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Development and Behavior from Birth to Five Years

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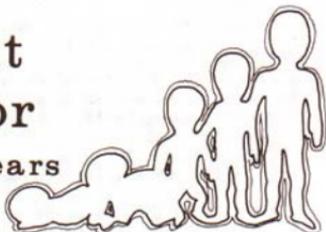
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Development and Behavior

From Birth to Five Years



This is not a "cookbook" where you will find a recipe for rearing your child. Neither is it a yardstick to measure your child's development with the development of other children. It is a guide to help you understand children from the ages of birth through five years. If we are to increase our understanding of why adults behave as they do, we must begin with an understanding of the very young infant.

How a child develops physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually is affected by his day-to-day experiences. All of his/her experiences from birth affect and determine the person he/she will become.

Good parenthood presupposes the deep willingness to be a parent. Children are potentially of great value to a marriage, yet, children also create new problems. Parents should be fairly mature, both physically and psychologically. Wise parents grow and learn with their children. They learn to relax and let a child grow in his/her own way, own time and own fashion.

Growing and Developing

Parents, as well as all adults working with children, will find it important to keep in mind the following general facts that pertain to children as well as all individuals as they grow and develop:

1. No two children are alike. Each differs in his/her rate and pattern of growth.
2. Growth is uneven, is continuous, and follows an orderly sequence or pattern. Some growth, such as height, we can see, but growth of internal organs we cannot see.

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3. Each phase or stage of development has certain characteristics common to that particular stage of growth.
4. As an infant develops some new power or capacity, he develops the impulse to use that new power. Example: Walking is practiced by 12 - 16 month old babies . . . they walk and walk.
5. Children, at all ages and stages, have some reason to behave as they do. Three causes of behavior might be:
 - a. the developmental stage of growth. Example: temper tantrums from 2 to 3 years.
 - b. trying to satisfy some physical or psychological need, want or drive. Example: being hungry or wanting to be held.
 - c. the blocking of an emotion. Example: wanting out of playpen for more freedom.

Heredity and Environment

We must also consider the factors of heredity and environment which affect both development and behavior. How tall a child will become as an adult depends on race, sex and family characteristics, as well as how he/she is cared for, what he/she eats and whether he/she is happy or not.

All of us--children and adults--differ and all of us must be ourselves. We have to be. We need to feel good about ourselves--confident, able. Children grow strongest, happiest and healthiest in this way.

We've talked about all children being different and they are! The following descriptive statements are useful only if you keep in mind that your child is unique and has his/her own pattern of development. If your child more than measures or fails to measure up to the statements, this is his/her biological right. If he/she is making progress toward the next stage, he/she is growing. Keeping this in mind will help you enjoy him/her.

Infancy

Appearance

The head looks too big for the newborn's body. In fact, it is 1/4 of the total body length. It may be temporarily out of shape, lopsided or elongated, due to pressure before or during birth. On the skull are two fontanels (places where the skull does not completely meet)--one above the brow, the other close to the forehead.

The newborn usually has pudgy cheeks, a broad flat nose with a mere hint of a bridge, receding chin and undersized jaw. Eyes are always dark blue and have a "stary" gaze.

The skin is thin and dry and one can see veins through it. He/she comes in many skin colors--rosy red, blotchy or a bright pink.

He/she has a short neck, small sloping shoulders, large rounded abdomen, umbilical stump (future navel), slender narrow pelvis and hips. The genitals of both sexes seem large. The legs are most often seen doubled up against the abdomen in pre-birth position. The legs are shorter than the arms. Most of the bones are still cartilage.

It usually takes about a month for infants to move from their pre-birth to post-birth world and to adjust to it.

Reflex Action

In the beginning, infants operate solely from reflex action. They jump and startle from a quick movement or noise. Fists are clenched and will be for many months. Pry the fist open, however, and the newborn will grip a finger or an object. Some infants can support their own weight. Other reflexive actions present at birth include sucking, swallowing, blinking, sneezing, yawning and stepping.

Physical and Motor Growth

Growth in infancy--from the age of a few weeks until the baby is walking securely--is a dramatic thing to watch. During the early months of life, striking and radical changes take place within a brief span of time. During these first two years, the baby changes from a helpless newborn lying flat on his back or stomach, to a high-powered pedestrian who investigates and masters everything within his reach in the most active way possible; tasting, chewing, probing, tugging, pushing, tearing. As the child's activity increases, his sleeping hours decrease. A child adds almost 12 inches to his stature and about 15 pounds or more of weight during his first two years.

How the infant grows physically has implications for his total growth pattern. Certain behavior patterns involving sleeping, eating and elimination arise as a result of variations in physical development. Infants have to learn control over their bodies. This learning is a continuous process covering many years of life.

Personality and Emotional Development

From the moment of birth, the infant feels the impact of personal care. He/she grows up in a world of things and people. At first the two are virtually blended. He/she must learn to distinguish between the two. The patterning of the infant's emotional life changes with experience, sensations and his personal social adjustment.

Social Development

Socially and emotionally, the infant begins by alternating between self-contained indifference (when satisfied) and undirected, grief-stricken rage (if not satisfied). Social growth implies the interaction of an infant with the people in his/her environment. At first, the infant perceives his/her world as "wet and hungry." In a little

while, he/she begins to study people's faces; then actively demands company. After midyear, he/she learns that some people are friendly and some are strangers. The infant learns to react to others early. Some early forms of behavior include: imitation, timidity, rivalry, social cooperativeness and resistance behavior. He/she is not born a sociable person, he learns to become one.

Intellectual Development

Learning begins and goes on as soon as an infant is born. Children learn as naturally as they breathe--by imitation, by trying over and over again and by sensory perception. Learning takes place by degrees and depends on maturity and readiness of the child's body, especially of the brain and nervous system.

All areas--physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth are very closely related. Because of this fact, the following items are not separated into the various areas.

Development: ONE TO THREE MONTHS

- Body muscles tighten with tension when they are picked up.
- Holds head up when pulled to a sitting position.
- Responds to snugness of being securely held.
- Can hold both eyes in a fixed position, staring vaguely at walls.
- Usually clenches hands to make a fist.
- At 8 weeks can hold a rattle though may not reclaim it if he/she drops it.
- Especially notices the human face and, by 2 1/2 months, may respond with a smile.

Development: FOUR TO SIX MONTHS

- Glories in his/her growing capacity to hold his head upright and rotates his/her head freely from side to side.
- He/she smiles at the mere sight of a face. There is an increased demand for sociability. He/she likes to have people pay attention and talk to him/her.
- Coos, chuckles, gurgles and laughs out loud.
- Recognizes mother and distinguishes familiar and unfamiliar people.
- "Discovers" his/her hands and plays with them.
- He/she is now putting everything into his mouth.
- The 6-month-old has much more command over his/her body. Can roll over, rest on elbows, and may sit up momentarily.
- The 6-month-old jabbars constantly.

Development: SEVEN TO NINE MONTHS

- This is the heyday for manipulation. Fingers toys, puts them in his/her mouth, pulls them out again, rotates and twists his/her wrists.
- Enjoys banging on high chair.
- Hands are not pawlike as before. Beginning to use his thumb more adeptly and enjoys sucking it.
- Far more self-contained as well as sociable.
- May be sitting alone and some children can sit alone indefinitely.
- Can use both hands.
- Beginning to respond to more than one person at a time.

- . Likes rhythm, and enjoys being bounced on a knee.
- . Vocalizes happily to him/herself by gurgling, growling and squealing.
- . Some children may even crawl or stand.
- . Easily becomes over-excited.
- . Reaching and grasping are automatic now.
- . Motor skill is progressing and he/she can feed himself a cracker.
- . There is some play with toys--usually pushing or hitting one toy against another.
- . Can imitate sounds and is beginning to respond to his/her name and to "no."
- . Teeth may begin to appear at 6 to 8 months.

Development: TEN TO TWELVE MONTHS

- . Rolls over and sits up.
- . Uses hands skillfully, plucks, probes and investigates.
- . Bangs cup with spoon and has a powerful urge to dip fingers into food.
- . Plays patty-cake, peek-a-boo.
- . May say "mama" and "dada."
- . Some start to walk. Others creep actively and rapidly.
- . May show signs of coyness.
- . Notices difference in parent's tone of voice--when she/he approves or disapproves.
- . Attention is easily distracted.
- . Likes to carry things with him/her, one in each hand.

- . Shows enthusiasm and interest in play.
- . Socially very cooperative.
- . Words are few.
- . Behavior is becoming inconsistent and variable.
- . Many have 6 front teeth by 12 months of age.

Development: ONE YEAR TO EIGHTEEN MONTHS

- . By a year, may use 2 to 3 words correctly.
- . Roots of "toddler" stage begin.
- . Full of curiosity.
- . Enjoys bath and water play.
- . Birth weight usually tripled.
- . Often tries to feed self; holds cup.
- . Enjoys pulling, lifting, pouring, pushing.
- . Builds a little with blocks.
- . Enjoys watching activity.
- . Imitator--coughing, sneezing, etc.
- . More responsive to adults than children.
- . Very dependent on caregiver.
- . May show affection, jealousy, sympathy and anxiety.
- . May respond to rhythm.
- . May be shy with strangers.
- . Prefers some food to others.
- . Enjoys throwing things.

- . "Into everything." Needs a safe environment.

Development: EIGHTEEN TO TWENTY MONTHS

- . Begins to show a temper.
- . Attached to a toy or blanket.
- . Listens to nursery rhymes.
- . Likes an audience and applause.
- . Constantly on the move.
- . Prefers to push stroller rather than ride.
- . Likes to chase and be chased.
- . Enjoys walking backward.
- . Speaks about a dozen words.
- . Enjoys sand play.
- . Enjoys looking at books and tearing paper.
- . Naming stage. Puts names on people, things, actions.
- . Begins to undress self.
- . Beginning fears show: noise of storm, train, vacuum clenaer, etc.
- . Showing some independence: "do it myself."
- . More conscious of approval and disapproval.
- . Climber.

Development: TWENTY MONTHS TO TWO YEARS

- . Beginning "negative" stage. "No-no."
- . Claims everything. "Mine-mine."
- . Danger of overestimating his capabilities.

- . Prolonged busyness is lessening because of new awareness of people.
- . More frequent play periods.
- . Acts out household tasks.
- . Can kick a ball.
- . Manipulates more freely with one hand.
- . Enjoys music and books.
- . Dislikes going to bed.
- . May have appetite drop. Feeds self.
- . Likes being with other children.
- . Grows less in height and weight.

What Makes Them Tick?

Infants seek a certain feeling . . . a feeling that they are safe; that the world is a dependable place in which to live. They are out to "test" this world to be sure it is safe.

They develop the feeling that the world is safe and people are fundamentally good through feeding . . . gradual weaning . . . "tender loving care" . . . letting them "do" for themselves . . . knowing fear of strangers is normal . . . sleeping routine.

Feeding

The way you feed your baby adds or subtracts from the feeling everything is okay. Your first decision is to breast or bottle feed. The method used seems not as important as how mother feels about it.

There are advantages and disadvantages to breast feeding. On the plus side mother's milk has unique properties which make it especially good for babies. The mother may feel nursing gives her a genuine feeling of closeness to her child.

On the minus side, for physical and psychological reasons, the idea may not appeal to the mother. She should not feel guilty about this. It's the how of feeding that counts. Holding the bottle for your baby may produce that feeling of closeness.

Self-demand, self-scheduling feeding means finding a reasonable, flexible schedule for everyone concerned with at least three hours between feedings. You wouldn't wake the child for feeding, nor would you wait an exact number of minutes before feeding.

Self-demand feeding takes the child's individual pattern into account. He may go longer between feedings in the afternoon than he does in the morning. At first, his feeding schedule seems irregular; later you see it fits into a pattern.

One reason given in favor of self-demand feeding is the association the infant receives from hunger, food and people. This association with humans and his needs gives him a comfortable feeling.

To eat is to learn. There is much to learn--to manipulate the tongue and to swallow as well as to become accustomed to a variety of foods and textures of food. Some infants are good eaters; others seem to have little interest in food. Most are unpredictable.

It takes time for children to learn about food. The clue is for the parent to relax. They'll eat when they are ready. No baby will starve him/herself. The word ready is your key here and all through your child's development. He/she will have his/her own time table. This is your guidepost.

Gradual Weaning

Then comes the time for weaning. This is the process of moving from the bottle or breast to a cup and spoon. There is a great age variation when infants are ready for this step. This

does not mean they do not still need to suck. They do. For this reason, they may start sucking fingers, toys and blanket as they move to drinking from a cup.

"Tender Loving Care"

Forget you've ever heard the word "spoiled." Giving an infant attention isn't going to "spoil" him. He/she needs an abundance of smiles, laughter and reassuring pats.

Babies cry for a reason. If needs are met, the outburst won't last long. You'll soon know if they want food, company or are just "letting off energy."

The way attention is given is what's important. The way they are changed when wet; the tone of voice you use--all have meaning to infants.

Let Them "Do" for Themselves

To develop a trust in their bodies, and what they can do, infants must learn and be encouraged to try things for themselves. Reaching for toys, creeping, crawling, walking around furniture and finally taking those solo steps are all learning processes for children.

It is important for all infants to have objects and toys to manipulate and furniture to walk around. When they are in this process of learning to do for themselves, babies need an encouraging pat or an extended hand to help them develop independence. One child may need more assurance; another less. Give it when they seek it.

Knowing Fear of Strangers is Normal

Around six months old, infants may begin to react differently to strangers than to family members. Some screech, some hide, others stare. This behavior, too, is normal.

Don't be concerned if your child never passes this fright stage toward strangers. It's an individual matter.

There are periods of social sensitivity in relationships with others. There are certain periods in our life, from birth to death, when all of us may be friendly or withdrawn.

Sleeping Routine

Sleeping difficulty may or may not appear during infancy. Most children

have less sleeping difficulty if on a consistent sleeping schedule. They know what is expected and what to expect. It's best they fall asleep in the same room they will wake in. The best procedure to follow is to have them always sleep in the same room, in the same bed and have a regular bedtime procedure. Taking them to bed with you promotes problems.

By the end of the second year, infants have made great strides. They have learned to respond to food, to discriminate between various objects, to know family members and have developed a skill in locomotion. If theirs is a friendly environment, they are ready and willing to move to the next stage of growth. Behavior can now be more easily identified, so behavior patterns have been separated into categories.

THE TODDLER: TWO TO THREE

Each child develops in his/her own unique way. It is hoped you will not use the following lists of developmental characteristics to judge your child. A child may develop more quickly in one area than in another. Each child follows his/her own timetable. The purpose of these developmental characteristics is to aid you in the understanding of your child.

THE TWO-YEAR-OLD

Generally is:

- Negative, possessive, noisy, wants own way, curious, dawdles.

Physical Growth and Development:

- Much bodily activity and vigorous outdoor play.
- Usually goes to toilet by self. May request, "Mommy, you go out."
- Needs help in dressing, better at undressing.
- Appetite fluctuates between very good and very poor (even within one day).

Emotional Development:

- Finds it hard to make choices.
- Has difficulty in relaxing to go to sleep.
- Behavior goes from one extreme to the other as: shyness to joy, keen desire to possess object to indifference, clamor for food to rejection of it, screaming to whispering, independence to "you do it."
- Insists on routines.

Interests and Intellectual Skills:

- Repeats prayers with little or no understanding.
- Dramatic play - household tasks.

- . Talks to self a great deal.
- . Bath continues to be favorite time.
- . Enjoys being chased.
- . Gross motor play.
- . Independent on walks; runs ahead, etc.

Relationships with others:

Adults --

- . Usually definite preference for either mother or father, for certain activities or for a certain part of

the day. Mother may become a "stranger" if she puts on a new dress, a formal or a hat.

Peers --

- . May "snatch and grab" but can also share upon occasion.
- . Wants to be with children.
- . Plays best when supervised.
- . Develops interest in brothers and sisters.

TODDLERHOOD -- PART BABY, PART CHILD

What Makes Them Tick?

This is the part baby, part child stage. It has been termed the "dart-dash-and-thing" age, and the "runabout baby" stage.

In infancy, children develop a trust in their environment. Now they are developing a trust in themselves. "I - I - I, mine-mine, no - no - no," are familiar words to parents of toddlers. With these words, the child vocalizes what is most meaningful to him/her. To be big, to do things for him/herself, to have power, to be him/herself.

They want freedom to think, to feed themselves, to explore. They also want the attention and support of their parents.

It is a hard age. The toddler is full of perpetual motion. Reasoning is not yet effective. He/she fluctuates from great independence to clinging dependence. He/she wants to grow up, yet still be a "baby."

These youngsters need: (1) to be independent; (2) to have a safe environment.

Independence is developed through: Toilet training . . . language . . . feeding . . . play.

A child's feeling that his/her environment is safe is developed through: love . . . providing sleeping routine . . . setting limits.

INDEPENDENCE

Toddlers view feeding, sleeping and toileting as "do it yourself" projects in their move to become more independent persons.

Toilet Training

Toilet training is a crucial adjustment to toddlerhood. There is no magical age to begin. Knowing when the child is ready is most difficult.

Toilet training is not easy for the toddler. Before the time is "right," he/she will have developed these indications:

- be physically ready to be able to have muscle control to stop a natural release.
- be psychologically ready to be able to give a signal--word, sound or look--about his/her needs. He/she might show interest in the way the family uses the toilet.
- be capable of understanding and accepting the suggestion of adults.

You cannot count on maturation alone to do the job. Parents need to initiate, motivate and encourage the learning process. Starting before the first part of the second year seems to be unwise. Before this time children cannot really understand what is expected of them.

Bowel control usually comes first. This is often established after the first or second year. Girls may be ready before boys.

Training is not accomplished in a week. A few youngsters seem to learn overnight, but for most it takes several months of gradual control. The goal you are aiming toward is for the child to become self-sufficient. This usually isn't before the third birthday. There will still be occasional accidents. And, staying dry all night may lag a year behind day-time control.

Language

Language development follows a pattern. It is developed through encouragement and attention given a child when he just happens to make a sound which has meaning for his parents.

The basis for speech begins during the first eight months. Infants love cooing and jabbering to themselves, particularly when alone.

Between 9 and 12 months, the child selects sounds that parents use. Imitating words that have meaning like "mama" and "dada" appear; other sounds start to disappear. Discovering the real meaning of the words they are using comes later.

Toddlers begin to be aware of word meanings even if they cannot speak the word. Most recognize their names by eight months and understand that "no" means "stop what you are doing" by a year. Often parents underestimate how much a child understands even though he isn't talking. Word meaning is inferred by tone of voice, gesture, facial expression and through objects.

Saying words lags behind understanding. After he masters walking, language usually takes a spurt. First are words that name people and things. Then come action words. Commands and requests begin to appear. He learns "bye-bye," "cracker," and "trike" because he wants to go bye-bye, to eat a cracker or ride his trike. He learns words that hold meaning for him. By the time the child is two to two and one-half years old, his language foundation has been laid and he often uses simple, short sentences.

Language serves as a substitute for action as a child grows. He uses it for self-control, to explain feelings, thoughts and concerns. A three-year-old girl was worried when her dad was on a business trip to Philadelphia. "But mommy, he's way out in the jungle. I hope the tigers don't eat him." Language offers an opportunity to clarify mistaken information that young children absorb due to their lack of experience with life.

The age a child begins to talk is an individual matter. Older children sometimes interpret for younger ones, making talking unnecessary. Girls usually talk sooner and more clearly than boys. Temperament also influences talking. Some children talk all the time and others observe.

Parents can aid language development. Children who hear good speech copy it. Youngsters often outgrow baby talk when the parents do. Speaking slowly, clearly and simply helps the child. Reading and singing with the child can broaden his/her development. Providing experiences for him/her to talk about helps promote good speech.

Feeding

The need to be independent is easily seen in feeding. This appears in infancy when he tries to hold his own cup and spoon, even though you are holding it too. Soon your hand is pushed away. Here are some things you can do to make this a less trying time.

Provide the right implements. The best kind of spoon and fork are short and straight with a broad handle the child can grasp easily. If the mouth of the spoon is wide and shallow, he can easily "shovel" food into his mouth. Plastic dishes and cups give mother peace of mind. A divided plate keeps food from running together and gives the child something to push against.

For the child's comfort, make sure his feet touch the floor or the support on the high chair. A washable floor is a necessity at this age. If you use a carpet in the dining area, get a plastic tablecloth for under the chair for easy cleaning.

The easiest way to feed a child is to have suitable food, friendly surroundings and not worry about what, how much or how he eats. Give him time to dawdle. Let him use his hands for the jello. He'll soon find a spoon more convenient. Keep these goals in mind for your youngster's eating:

- . let him enjoy eating.
- . let him learn to do for himself.

Children often "eat through their eyes." How the food looks, tastes and feels is important. Bright colors,

bland flavors, soupy consistencies and moist meats and vegetables, finger foods and a lukewarm temperature help make food attractive to the toddler. Most children do not like foods mixed together.

Heaping up a plate is discouraging for the child. New foods should be tried at the meal's beginning. Offer only one new food at a time. One teaspoon is plenty for a starter.

Usually when parents stop worrying, the child will start eating. The attitude of parents is most important. Don't worry if the child goes on a food jag. It won't last long. Work at making eating fun. The over-all patterns, week to week and month to month, is what counts--not a clean plate every meal. As a child enters the preschool years, food may become less important to him due to his plateau stage of physical growth and his increasing variety of interests.

Play Materials

Young children's play is not aimless, although it often appears to be. There are many things learned through play. First, how to manage their bodies; to shove, climb, push, lift, jump, poke and squeeze. They discover how things work, what fits into what, where things go. They try everything they see everyone else doing. They're wonderful imitators of sweeping, rolling a pie crust or barking like a dog.

Through their imaginative play, toddlers learn how it feels to be something or someone else. Play may be a release for angry feelings or a chance to relive something of particular importance.

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Love

There are many ways to strengthen a child's feeling of security. The most basic is through constant love. Another is by "taking it slow and easy" when teaching new routines. Weaning and toilet training should not be abrupt. Realize that messy meals and fighting against naps will occasionally occur. Try to find the reason for the child's behavior.

Wanting a safe environment is just as real as their drive for independence. During this stage they want to grow up and at the same time remain protected babies. Before they feel free to try their wings, they must feel secure.

Children take parents' praise and scoldings pretty much to heart. But, because their experiences are so limited, they may misinterpret discipline at times. It can be easy for them to think of words like "naughty" and "bad" as a sign that they're losing your love. They need reassurance that you do not turn your love on and off depending on their behavior. It's important that you make it clear that you disapprove of what they did, but never of them.

Sleeping Routine

Sleeping difficulties and toddlers often go together. The toddler is becoming more aware of the world around him. Sleep interrupts the things he/she enjoys--the nearness of people and play. Tomorrow is non-existent for him/her.

You may be expecting too much sleep for him/her. A rearranged nap schedule may be necessary if he/she's having difficulty sleeping at night.

This age doesn't recognize fatigue. It cannot be left to "self-demand" like food and hunger. Actually when toddlers become over-excited and irritable, they

feel they don't need sleep. However, they must be helped to accept it.

Allow the toddler time to get to bed. Be consistent about routines around bedtime. Roughhousing with dad is not conducive to sleep. Listening to a story or record is. Taking a favorite toy or animal to bed helps during presleep play and again when waking. This also helps divert attention when parents are no longer around. Never make bed a place of punishment. No spanking, no tying the door shut with a rope, no threats or yelling.

Toddlers need to know they have to go to bed and, once there, they have to stay. They may need time to settle down. Singing, calling for water, and just one more kiss are common. Be reasonable and get the drink, talk a bit longer, then draw the line. And be firm.

There may be many reasons for night waking. It might be a physical reason as start of illness, the temperature of the room, or wet pajamas. When children wake, they need to be comforted and reassured. It's best to leave them in their own beds rather than to take them into bed with you.

Setting Limits

Certain boundaries must be set. Toddlers are so active. They constantly explore and experiment. However, this activity is often accompanied by poor judgement.

A reasonable number of limits are good for children. They know where they stand. At this age they can't always control their own impulses. Limits should not be thought of as restraints. They are guidelines toward normal behavior. Toddlers should be allowed to tear up library books, but they can be given old newspapers. Substitution works well at this age.

Limits must be geared to the child's powers of discrimination. For example: the kitchen range is forbidden at all times, not just when it is turned "on." Without limits, the child misses the feeling he/she has a safe environment and parental protection.

In setting limits, a youngster needs balance. A few limits, but only the

necessary ones. Things and places he cannot go, but freedom also in the other direction. Protection from real harm, but not so much protection he becomes upset by minor hurts. When you set limits and stop undesirable behavior, don't tear the child down. Give love always and praise generously.

THE PRESCHOOL YEARS

Children follow their own timetable. The purpose of this general list of developmental characteristics is to help you understand your child's growth and development.

THE THREE-YEAR-OLD

Generally:

- Tries to please.
- Conforms.
- Attentive to spoken words.
- More able to accept suggestion.
- Can choose between alternatives.

Physical growth and development:

- Has full set of temporary teeth.
- Most children dry all night and take responsibility for own daytime needs.
- Helps with dressing and undressing.
- Hangs up own coat.
- Can now eat without spilling.
- Walks erect.
- Unbuttons large buttons and works zippers.

Emotional development:

- Peaceful.
- Can help put toys away.
- May prefer a "play nap."
- Dreams begin to be reported.
- When fatigued, asks to be carried and says, "I'm a baby." Wants to hear stories of babyhood.
- May have imaginary companion; very apparent around age 3 1/2.
- Begins to develop sympathy.

Interests and intellectual skills:

- Talks in complete sentences.
- Can identify common colors (red, blue, yellow, green).
- Scribbles mean "something" -- to self only.
- Often can carry a tune.

. Can distinguish between 1, 2, "lots of" and today and tomorrow. Doesn't know what yesterday means.

- . Rides trike.
- . Enjoys playing "house"; playing family roles.
- . Enjoys hearing stories repeated.
- . Great desire to talk.
- . Imaginative world opening up.
- . Sex role difference starting to be noticed.

Relationship with others:

Adults--

- . Seeks attention and approval.
- . Adjusts quite easily to new situations and new adults.

. Susceptible to suggestions and reasoning.

Peers --

- . Sometimes selects "special" friend.
- . Capable of extreme jealousy of new baby.
- . Plays well with one or two children, yet still enjoys much time in solitary play.
- . Boasts of what they can do.
- . Imitates other children.
- . Tells others what to do.
- . Needs less adult help in solving conflicts.

THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD

Generally is:

- . Full of questions.
- . Wants friends.
- . Assertive.
- . Boastful and bossy.
- . Talkative.
- . Egocentric.

Physical growth and development:

- . Can coordinate blunt scissors, uses hand saw, laces shoes.
- . Throws ball.
- . Dresses and undresses self if clothes are easily managed.

. Toilets without help.

- . Grows approximately 4 pounds and 3 inches a year.
- . Needs (most children) 12 hours sleep out of 24 hours each day.
- . High level of physical activity: runs, jumps, hops, skips, climbs.

Emotional development:

- . May boast, name call, tattles freely.
- . Conscience starting to become factor in behavior.
- . More fears. Can understand many dangers.
- . Shows temper. Starting to be more verbal than physical such as kicking.

- . Producer of alibies to protect self and friends, but doesn't understand the concept of "lying."
- . Refuses. "No," "I won't," and "You're stupid."

Interests and intellectual skills:

- . Persistent questions. Why? How? What? When? Starts sentences with "Guess what?"
- . Growing vocabulary.
- . Tells tales that involve wild flights of fancy.
- . Ideas move beyond home. Plays "store," "train."
- . Time concepts clearer. Monday after Sunday, remembers last Christmas and other holidays.
- . If taught, can learn name, address, phone number.
- . Conscious of sex difference.
- . Likes dressing up and pretending to be "grown up."
- . Ready for rhythm band and simple singing games.

- . Inquisitive about death.
- . Enjoys different words--"ooshy, wooshy" and uses them to exaggerate.
- . Interested in becoming 5. Enjoys birthdays.

Relationships with others:

Adults --

- . Enjoys going on neighborhood errands.
- . Not as sensitive to praise as at 3 or will be at 5.
- . Uses mommy and daddy as final authority. "Mommy told me to do that."

Peers --

- . Strong need for companionship.
- . Enjoys being silly with friends. Says silly rhymes.
- . Name calling. "You're a rat; I'll kill you."
- . Follower and tag-a-long with older children.

THE FIVE-YEAR-OLD

Generally is:

- . Friendly.
- . Businesslike.
- . Likes to dress up.
- . Interested in adult activities.
- . Project minded.
- . Likes praise.
- . Dependable.

- . Likes to feel independent.
- . Serious.

Physical Growth and development:

- . Handles sled and tricycle well.
- . Hops and skips.
- . Cuts, pastes and draws pictures.
- . Handles tools geared to size.
- . Can handle most dressing.

- . Permanent teeth starting to come in.
- . Needs rest periods. Posture must be watched.
- . Needs activity--ladders, jungle gym, balls, roller skates, toys, jump rope, bicycle.
- . Is companionable.
- . Likes to run simple errands.
- . Enjoys conversations with adults.
- . Sensitive to praise.
- . Wants mother home after school.

Interests and intellectual skills:

- . Proud of possessions, clothes.
- . Can learn full name, address and telephone number.
- . Starts to be a collector of school papers, etc.
- . Conscious of things they don't know.
- . Can do simple household tasks such as feed the dog.

Relationships with others:

Adults --

- . Likes to help either parent.

- . Conforms, "May I go."

Peers --

- . Is a poor group member.
- . Is a tattletale.
- . Needs adult supervision.
- . Is demanding.
- . Hits and pushes.

LIVING WITH THREE TO FIVE'S

These years are a trial run for adult life. Preschoolers are full of great initiative. They need the time and materials to try out their plans and ideas.

Your job changes now. During infancy you provided for all their needs. Even during toddlerhood, you were their main protector. Now, during this period, your children will:

- . Develop a real concept of themselves.
- . Develop new relationships with brothers and sisters.
- . Possibly develop new fears. Now you must be willing to "let go" and help them grow by:

- . Meeting people.
- . Providing time, space, play materials.

Self-Awareness

During infancy you judged the baby's self-awareness from his vocal behavior. The toddler could use simple words to transmit his/her wants. A preschooler can directly tell about his/her feelings. If he/she doesn't, behavior is a good clue.

This is the period a youngster wants to try everything. This is how it should be. If they hang back, they may need more encouragement. A three-year-old tries to please and needs praise. Don't be afraid to give it to him/her.

He/she may need more experiences to get ideas. All preschoolers need materials to work with--not those to wind and then sit back and watch--but materials to manipulate and be creative with. Give him/her wood, nails, a hammer, the opportunity to dress up and parade around, the fun of splashing in water.

It doesn't really matter at this age if their crayon "house" doesn't look like a house at all to you. What really counts is how they feel about it and the fun they had doing it. Each experience they have and each new discovery they make about people and their environment makes a mark on their concept of themselves.

During this period of awareness they are learning about the type of person they are; the kind of children you expect them to be. For these reasons a great deal of "testing" is common during this period.

And, remember, they arrive at who they are by your tone of voice, what they hear and reactions toward them.

Brother-sister relationships

Children are not born with a love for brothers and sisters. Respecting and enjoying each other and doing things as a family comes gradually. It takes time and parental help for each child in the family to accept and learn to like the other family members. Small children are very self-centered.

Jealousy is a feeling common to all. It comes from situations when we actually are, or appear to be, left out. There are many causes of a child's jealousy. Examples: the arrival of a new baby; when another youngster takes a possession they consider strictly their own property.

With the arrival of a new baby, they often feel the infant will take their place with their parents. Since they know they are not allowed outwardly to take angry feelings out on their parents, they take them out on the baby.

"Take him back to the hospital." "I'm going to flush him away." "I'm going to be a baby again." These are common statements of the older child betraying his/her jealous and normal feelings toward the new baby.

They may show their feelings through regressing in behavior. They may demand a bottle, begin to wet again, crawl or babble. Or preschoolers may have bursts of temper, not want to eat, bite or pinch younger children, or withdraw from their neighborhood friends. Jealousy takes many paths.

Prevention is the best cure. Tell them in advance about the baby. Let them share in the preparations. Shift them from the baby bed, or to a new room, several months in advance of the baby's birth. Begin any change in their routine, such as starting nursery school, if possible ahead of the baby's arrival.

Jealousy may be more pronounced when the new baby is old enough to get his/her own way or be interested in toys. Rivalry and some quarreling between children is common. And jealousy can be turned around. The younger child can be envious of the older one with his/her greater skills and abilities, size, strength and privileges.

Fears

New, strange and violent fears often crop up when children become four or five. They seem to coincide with children's developing self-awareness and all the power they imagine is theirs. Children at this age are learning about real and imagined dangers. Fears loom up of imagined kidnappers, giants, burglars, spooks, of being orphaned, of death, bodily mutilation, the boogymen and the dark.

Being able to trust things as they did at two may be gone. They may fuss when getting shots at the doctor's office. They may overhear adult conversations and misunderstand meanings. Occurrences such as the whir of the fire

siren may be frightening to three, four or five-year-olds.

Actually, there are two types of fears. We all have natural ones about the strange, the unfamiliar, unusual noises. The other type of fear is caused by anxiety. For example, a preschooler may be afraid of death, that you will leave and never return. When fears seem to stem from anxiety, try to uncover the reason behind his/her fear and then offer reassurance.

Trying to avoid frightening situations is the best course of action. No threats about people or terrible animals. See that older children do not shut him/her in a dark closet as a joke.

All fears cannot be prevented. When frightened, soothe him/her and give the reassurance needed. Take him/her in your arms. Talk but leave the reasoning until later. Try to help him/her help him/herself by living out fears during play and through stories.

If he/she seems overly frightened, take a look at his/her life. Do you expect him/her to be too good? Could he/she be feeling that he/she really can't do things to please you. Accept these fears. They are very real to him/her. Help him/her get them into the open. Trying to cover them up may provoke smarty and belligerent actions. If you can't uncover a cause for these fears, it may be a phase and that will vanish as he/she grows in experience and sureness of him/herself.

Meeting people

Children need contact with a variety of people outside the family now—the milkman, mailman, workman, repairman, salesman, policeman and grocer. Children learn from them. "Why do you need a wrench?" "How does milk get cold?" They want to know what adults do and how they act. Through play, preschoolers relive their "grown up" ideas.

Especially important to preschoolers is being with boys and girls their own

age. Give them such experiences through Sunday school, nursery school, neighborhood play. Occasionally arrange to have them visit in other children's homes with you.

Children learn from each other and with each other. They play out adult roles together. How often is heard, "I want to go out and play," and then, "You be the baby, I'm the mommy;" or "I'm the fireman." They learn to stretch their imaginations. They learn about people.

They also begin to develop signs of sympathy, aggression and leadership through play. At this age one can see that their social relationships revolve around play.

Providing time, space, play materials

Adults may be inclined to dismiss a preschooler's play as tolerable, since it keeps them occupied, but really not of much worth. On the contrary, it is serious business to them. It is their "work;" their way of finding out what they are like and what materials are like.

Time is important. This is where an adult's attitude about play begins to show. If spontaneous expression is met with "Hurry up," "Clean up that mess," or "You're just being silly," children may hesitate before stretching their imagination again. Of course, children need to learn that they live in a family. Therefore, they must adapt to other's schedules and feelings, too. But preschoolers also need uninterrupted blocks of time to use for their business of play. And some adult attention and guidance along with it.

Space to run, to be noisy, to be messy and to explore materials is a "must" for a child this age. And this is not always easy to provide. If you do not have a spot designated for such play, it might mean allowing finger-paint in the kitchen or even the bathroom. It might mean allowing the living room floor to become an airport or race track for cars. It doesn't matter where

a child plays as long as he/she feels free and you do not mind his/her being there.

There are many things in your own home to use in enriching a child's imagination and knowledge of the world--adult dress-up clothes, daddy's worn out shoes, your old purse and rumpled hat, discarded boxes to climb over and hide inside, tarnished muffin tins and old pots and pans to whip up a pretend cake. There are old receiving blankets to wrap a "baby" in; pieces of string and hunks of rubber hose; a magnet and magnifying glass, a piece of pie dough to squeeze and roll, and a most delightful play material--water.

SUMMARY

The pattern of growth in each child is unique--differences caused mainly by inherent or environmental factors. Growth of individuals is often uneven. This, however, is a normal and healthy pattern.

In general, the rate of growth and development from infancy to maturity is much slower than the prenatal period of development. Development is relatively rapid from birth during infancy and

early childhood. It is slower but constant in middle childhood, becomes accelerated during puberty and tapers off during adolescence. Growth is a profound psychological experience with all areas of development--physical, social, emotional and intellectual--closely related and dependent on each other.

Parents cannot hurry or prevent growth. Neither can they "do the growing" for their children. Adults can only provide a healthy and happy environment in which children can grow and develop. They can provide the right equipment, abundant space, encouragement, and tender, loving care. Every child must grow according to his/her own growth pattern. Every child has a right to be wanted, loved, and provided with the basic physical and spiritual necessities of life.

Learning to be a parent does not demand unusual skills, but sometimes trying to be a "perfect" parent can make the job more difficult. One cannot take the storybook or perfectionist approach rather than the realistic approach to child rearing. We must prepare for parenthood, learn to trust ourselves, and use professional help along with common sense.

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