of others. Some studies of theory of mind view a child as a thinker who is trying to explain, predict, and understand people's thoughts, feelings and utterances. Children's theory of mind changes as they develop through childhood. However, whether infants have a theory of mind continues to be questioned by some.

In ages two to five children begin to understand perception, emotion, and desire. The child can distinguish between a positive and negative emotion. Two- to three-year-olds understand that people will get sad or frustrated if they do not get what they want, but if they obtain it, they are likely to feel happy.

Beyond age five children have a deepening appreciation of the mind itself rather than just an understanding of mental state. Not until middle and late childhood children see that mind as an active constructor of knowledge and processing center. It is only then that they move from understanding that beliefs can be false to realizing that the same event can be open to multiple interpretations.

There are individual differences in this age. For example, children who talk with their parents about feelings frequently as two-year-olds show better performance on theory of mind tasks.

Parental engagement in mind-mindedness advances preschool children theory of mind

#### **4) Major Milestones of Language in Early Childhood.**

Children use speech to communicate socially and to help them solve tasks. Between ages two and three, they begin to transition from saying simple sentences to saying complex sentence.

They learned prepositions such as on and in before other prepositions.

Phonology refers to the sound system of a language, including the sounds used and how they may be combined. During the preschool years, most children gradually become more sensitive to the sound of spoken words and are capable of producing all the sound of their language. By their third birthday they are able to pronounce all the vowel sounds and most of the consonants sounds.

By the time children move to two-word utterance, they demonstrate knowledge of morphology rules. Morphology refers to the units of meaning involved in word formation. Children begin using the plural and possessive forms of nouns. They put appropriate endings to verbs and use prepositions, articles, and various forms of verbs.

Preschool children also learn and apply rules of syntax, which involves the way words are combined to form acceptable phrases and sentences. They show a growing mastery in how the words should be ordered.

These are some important aspects of how word learning occurs. Children learn the words they hear more often; they learned word for things and events that interest them; they learn best in responsive and interactive contexts rather than passive context; they learn best in context that are meaningful; when they access clear information about word meaning; and when grammar and vocabulary are considered.

**5) Explain what Erikson means by saying that early childhood is dominated by feelings of initiative versus guilt**

Initiative versus Guilt is one of the psychosocial stages associated with early childhood.

According to Erik Erikson, children in this stage understand that they are a person of their own.

During early childhood they start to imagine what kind of person they want to be when they grow up. They start to compare themselves with their parents and wish they can be like them.

Parents are usually children's heroes and most beautiful person. They also are aware that this same wonderful parent can sometime be scary and dangerous.

Something interesting about children in this stage is that they have a surplus of energy that allows them to forget unpleasant things quickly. They would continue exploring and trying new things even dangerous ones. They are in the process of discovering their environment and learning new things.

Children's initiative and enthusiasm can bring them happiness but also sadness when something goes wrong. When a parent reprimand a child for something he did wrong, the child may feel sad and guilty. Parents must take on account the way they educate their children in this age. Scolding a child for something they did wrong, may result in psychological issues including low self-esteem.

**6) Describe the development of self-understanding during early childhood, and relate what we know about it to what we know about cognitive development during this life period.**

Some research studies have revealed that children are psychologically aware of themselves and other more than what we imagine. Self-understanding is the representation of self, though not the whole personal identity. Early self-understanding involves self-recognition. Young children think they can describe themselves by material characteristics such as shape, color, size, etc.

For example, Maria may think that she is different from Hannah because Hannah has short hair and Maria has long hair. Joseph may think he is different from Samuel because Samuel is shorter than he is. This is an example of how they think they are different from one another. At the same children are learning new way to describe themselves from what they hear other people say. For example, they can say "I'm very smart," "I'm very happy." Children also make good progress understanding others. They have learned that people do not always say the true. People can lie to get what they want or to avoid punishment.

Parents and teachers can help children to better understand and interact in the social world by how they interact with them. Children can be benefit from the good example shown by their parents teachers, or caregivers.

**7) Identify and discuss the components of moral development. Discuss how current theorists conceptualize moral development.**

It is responsibility of the parent to teach the child moral values. Moral development includes the development of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors about what people should do in their interaction with others.

According to Sigmund Freud, feelings of anxiety and guilt are part of the moral feelings.

Children attempt to reduce anxiety by obeying their parent and accepting their standards of right and wrong. The purpose is to avoid stressful situation and punishment. Other emotions that contribute to moral development include positive feelings. They can show empathy toward other person's feeling.

In moral reasoning, the interest is how children think about moral issues such as thefts, lies, punishments, justice, etc. Piaget concluded that children from ages four to seven display heteronomous morality. Children think of justice and rules as unchangeable that are beyond the control of people. From ages seven to ten, children are in a period of transition. They show feature from the first and second stage. From about age ten and older, children show autonomous morality. They understand that rules and laws are created by people.

The moral behavior includes the processes of reinforcement, punishment, and imitation. When a child is rewarded for a certain behavior, that behavior is more likely to be repeated. In the other hand, when a child is punished for showing certain behavior, that behavior is more likely to be extinct.

**8) Parenting Styles, describe the personalities of children who experience each type of parenting.**

The four parenting styles according to Diana Baumrind are: Authoritarian Parenting, Authoritative Parenting, Neglectful Parenting, and Indulgent Parenting. Let's review each of them.

The authoritarian parent can be physically and verbally aggressive. They may spank the child often and enforce rules rigidly without explaining them. Children of authoritarian parent are often unhappy, fearful and anxious. Children can also develop higher levels of externalizing problems.

The authoritative parenting encourages children to be independent but at the same time supervises their actions. If the child do something wrong, the authoritative parent talks to the child and try to correct them with compassion. Authoritative parents are patience and are not aggressive toward the child.

The neglectful parent is not involved or present in the child's life. The child may get the impression that the parent has more important things to do. The parent does not spend time with the child and does not meet their physical and emotional needs. The child may feel unimportant and can develop low self-esteem. The indulgent parent is involved with the children's life but do not set rules. The child of an indulgent parent can do whatever they want without being stopped. Such way of parenting is wrong because that kind of children do not learn respect for others.