

Human Development

- Development is viewed as lifelong, multidimensional, multidirectional, plastic, historically embedded, multidisciplinary and biological. Cognitive and socio-emotional processes influence development.
- The ideas about development revolve around three issues: nature and nurture, continuity and discontinuity and stability and change. Some basic principles underlying the process of development, which can be observed in all human beings.
- There are different stages of development signifying specific developmental tasks to be accomplished during that period or stage of life.
- Infancy is the period from birth to 18 months of age. It marks the beginning of language, symbolic thought, sensorimotor coordination and social learning.
- Early childhood years extend from end of infancy to 5 to 6 years of age and are also called the “preschool year”. The middle and late childhood years is the period from 6 to 11 years of age. The child is able to master the fundamental skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, the child also develops physically, socially and morally.
- Adolescence begins at puberty, and is the transition from childhood to adulthood. Physical changes in adolescence include the development of secondary sex characteristics, hormonal changes, and spurt in growth. The major developmental tasks for the adolescent include identity formation and coming to terms with biological changes taking place.
- Adult year is the time of establishing personal and economic independence, starting a career, getting married and starting a family. Middle adulthood is the time for the individual to adjust to vocational changes, expanding families, changing roles e.g. grand-parenting etc. Old age is the time to respond to changes in physical and cognitive capacities, retirement and death of spouse.
- Later adult years represent another segment of life span which are accompanied by physiological and cognitive changes.
- The chapter gives an overview of the entire lifespan, from birth to death. You must have realized that development and change continue throughout the lifespan. No period of life is completely stable or unchanging. If one aspect has stabilized others are



. developing. In Fact the human being is constantly making adaptation to the changing world throughout his/her life.

Word That Matter

1. Adolescence: The developmental period of transition from childhood to early adulthood, starting at approximately 11 to 13 years of age and ending at 18 to 20 years of age.

2. Animism : A facet of preoperational thought; the belief that inanimate objects have "lifelike" qualities and are capable of action.

3. Attachment: A close emotional bond between the infant and the parents or caregiver.

4. Centration: The focusing or centring of attention on one characteristic to the exclusion of all others.

5. Cephalocaudal pattern : The sequence in which the greatest growth occurs at the top- the head with physical growth in size, weight, and feature differentiation gradually working from top to bottom.

6. Concrete operational stage : The third piagetian stage, lasting approximately from 7 to 11 years.

7. Deductive reasoning: Reaching a conclusion by accepting the premises of an argument and then following the formal logical rules.

8. Development : It is the pattern of progressive, orderly, and predictable changes that begin at conception and continue throughout life.

9. Egocentrism : A salient feature of preoperational thought, which refers to the inability to distinguish between one's own perspective and someone else's perspective.

10. Evolution: The theory proposed by Charles Darwin that over time organisms originate and change in response to adaptational demands of their unique environments.

11. Gender: The social dimension of being male or female.



- 12. Maturation** : The orderly sequence of changes dictated by each person's genetic blueprint.
- 13. Menarche** : The first occurrence of menstruation.
- 14. Motor development**: The progression of muscular coordination required for physical activities.
- 15. Object permanence**: Understanding that objects and events continue to exist even when they cannot directly be seen, heard, or touched.
- 16. Operations** : Internalised sets of actions that allow the child to do mentally what was done physically before. '
- 17. Phenotype** : Observable features by which individuals are recognised.
- 18. Prenatal period** : The time from conception to birth.
- 19. Pre-operational stage** : The second Piagetian stage in which children begin to represent the world with words, images, and drawings but cannot perform operations in logical manner.
- 20. Primary sex characteristics** : The sexual structures necessary for reproduction.
- 21. Proximodistal trend**: The center-outward direction of motor development.
- 22. Puberty** : A period of rapid skeletal and sexual maturation that occurs mainly in early adolescence.
- 23. Reflex arc** : A receptor neuron and an efferent neuron capable of mediating a S-R sequence.
- 24. Secondary sex characteristics** : Physical features that are associated with gender but that are not directly involved in reproduction.
- 25. Self** : The individual's perception or awareness of herself or himself-of her or his body, abilities, personality traits, and ways of doing things.
- 26. Sensorimotor stage**: The first Piagetian stage in which infants construct an understanding



of the world by coordinating sensory experiences with physical and motor actions.

