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# CHILD PSYCHOLOGY



# UNDERSTANDING THE CHILD

For the purpose of this study childhood will be the age group 0-15 years.

- 0 - 3 - infancy
- 4 - 5 - Nursery
- 6 - 8 - Primary
- 9 - 12 - Primary
- 13 - 15 - Young teens

Every child has unique characteristics that distinguish him from others in his family, let alone from children outside his family. Because every child is born from a family, it is better to see his development from his family setting. His family is the first school room God uses to mould and train him. That is the focus of Proverbs 22:6. It is at his family, for example, that a child is taught to:

- say 'thank you'
- greet others
- pray before meals
- wash his hands and
- brush his teeth.

To properly and effectively bring up a child, an understanding of his culture and behaviour is necessary.

**a. Culture:** Children seem to have a culture different from that of adults. Wright (1978) says "it would be helpful to enter into the mind of a child and live there for a while." Because he is shorter than adults, he sees things differently. Even when he sees as adults do, his reaction is different because his understanding of concepts is at a different level of maturity.

**b. Hearing:** Toddlers may not hear as adults hear; they give different phrasing to songs and words. The teacher should therefore be distinct and clear in his pronunciations. For example a parent listened to his child's singing "On the last day, on the last day, only 'two' believers shall be raptured" What that teacher did not know is that 'true' could sound 'two' for toddlers.

Hence the need for clarity, visuals and demonstration.

No wonder - Isaiah 28:10 (Good news Bible) admonishes us on how to teach children i.e., line upon line, here a little and there a little.

From the chart on page 10, similar behaviour characterizes children of all races and similar age groups as they develop from birth through early teens.

**1. Attention Span:** This is generally short especially for the younger children. As a result they fidget more. Once the action is started, it can run through the class. This can be controlled through songs, games and other activities to absorb their energy.

**2. Abundant Physical Action:** This steps up from 2½ years. He runs, jumps and climbs. Action is further expressed by destroying toys, hitting at or beating up others. Action songs can be used to absorb his excess energy.

**3. Dictators.** He wants to dictate to his parents what to wear (in spite of the weather), what to eat (even if it lacks proteins); he begins to be self-





willed and may resort to crying and temper tantrums in order to have his way. Many parents (mothers in particular) miss it here.

**4. Expert Imitators:** Even before they learn to talk, babies are good imitators. A Christian mother came into her bedroom one morning to find her 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> year old kneeling by his bed and whining some sounds. Children quickly emulate any emotions or actions displayed before them. Children's behaviour can easily be traced to the conduct of the parents who brought them up. Teachers and parents should therefore watch their lives and words. If you call someone a fool today, before long a child who heard you will call some child a fool. Parents and teachers should also pray against any mannerism often exhibited by them.

**5. Skill development:** This is the art of training a child to do something habitually well. Rayner (1973) says a child's development of skill is 2 steps forwards, one step backwards. Skill once developed in a child can easily be lost. He needs time to try something new today only to completely forget it a few more days before trying again. Gradually the time between his attempts shortens until he habitually uses his skill.

According to Rayner this retrogressive behaviour is not pre-determined, hence the very frequent, forgetful attitudes in children. According to Deut.6:7-8, prayerful repetition may hasten the child's ability to acquire skill in doing things. Many parents fail here, as they resort to cursing and spanking the 'misbehaving' child.

**6. Easily influenced:** As children grow, they hunger for new aspiration. The characters they observe in video and T.V may capture the life-style of a child. The way the parents and teachers dress, talk and walk may influence him. Parents should also watch out for the comics and story books etc that their children read.

The word of God and good Christian exemplary living can model a child's life. Prayerfully teach and demonstrate values you desire in the child; don't just hope he will acquire them. It is said that "if you want your child to be something, do something; if you want him to be nothing; do nothing."

**7. Child Development:** It has been suggested that the development of a child is 50% between conception and 4 years, 30% between 4 and 8 years, 20% between 8 and 17 years.

Meier (1977) believes that 85% of the eventual personality of a child is formed in the first 6 years. Britton argues that by age 3, a child has laid down the foundations of his personality (Daily Times of Nigeria, August 25, 1983, P.7).

These researches confirm Biblical injunctions (Proverbs 19:18; 22:6 and Deut. 31:11-13). The child has great opportunities to become what he is trained to become.



**CHILD****DISCIPLINE****HANDLING INDISCIPLINE**

Discipline means training especially of the mind and character to produce self-controlled habits of obedience etc. It is a conditioning of the mind to follow rules.

If your child will be a success in life you should not be careless about the need to discipline him. Parents should be able to inculcate discipline and obedience in the heart of their children. **Obedience is not complete until it:**

- a. **has immediacy:** at the first instruction - 1 Samuel 3:4-5. Hannah taught it to Samuel.
- b. **is absolute:** pick up the items on the floor. The child picks some and leaves some. 'Have you picked them?' 'Yes'. 1 Samuel 15:13-14; Prov. 13:13.
- c. **is done willingly (without grumbling):** If he can obey you in your absence then he is obedient - Col. 3:22.

**Origin of Indiscipline:**

- \* Adam and Eve
- \* Womb: Psalm 58:3; 51:5.
- \* Childhood: Proverbs 22:15
- \* Family up-bringing.
- \* Playgroup.
- \* Strong suppressive (demonic) influence.

**Things to bear in mind before applying discipline:**

- \* Punishment should not be your goal, but repentance through correction.
- \* Is he guilty? Let him know.
- \* Have you earlier taught the correct thing?
- \* Was the offense deliberate?

- \* Are you disciplining in anger?
- \* Is the punishment commensurate with the offense.

**HOW TO HANDLE INDISCIPLINE**

**1. TIMING:** Proverbs 19:18. Chasten while there is hope. By neglecting timely correction, the child develops a stubbornness that will hardly ever be conquered. (Rice, 1946).

**Two weapons of effecting discipline:**

The Rod - Proverbs 23:13-14

Reproof - Proverbs 29:15.

**When to apply:**

- a. The Rod: when there is a deliberate (willful) disobedience or any shameful, disgraceful conduct. Others include kneeling him down, restriction him to a confined area for some time, denial of privileges, picking the pin. Let the child know that the rod is used as a deterrent against future misconduct as well as a corrective measure.
- b. Reproof (verbal correction or look of disapproval): Reproof is used for first offenders or for childish irresponsibility such as: forgetfulness, mistakes, accidental breaking of dishes, immature behaviour. Such behaviour is not predetermined, but common among children of all ages. Whichever weapon, let love and wisdom, not anger, be the controlling factor. But do not love so much as to spoil the child by sparing the rod.

Rice (1946) "A child properly punished for sin develops a conscience that is hurt and grieved when he does wrong. But children brought up to have their own way, with never a thought of punishment for their misconduct grow without respect for authority abroad. Such children are:

- \* rebellious and insolent to adults,
- \* the law breakers in the post primary and tertiary institutions.

Some of them have been foolishly loved and pampered by their parents especially if the child;

- is a late arrival,
- the only male/female
- is a lone child.
- the first or last child in the family.

**Such children:-**

- i. resist their Sunday School Teachers
- ii. in church want to stay by their mothers.
- iii. don't like going to school.

Because they have been brought up to have their own way, they want to rule/manipulate other children.

**Some of them grow up to be:**

- immature and
- lack initiative (spoon-fed children)
- morally loose and
- grow into adolescence to disrespect or hate their parents who spoil them (cf Dobson '84).

**Note that:**

1. Parental good example will be remembered and followed better than parental preaching.
2. A child though born again is still a child.
3. The child needs encouragement and commendation.
4. Beware you don't destroy him through wrong use of words - Proverbs 18:20-21.

**SOME CAUSES OF INDISCIPLINE IN BIBLE CLUBS/ SUNDAY SCHOOLS:**

1. Physical discomfort e.g., poor sitting position for example friends sitting together, uncomfortable chairs, legs hanging down, sunlight in room, stuffy room, poor ventilation, over crowdedness.
2. Problem inherent in their age group - love of fun and fantasy, a desire to be noticed.
3. Home background, lack of influence of the word of God, poor negative family examples e.g. lack of enforced obedience, or security.
4. Poor teaching methods; uninteresting, dull and disorganized teaching; lack of adequate preparation.
5. Demonic influence.

**CORRECTION OF INDISCIPLINE:**

- a. Maintain eye contact
- b. Question less attentive children
- c. Relocate to a proper place objects of distraction
- d. Separate misbehaving children from each other.
- e. Briefly stop talking and show a glance of disapproval to the offending child.
- f. Keep child standing for sometime
- g. If the rod must be applied, do it with explanation

- h. Use older children to keep attention
- i. Sing a popular song.
- j. Reward good behaviour.

**GENERAL HINTS**

- i. Be consistent
- ii. Realise and use your God-given authority.
- iii. He/she is still a child, make allowance for this
- iv. Appreciate and reinforce good conduct.
- v. Avoid shouting when scolding and reproofing child
- vi. Forget a punished offence.

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# THE TEENAGERS



## INTRODUCTION

Who is a teenager/ adolescent?

Adolescence is the period between childhood and adulthood. If this transit period is not properly handled, it could produce an unbalanced adult. It is a period of crises but can be a time of fun and stimulating adventure for parents, teachers and teens if all the parties involved have an understanding and how to effectively handle it.

## UNDERSTANDING THE TEENAGER

Adolescence years are characterized by changes in the physical, intellectual, emotional, psychological, sexual and social development of the teenagers. These changes, usually last three and half to seven years, brings disorganization in the world of the child, and lead to the first sign of stress noticed in a young teenager. The level of the changes however depends on the factors of nature, nurture and the kind of diet the child takes. Adolescents think they are already adults. They want to be independent and take their own decision but they are not ready to take responsibility for the consequences.

## WHAT THE TEENAGERS WANT THEIR PARENTS/ TEACHERS TO KNOW:

1. I really love you even when you correct me.
2. Don't correct me in public it makes me feel embarrassed.
3. Give me benefit of doubt before "judging" me.
4. Understand my mood.
5. Guide me to take my own decision and don't decide for me.
6. Appreciate me when I'm doing my best and encourage me when I am failing.
7. Don't pamper me. Challenge me to do good and new things.
8. Respect my privacy.
9. Don't use cane to correct me, it will only harden me.
10. Don't compare me with other people.

11. Even though older people are knowledgeable, younger people too can have brilliant ideas so listen to me too.
12. I'm sensitive to words and that can go a long way to hurt my feelings and even make me feel inferior.
13. Do not be partial or have double standard.
14. Even though I'm bad today it does not mean I will continue like that. I am a 'good in the making'. Please be patient with me.

## HOW TO RELATE WITH THE TEENAGERS.

1. Love them unconditionally. Understand their love languages and speak it as often as possible. Language of love are: Quality time, Quality service, Physical touch, Words of affirmation and Gift.
2. Get close enough and ease the burden of awkward feeling. Learn to communicate freely and share with them (but don't preach) from your life experiences.
3. Be a good role model. Be a living example of life of faith. 1Tim 4:12, you should be able to confidently say follow me as I follow Christ (1 Cor 11:1).

## THE 7 'C'S FOR TEENAGER'S TEACHERS/ PARENTS

1. Condemn not but affirm (Prov. 12:18).
2. Correct in love and in private.
3. Communicate: Don't be busy.
4. Control not but seek to have a relationship that brings about a natural submission.
5. Calm down and listen – seek to understand what they mean.
6. Consider them by respecting and exhorting their points of strength.
7. Counsel them in all spheres of life.





# THE TEENAGERS

## ▼ UNDERSTANDING THE TEENAGERS CHARACTER CHART ▼

### PHYSICAL

They experience tremendous growth physically and sometimes get embarrassed by this growth. This is evident by the changes in size and body features due to the production of hormones (Prov. 20:29). As a result:

Boys' voices deepen and they may have wet dreams. Girls grow breast and their hips expand. On set of menstruation for girls. Girls mature earlier than boys.

### WHAT TO DO

Get close enough to ease the burden of awkward feeling by learning and explaining in the most informal way the changes in them and how to handle those stages

### MENTAL

Due to the rapid development of their mind, they could reason things through by themselves. They do not like to obey blindly; their emphasis is on reason rather than tolerance. They have keen minds. Query and probe virtually everything. Try out own ideas and thoughts. Need to be challenged to learn. Idealistic. Have great sense of humour.

### WHAT TO DO

Be a motivator and model, encourage and expose them to good books especially at the early teens.

### SOCIAL

Companion Seeker. They love being with friends and the influence of peers become dominant. They want to belong. Can be greatly influenced by peers. Transfer of loyalty from home to school. They like to interact and discuss. Begin to get attracted to the opposite sex. They look up to youthful leaders as role models

### WHAT TO DO

Help them to make right choices and to know effect of bad choices "allow them to make their own mistakes". Be part of their lives (be a friend). Expose them to proper social etiquettes. Create forum for interaction especially while teaching. Create good and wholesome fun for them e.g. games party, informal interaction etc. Make your instruction about relationship simple and clear. Give them guided freedom. Enter into their world and stay there a while. Involve them when you plan programs for them. Be a guide and a coach.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTION

This is not fully developed. They are emotionally unstable. Can express extreme moods e.g. happy, sad and rebellious. Often over-respond emotionally. Do a lot of day dreaming. They want to feel accepted and loved.

### WHAT TO DO

Help to build positive self-image and self-esteem in them. Let them know they are loved and accepted without indulging them. Discipline them in love. Don't rebuke a teen that you have not properly instructed.





# THE TEENAGERS

## ▼ UNDERSTANDING THE TEENAGERS CHARACTER CHART ▼

### SPIRITUAL

Question spiritual values and want to be convinced. Want to be sure, definite and specific about spiritual matters. Are zealous and full of energy. Need guidance. Have tendency to pretend and cover-up.

### WHAT TO DO

Be assertive when it comes to absolute and understand when it comes to trivial matters.  
Be balance and modest.  
Be very personal in evangelizing them.  
Give necessary encouragement to them so that they can grow in faith.  
Involve them in spiritual activities such as evangelism, prayers, conferences etc.  
Encourage them to keep journal(record of their growth).  
Encourage them to establish conversational prayer life.  
Create a forum for them to meet once in a week for spiritual activities apart from Sunday service.  
In the church, start a teen's class.  
Make deliberate effort to disciple them.  
Above all, be a living example of life of faith. 1Tim 4:12, you should be able to confidently say follow me as I follow Christ 1Cor 11:1.  
Encourage them to have Christian role models

### SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT

Male and female reproductive organs is now developing.

### WHAT TO DO

Teach them sex education before they learn it from the wrong place.  
Teach them about right friendship – treat every boy as your brother and every girl as your sister.  
Help them to appreciate their bodies as God's temple.



# STUDIES ON CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT



## Definition/Explanation of terms

**Development:** This is the progressive acquisition of physical (motor), cognitive (thought), linguistic (communication) and social (emotional) skills and/or attributes. It is an increase in the function and complexity of these skills in an individual. The development of a child is influenced by a number of factors which include biologic, psychologic or social. They may act singly or in combination to determine the course of the child's development. It is therefore important that all who are involved in the care for children, either at home, school or within the community get conversant with what normal development entails, so that children with developmental challenges can be detected on time and appropriately managed to reduce their impacts, on the child as a whole.

Health is defined as a state of physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. It is a state that can hardly be maintained by any individual for any length of time. However, in practical terms there is a degree of health which all children ought to enjoy for normal growth and development.

It is important that we realize the major

determinants of who we are as human beings, children included. These factors include nature and nurture. Nature is the genetic endowment of an individual i.e. what the individual inherits from his/her parents. Nurture on the other hand is the effect of environment on the individual. The net effect between nature and nurture is the personality (individual) we see and live with. While there is very little we can do about nature, we can do a lot about nurture.

Nurture i.e. the environment, may be physical, social, economic, psychological or even spiritual. Physical environment relates to the surrounding (e.g. room, house, backyard, community). The social environment relates to the economic situations surrounding the individual. (e.g. affluent, poor, wretched).

As far as the health of the children you handle or minister to is concerned, these factors may influence their behaviour, attention span and attitude within the Bible Club. These in turn may affect the behaviour of other children within the Club. Therefore, it is very important that we are all familiar with these possible sources of problems.

**INTRODUCTION**

Physical (Motor) development is one of the aspects of development in a child. The other aspects of development are cognitive (thought), linguistic (communication) and social (emotional) skills and/or attributes. The developmental milestones depend on the ages of the child and great differences exist in the ages at which children attain the different milestones. The milestones presented below are an average and is expected to guide parents to ensure that children are assisted to attain optimal development.

## THE CHILD'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Normal Development				
Age	Psychosocial	Physical(Motor)	Fine Motor/ Coordination	Communication and Hearing
3 months	Recognizes mother Smiles responsively.	Can support head for a few seconds when held upright.	Opens hands frequently.	Responds to voices Laughs.
6 months	Reaches for familiar people	Rolls from stomach to back or back to stomach. Sits with anterior support.	Plays with hands by touching them together. Sees small objects such as crumbs.	Responds to name. Babbles.
12 months	Has separation anxiety. Social interactions are intentional and goal directed.	Pulls self up to standing position. Walks with support.	Points at objects with index finger.	Says at least 1 word Makes "ma-ma" or "da-da" sounds. Locates sounds by turning head.
2 years	Does things to please others. Engages in parallel (imitative) play.	Runs without falling.	Looks at pictures in a book. Imitates drawing a vertical line.	Combines 2 different words.

**2 years:**

- Posture is more erect; abdomen still large and protruding, back swayed, because abdominal muscles are not yet fully developed.
- Respirations are slow and regular
- Body temperature continues to fluctuate with activity, emotional state, and environment.
- Brain reaches about 80 percent of its adult size.
- 16 baby teeth almost finished growing out

# STUDIES ON CHILD'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

## 3 years

- Growth is steady though slower than in first two years.
- Adult height can be predicted from measurements of height at three years of age; males are approximately 53% of their adult height and females, 57%.
- Legs grow faster than arms,
- Circumference of head and chest is equal; head size is in better proportion to the body.
- "Baby fat" disappears as neck appears.
- Posture is more erect; abdomen no longer protrudes.
- Slightly knock-kneed.
- can jump from low step
- can stand up and walk around on tiptoes
- "baby" teeth stage over.
- Needs to consume approximately 6,300 J (1,500 calories) daily.

## 4 years

- Head circumference is usually not measured after age three.
- Requires approximately 1,700 calories daily.
- Hearing acuity can be assessed by child's correct usage of sounds and \*Language, also by the child's appropriate responses to questions and instructions.

## 5 years

- Head size is approximately that of an adult's.
- May begin to lose "baby" (deciduous) teeth.
- Body is adult-like in proportion.
- Requires approximately 7,500 J (1,800 calories) daily
- Visual tracking and binocular vision are well developed.

## 6 years

- Weight gains reflect significant increases in muscle mass.
- Heart rate and respiratory rates are close to adults.
- Body may appear lanky as through period of rapid growth.
- Baby teeth beginning to be replaced by permanent ones, starting with the two lower front teeth
- 20/20 eyesight; if below 20/40 should see a professional.
- The most common vision problem during

middle childhood is myopia, or nearsightedness.

- Uses 6,700 J to 7,100 J (1,600 to 1,700 calories) a day.

## 7-10 years

The child grows 2 to 3 inches per year. His muscle mass will build--creating a leaner physique. Muscle coordination and balance continues to grow. Baby teeth are replaced with new permanent teeth. Faces begin to form with a new jaw line to accommodate new teeth. Light hair may darken and hair textures may change--curly to straight or straight to wavy. In some cases, girls will start early puberty--growing pubic hair and forming breast buds.

## Beyond 11 years:

Children are likely to experience adolescent/pubertal growth spots. Sexual maturation will occur with the development of the breasts, voices, and pubic hairs, and beards, changes in the physic and participation in activities. The girls start menstruation. Parents should devote time to prepare them for these developmental stages as this may create embarrassment to some children. Also, because of sexuality awareness, some children may indulge in negative habits such as sexual and substance abuses. Teenage and unwanted pregnancies should be guarded against.

Some key messages that are relevant to development of children from the Facts for Life (4th Edition) are:

1. The first three years of life, are important for building the baby's brain. Everything she or he sees, touches, tastes, smells or hears helps to shape the brain for thinking, feeling, moving and learning.
2. Babies learn rapidly from the moment of birth. They grow and learn best when responsive and caring parents and other care givers give them affection, attention and stimulation in addition to good nutrition, proper health care and protection.
3. Encouraging children to play and explore helps them learn and develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. This helps children get ready for school.
4. Children learn how to behave (socially and



# STUDIES ON CHILD'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

emotionally) by imitating the behaviour of those closest to them.

5. Entering primary school on time is critical to ensure the continuity of a child's development. Support from parents, other caregivers, teachers and the community is very important.
6. All children grow and develop in similar patterns, but each child develops at her or his own pace. Every child has her or his own interests, temperament, style of social interaction and approach to learning.

#### 4. Factors affecting physical development:

Factors that affect a child's physical development include genetic, cognitive, physical, family, cultural, nutritional, educational, and environmental factors. Some of these factors are :Malnutrition, Measles and viral infections, Diarrhoea, Chest infections, Tuberculosis, Sickle cell disease, Febrile convulsion.

#### MALNUTRITION.

Malnutrition means wrong nutrition. It may be over-eating, under-eating, or eating the wrong combinations of food items. Overeating generally leads to obesity. To get a clear picture of the condition it is necessary to classify food items. The food items can be classified into carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins and minerals. In a normal diet (balanced) all the mentioned components are present in the right proportion. It is this balanced diet that promotes adequate growth and development.

The reason why we must take nutrition seriously is that poor nutrition can result in poor mental development. A well-nourished child will be able to fight infection very well, as well as poor physical development whereas a malnourished child can easily be overcome by infections and other minor illnesses.

#### MEASLES AND OTHER COMMON VACCINE - PREVENTABLE INFECTIONS

Measles is very well known to most of us as a condition common among children from January to March or April. The condition is caused by very small germs called virus. A specific type of virus is involved. The infection starts with running nose, dry cough, fever and then the rash which starts from the face and spreads downwards. The rash is

velvety and reddish in colour. The fever is usually very high. There will be hoarseness of the voice and loss of appetite. The fever may last 3 to 5 days but usually subsides while the rash is still on. The skin is itchy and uncomfortable. The mouth may become reddened and the angle of the mouth may crack.

There are important complications of the condition which we can note.

- \* Diarrhoea may accompany or follow the condition.
- \* Pneumonia which is a chest infection (causing fever and difficulty in breathing) may follow measles.
- \* Malnutrition may result because of loss of appetite in a child whose nutrition was not good even before the measles.
- \* Ear infection which may result in pus draining from the ears may result. Because of these, including blindness and many other complications, measles can be a serious disease. When measles occur among malnourished children, the chances of dying are very high.

Unfortunately, there are no drugs which can kill the virus responsible for measles. This means that we have no antibiotics for it. When a child develops measles, we therefore try to support the child to enable him to survive. Adequate child, skin and mouth care, management of bacterial infections and encouragement for feeding together with lowering of body temperature are the usual measures taken by health personnel.

The best approach to measles is prevention. Measles can be prevented by immunization. A number of other viral and bacterial conditions can also be prevented by immunization.

#### IMMUNIZATION

Immunization is the process of introducing very small quantity of a substance into the body to provoke a large quantity of material capable of preventing a disease which can result from infection by the germ (or substance) which was used to provoke the reaction. If a germ A, can cause measles, a very small quantity of A can be introduced into the body, not enough to cause





## STUDIES ON CHILD'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

disease, but enough to help the body produce a substance B, which will prevent measles when A infects a child. That process of introducing the very small quantity is immunization.

### We can immunize a child against:-

Condition	Age for Immunization
1. Tuberculosis	At birth
2. Diphtheria, polio, tetanus and whooping cough	6, 10 and 14 wks
3. Measles	9 months.

The above conditions which are killers of children can be prevented to a very large extent by the process of immunization. It is highly advisable that all children get all the immunization to all the listed conditions at the right time from the right place by the right person. Perhaps we can say a few words about each of the other conditions listed:

**1. Tuberculosis** (BCG is the vaccine required). This disease primarily affects the lungs and with time destroys the lungs. The child will develop a long standing cough, weight loss and in many instances night sweat. The child becomes chronically ill with the chest bones becoming prominent. The condition is acquired by inhaling the germs from sputum of others who have the condition. Because of this, it is bad habit to spit in public. We may be spreading diseases to other people. Once the disease affects an individual, all the family members and close associates and classmates in school are at risk of acquiring the disease. The disease is deadly. But thanks to God that there are drugs which can kill the germs causing tuberculosis.

The drugs are expensive and the treatment takes 9 months to one and a half years to complete, depending on the type of drug used and the extent of the disease. The best thing is to prevent the disease.

**2. Poliomyelitis:** is prevented by giving the vaccine 3 times at the age, 6, 10 and 14 weeks of life. Poliomyelitis can cause a permanent paralysis of the legs and hands. The damage done may never be reversible. The germ causing the condition is a virus and there are no drugs to kill the germ. Hence, it is very wise to prevent the disease by immunization.

**3. Tetanus:** Tetanus germ is very common everywhere in the soil. Any dirty wound will facilitate its growth. The germ produces a toxic substance which causes excessive violent contractions of muscles all over the body. These contractions are

called spasms. The disease can lead to death if the spasm of the muscles of respiration is excessive.

There is immunization available for the prevention of the condition. The vaccine is also given at 6, 10 and 14 weeks of age. Each time we have a deep cut or dirty wound, it is wise to take the anti-tetanus serum.

**4. Whooping cough:** This is a violent continuous cough which ends up in a whooping particularly in infants. The condition can kill or damage infants one year or less in age. There are no good drugs that can kill off the organisms rapidly enough.

The immunization agent against whooping cough is available and efficient. It is given at 6, 10 and 14 weeks of age.

### DIARRHOEA DISEASES

Diarrhoea is a common problem in children. Diarrhoea is from the Greek word meaning flowing through. It is characterised by frequent watery stools. There are various causes of diarrhoea: some are caused by virus, some by bacteria, some by parasites and some by fungi. The bacterial type tends to have blood and mucus in the victim's stool. The child may also have fever. This type of diarrhoea may need drug treatment.

But, by far the majority of diarrhoea in children is due to virus against which we do not have any effective drug. Secondly, the main danger of diarrhoea is dehydration (loss of water and salt from the body). While it is extremely important to prevent diarrhoea by adhering to hygienic practices the main cause of death in diarrhoea is dehydration. Fortunately, dehydration can be prevented by oral rehydration therapy (ORT).

How do we know if a child is dehydrated or not? If there is dehydration, the child will not pass urine enough. The limited urine passed will be concentrated (yellowish). The tongue may be dry and the eyes will be sunken. The child will be weak and the weight will be light.

### What To Teach Mothers in Case of Diarrhoea:

- \* Careful handling of stools and proper disposal as soon as the stool is passed.
- \* Careful hand washing; and thorough washing of plates, cups, spoons etc.
- \* Prevention of flies from touching the stool.
- \* Administration of oral rehydration solution.



# STUDIES ON CHILD'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

## Preparation of Oral Rehydration Solution

1. Get two soft-drink bottles, wash them properly.
2. Boil water, allow to cool and fill the two bottles.
3. Pour the water in the two bottles into a clean bowl.
4. Add 10 level teaspoons of granulated sugar and 1 level teaspoon of salt.
5. Mix well and begin to give to the child to drink as soon as possible.
6. Ensure that the child drinks as much as possible.
7. Discard the ORT after 24 hours.

The solution is only good for 24 hours.

## CHEST INFECTION

Infection in the chest usually manifests as cough, fever and difficulty in breathing. The child may be very sick or mildly so, depending on the type of infection.

Pneumonia due to bacteria or virus may occur. The pneumonia due to bacteria may be very severe. The individual may complain of chest pain. There may be sputum which may be whitish or brown in colour. There may be sore throat if the infection is located at the upper airway. The bacterial infection can be treated with appropriate antibiotics. However, many cases of pneumonia are due to viruses rather than bacteria. These do not respond to drugs but the body has ways of controlling these virus infections.

## SKIN INFECTIONS

This is a very important issue in a Bible Club or Sunday school because such can be the source of spread to other children. Infections such as chicken pox, can spread from person to person. If a child has chicken pox, it is better the child stays away from the club for as long as there is more fresh appearance of the pox.

## SICKLE CELL ANAEMIA

This is a genetic disorder of the blood that is inherited by the child from both parents. The gene for the normal haemoglobin is called A (HbA) while haemoglobin S (HbS) is an abnormal one that encourages sickling of the red blood cells. The sickled cells are not malleable and easily block the blood vessels. This impairs the blood flow through the vessels to the peripheral tissues. Inheriting normal HbA from each parent will lead to a normal genotype AA. An individual who inherits a normal gene from one parent and an abnormal gene from the other parent has genotype AS. This is also called a carrier state. But an individual who inherits

abnormal gene S from both parents will have haemoglobin genotype SS. This is a state that results in sickle cell anaemia.

It is a disease that is restricted to the African race and presents itself in a number of ways. It is usually present for the first time around the age of two years with swelling of the hand (wrist) and foot (ankle). The individual is noted to have chronic anaemia (i.e., low blood level). They tend to have stunted growth with tall thin extremities (limbs) and protuberant abdomen (and forehead). Some have chronic leg wear.

Apart from all these, sicklers can from time to time be in crisis state with the following manifestations:

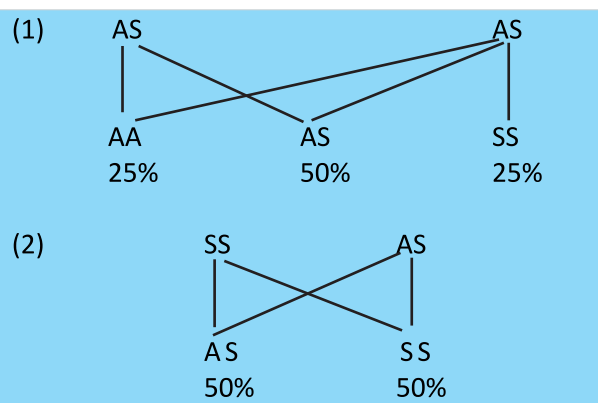
**(a) Bone Pain crisis.** This is usually precipitated by an infection like malaria, dehydration etc. The patient complains of pain in the bones of the legs or of the hands and even sometimes the ribs. They are usually treated in the hospital with adequate analgesics, fluid replacement and treatment of the underlying problem.

**(b) Hemolytic crisis.** Red cells are damaged massively and patient becomes severely anaemic and deeply jaundiced and this may sometimes require transfusion with blood.

Although sickle cell disease is a serious condition, it does not preclude a normal life style. However the patient should take the normal routine drugs like Folic Acid, Paludrine and visit the clinic by appointment regularly.

It can be prevented by genetic counseling. But suffice it to know that in general, if an AS marries an AS, 25% of their offspring may be SS (i.e. one out of every 4 of their children.)

If an SS marries an AS, 50% of their offspring may be SS (i.e., one out of every two. See sketch below.





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## FEBRILE CONVULSION

This is a form of generalised tonic chronic seizure that is found in about 5% of children between the ages of 6 months to 5 years when they have high grade fever. The seizure must be brief and the body temperature is usually greater than 38°C. The cause of the fever may be any form of infection like malaria but a disease of the central nervous system like meningitis has to be ruled out. It occurs in individuals who are genetically predisposed if positive history can be found either in their parents or any of their siblings. There is a small risk that an individual with febrile convulsion may have epilepsy (i.e. non-febrile seizures) later in life.

When confronted with a child with this condition the following steps should be taken.

1. Do not panic.
2. Place the child in a safe environment and let him lie on his side.
3. Bring down the body temperature by exposing the child to cool air and/or by tepid-sponging.
4. When the child is fully conscious, give antipyretic drug like paracetamol syrup.
5. Avoid putting hard materials into the mouth of the child while he is still convulsing because it can injure him.
6. Do not give him oil to drink as this can be aspirated and lead to lipoid pneumonitis.
7. Use of herbal concoction is not encouraged as some of them contain materials that can further depress the CNS or cause permanent brain damage.
8. Take the child to the hospital where the cause of the fever will be diagnosed and appropriate treatment given.
9. Children with repeated episodes of febrile convulsion can be placed on anti convulsants like phenobarbitone.

## 4. How to ensure physical development

Children require the commitments of their parents and caregivers to ensure optimal development. The parents/caregivers should provide enabling environment for the child's development. This includes the provision of safe and healthy environment to prevent injuries from falls and accidents, nutritionally adequate foods to prevent malnutrition, preventive health services such as regular check-ups and immunization and adequate psychosocial stimulation. The children in different

age groups require age appropriate supports to promote their developments. For example:

Birth to 12 months:

- o Allow your baby plenty of safe space for rolling, scooting and crawling.
- o Make sure your baby's clothing is loose enough so arms and legs can move freely.
- o Play gentle exercise games.
- o To encourage your baby to crawl, place a favorite toy just out of reach.
- o Provide firm, stable objects on which your baby can pull up to a standing position.

One to 3 years old:

- o Provide pull toys that make noise. Encourage your child to walk forward and backward while pulling the toy.
- o Help your child walk up and down stairs.
- o Help your child jump off the first or second step and over a small object.
- o Provide opportunities for your child to climb up and through things.
- o Provide both large and small balls for throwing and kicking.
- o Provide a wagon for pulling and carrying objects from place to place.

Four to 5 years old:

- o Have your child walk along a line drawn on the floor to learn balance.
- o Provide a mat for tumbling play such as rolls and somersaults.
- o Play catch with your child, starting with a large ball and gradually changing to smaller sized balls.

## 6. Conclusion

Children's physical development cannot wait for the parents to do other things. Children require the right environment to optimize their development. All forms of delays must be detected on time for appropriate interventions. Children Ministry teachers should ensure that the teaching environment is optimal for the child's development..



## MENTAL DEVELOPMENT - EDUCATION

### Introduction:

A University Professor left teaching at University to teach at a kindergarten school. When asked why, he had this to say "At what time do you engrave your name on a cornerstone, when the concrete is fresh with water or dry?" He continued, "God wants to imprint His name in the child's heart while he is young, and has not got enough sin's scar on."

In our days when minds are filled with all sorts of ungodly philosophies and ideas, we need to have the minds of our children filled with teachings of God's Word and godly ideas. The mind apart from being renewed with God's Word needs to be developed intellectually too - hence the need for sound education for our children.

### The Starting Point

The beginning of the life of a human being is at conception and all the child will be is genetically determined from that time. The environment (nurture) apart from the nature also affects the development of the child. For Christian parents, you start speaking the Word of God to the baby in the womb right from the time of conception. Make your positive confessions of faith of what you want your child to be and it shall so be to you according to your faith (Mark 11:23-24).

In dealing with children from non-Christian parents, the spiritual nurture and the environment provided by a Christian Daycare/Nursery School is the ideal place to get the child's mind developed and renewed with God's Word.

The Catholic Church has been credited with the statement, "Give me a child the first five years and I'll own him for life." The importance of the first five years

of life cannot be overemphasised. That which is lacking in the home can be provided by the Christian teachers in the school or church as the case may be.

### Other Factors Affecting the Development of the Mind of the Child

The environment plays an important role. Children that miss genuine love in the environment perpetually suffer character difficulties and fail to achieve the potential growth emotionally and intellectually.

Genuine love shown to the children by parents or teachers can help the child to develop proper self esteem, self confidence and sense of security as well as self worth. Show love to the children and spend time with them.

### The Family.

The personality of a child is built from all of the relationships that touch the child's life., i.e. Parents, brothers, sisters, teachers, classmates, etc. A happy family gives the child direction in life, self esteem, and confidence and a happy look on life.

### The Church.

Through Sunday School, children services help in shaping the life of the children by teaching God's Word. The training provided to parents in the upbringing of children also directly affects the mind development of the child.

### The School.

In the school the teacher substitutes the parent. He teaches values or morals, ethical and spiritual to the children. So it is important that we have Christian schools-preschool, primary and secondary schools where children could be taught in God's way as their minds keep developing.

### The Community.

This includes the moral climate of a neighbourhood. The influence of the peer group, friends etc, cannot be over emphasized.

### Other influences include:

- (i) urbanization - children in cities are introduced to lots of influences.
- (ii) mass media especially the television, which exposes children to lots of culture and social influence.
- (iii) the computer and internet.





## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE MIND OF THE CHILD**

### **The Parents' Part:**

Parents should be encouraged to provide balanced diet and nutritious meals for the children. Pregnant and nursing mothers are to feed well (especially protein foods and vitamins, fruits, vegetables etc.) as this helps the development of the brain cells of the baby. They should also show genuine love to their children.

### **The Teacher's Part:**

This refers to both in church and in school. The teacher should endeavour to see that the child's need for love, security, sense of belonging, significance, recognition and interrelated influences are met. The teacher should show equal love to all the children.

In the school, the child should increase in knowledge, stature and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:52). Hence the importance of building a solid foundation for a better tomorrow (Prov.22:6).

Teachers should teach diligently using both word of mouth and visuals (Deut.6:6-9). This makes learning pleasant and interesting to the child. He uses illustrated drawings, object lessons, posters and other helps to aid understanding of concepts that are abstract. This also helps to stimulate their minds to think, making their minds to develop, as new concepts are more easily understood.

Toys, puzzles etc, should be provided for children in a form appealing to a child's interest e.g. bright coloured plastic or wooden toys with non-toxic paint.

The child thinks or reasons to solve the problem and this helps his mind to develop e.g. building a bridge or house with blocks. Toys need not be expensive. Local materials could be used in making toys.

Telling of stories, use of puppets, T.V. etc helps to improve the child's imagination i.e. picturing of mental images. Communicate with the children, talk with them, give simple answers to their questions.

### **Play**

Enough room should be provided for them to play both outdoors and indoors. Play also exercises the body and provides relaxation from dull and difficult tasks. Play also helps children to discover themselves as their whole energy is involved in play. This helps them to adapt themselves to other children easily.

Children (3-4 years old) should be given opportunity to develop their ability to use eyes and hands together e.g. by threading large beads on a shoelace, or small beads to make a necklace. They should be able to use the pencil for scribbling and later, for writing. They should be taught colours e.g. red, yellow, blue, green etc and match them; also shapes e.g. triangles, circles, rectangles etc; painting and drawing of objects e.g. cup, spoon etc. These also aid the development of the mind. Drama, imagination play at being mother, daddy or nurse also serves to develop their minds for their roles in later life.

God's method of teaching is in Isaiah 28:9-10 (GNB). So teach little at a time; recognise individual differences and observe child's interests and direct along such lines, as children vary in characteristics, personality and ability.

Include a lot of variety in children's activity, bearing in mind their short attention span. Teach songs, rhymes, etc. and include action in songs or rhymes i.e. have the children demonstrate what they say. Bear in mind that children remember about 80% of what they see, hear and do.

Children remember and learn best what they want to learn. Do not force or rush them. Use simple language, go from the known to the unknown. Repetition is also essential for good remembering. Since the Daycare/Nursery School is a service to the community and an extension of the parental concept, it should provide all these varied learning experiences which go a long way towards the proper mental development of the child.

Finally, children will not learn to remember when they are tired, hungry, sick or bored. A healthy body is as necessary as an alert mind for all kinds of learning. Above all, pray that God would give you and the children wisdom (James 1:5). Jesus Christ is the source of all knowledge and wisdom and without Him we can do nothing. When children are saved, Christ the wisdom of God lives in them and they have the mind of Christ. Keep renewing their minds with God's Word and watch them develop mentally as well as spiritually.





# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**Definition:**

Social development is the process by which an individual acquires the ability to behave in accordance with social expectations.

**Social Expectations:**

Social expectations include those behavioural patterns expected of a child which ought to tally with his age. His behaviour must therefore be in accordance with socially approved pattern. At birth for example, man can not talk, walk or do virtually anything. But through socialisation (relationship with others) he gets to know and do them.

**Agents of Social Development:****These include:-**

1. The family
2. The peer group.
3. Religion.
4. The School.
5. The Mass Media.

**1. The Family.**

The child's first contact with the world is his immediate family; the parents (mothers in particular) take care of such basic socialization practices as feeding habits, toilets training, sex education and brushing of teeth.

Compare this with a child raised just in the hospital or in an orphanage. In the majority of cases the latter develop more slowly. Consider also the situation where both the mother and father go to work, leaving the child under the care of nannies, day care centres etc.

**2. The Peer Group.**

It is said that birds of the same feather flock together. A well trained child would naturally enjoy and look out for friendship with well behaved peers. The child's friends and companions to a very large extent influence him.

**3. Religion.**

The church for instance teaches morals and religious instructions from the Bible (Ps. 119:11,105). Through Bible Clubs and Sunday Schools the character of the child is moulded profitably for the society.

**4. School.**

This refers to the child's social development as observed in the school environment. Almost every socialisation here is deliberate (e.g., reading, teaching, writing, skills etc). The socialisation practice which starts within the family and the peer group is formalised at this stage.

**5. The Mass Media.**

This socialization stage involves the children at the age of reasoning. They are able to read and watch such things as newspapers, magazines, books, television, video and radio etc. Films communicate values and standards to a child. No wonder many children today are more interested in the name of film actors and musicians than in God's Word. Parents and guardians should therefore control and regulate what their children read or watch (Prov. 19:27).

What kind of values and beliefs does the society want to inculcate into the future leaders? The answer is in what is implanted in the child of today. The emphasis of the society may vary from generation to generation as well as from society to society. For example a society that places values on morality, hard work and honesty will surely produce a generation worthy of emulation.

**Conclusion:**

Humans are extremely social beings and God has a hand making it so (Gen. 2:18). What we are as adults - our likes, dislikes, personality and mannerism are determined largely by the relationships we had as we grew.