Unit 2

Basic Concepts in Child Development

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Scope of Child Development
- is concerned with the changes in the behaviour of children over time and explains how and why they occur.
- Aims to describe overall development
- concerned with growth and development that affects entire lifespan.

Development and Growth
- Development is used to refer to changes in the body, thinking capacities and social and emotional behaviour.
- ‘Development’ refers to changes in a person’s physical and behavioural traits that emerge in orderly ways and last for a reasonable period of time.
Changes are progressive, orderly and long lasting.

‘Growth’ refers to physical increase in the size of the body. Increase in weight, height and the size of internal organs is growth. Refers to quantitative change.

Development refers to both quantitative and qualitative change. Includes changes not only in structure but also in function.

Growth is only one aspect of development. Physical growth slows down after adolescence but development does not. There is development in the complexity of thought and social skills, as in use of language.
Stages of Development

- Infancy – birth to two years; period of most rapid development
- Childhood – early (2-6 years) and middle childhood (6-12 years)
- Adolescence – (12-18 years). Puberty (11-14 years).
- Adult – after age 18 years. legal and social definition
Areas of Development

- **Physical Development** – physical changes in size, structure and proportion of body parts
- **Motor Development** – control and coordination of body movements. Child acquires many abilities.
- **Language Development** – verbal speech and communication (Development of Communication).
- **Cognitive Development** – emergence of thinking and reasoning abilities. Qualitatively different thinking abilities at each stage of development.

Cognitive development is the process of mental development. Cognition refers to the process of ‘coming to know’, through gathering and processing of information. Includes perceiving, learning, remembering, problem solving and thinking about the world.
Areas of Development

- Social Development – relationships, interaction; development of those abilities which enable the child to behave in accordance with the expectations of the society and function as an accepted member of her socio-cultural group.
  - concerned with child’s relationships with people and her ways of interaction with them.
  - The ability to understand other person’s point of view and a concern for others will help her to form satisfying relationships with people during adolescence and adulthood.

- Emotional Development – refers to emergence of emotions and socially acceptable ways of expressing them.

- Personality- refers to person’s characteristic ways of relating to others and distinctive patterns of thinking and feeling about oneself and other people.

Inter-relationship among various areas of development
Importance of the Study of Child Development

- Describes Universal Patterns /Norms of development- the age ranges around which most children acquire a certain skill are used in identifying norms of development. Norms help us to evaluate whether or not the child is developing at a pace considered normal for her age. Optimal development means growth and changes are at an expected rate. The child’s development is following the norms.
- Explains Individual Differences in Development
- Understanding Human Behaviour – lasting impact
Application in Daily Interactions with Children
- Awareness of children’s abilities and sensitivity in dealing with them
- Plan appropriate experiences and for next stage of development
- Planning health, nutrition and educational programmes

Significance of Infancy and Early Childhood
- Influence later behaviour
- Rate of development in all areas is most rapid
- Sensitivity to both favourable and unfavourable experiences. Positive experiences important. Feelings of security and confidence influence the attitude with which a person approaches a task.
Thank You