

## DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDHOOD

Childhood is an important period of human development, because this period is intervening stage between infancy and adolescence. At this stage the youngster is still a child but he is more mature than the infancy stage. This pre-adolescence period begins with the entry into school and ending in the advent of puberty. It is otherwise the stage of latency period, the period of excellence and pseudomaturity. His physical, intellectual, emotional, social and moral development mean a lot to the family, the school and the society at large.

### Chief Characteristics of Childhood

Followings are the chief characteristics of childhood-

- 1. Stability in physical and mental development-** Physical and mental development at this stage to relatively stable. Child's sense organs, muscles, brain are more or less mature enough. The body of child develops at a fast speed in early stages and goes slow in later stages. By this stage, a child is ready for school and his brain has attained 80% of its total development, his vocabulary has increased and it able to form simple concepts. Ross has stated that this stage is the stage of 'pseudo maturity'; physical and mental development stability is the main characteristic of this stage.
- 2. Development of mental abilities** There is a rapid mental advancement during this stage. The child is able to see the similarities and differences between objects but children are found to be quite immature and their concepts are native and shallow. Thinking, understanding and memory develop at a high level at this stage.
- 3. Intense in curiosity-**Curiosity is at the climax during the stage. To satisfy his curiosity he asks number of questions to his parents and other members of the family. In infancy questions are limited to ' know why' and 'how.'
- 4. Relationship with real world-**Child at this stage begins to accept and appreciate the hard realities of life. He no longer reamains in the own world of make believe, fantasy and fairy tales. He is now perfect realist in place of imaginative) idealist. He begins to take interest in the world of realities and tries to adopt himself in the real environment.
- 5. Feeling of self-independence** Whereas an infant look for help in every sort of work, even if he is able to do it independently, the child at this stage desires independence. He tries to do his daily work, as-bathing, washing hands and mouth, wearing clothes, getting ready for school etc

**6. Interest in constructive work-** Children of this age are always interested in doing constructive work. Girls and boys want to do constructive work according to their interest, i.e. drawing, painting, clay work, flower making from coloured paper, doll making etc.

**7. Control on emotion-In childhood stage** children are able to control their emotions. Intense emotional outburst which usually find their expression in motor activity and physical form during infancy, now is now refined. This period is known as a period of stability and control. Emotional behaviour starts getting its rational. He understands that in front of whom he should express his feeling.

**8. Development of social qualities** In contrast to an infant who is egocentric the child at this stage, develop social qualities and picks up so many social virtues. He likes to play in groups and shares his toys with others.

**9. Intensity in group feeling-** Feeling of mutual co-operation, team spirits and group loyalties are developed among children of their age, this period of childhood is often named as gang-age as the child of this age is always a member of some group and develops a very strong feelings for the group.

**10. Development of extroverted personality** During this stage extroverted personality begins to develop. The child is no longer in need of close parental supervision. He spends most of his time in playing outside with his friends. He is interested in peer group interaction. He wants to know about other people.

**11. Development of acquisition instincts** Acquisition instincts is very prominent during this stage. Child collects various things i.e. boys collect old stamps, glass balls, toys, parts of machines, stones, etc. and girls collect toys, dolls, cloth pieces, etc.

**12. Tendency of roaming-** Various psychological studies revealed that at the age of 9-10 years children like roaming here and there without any aim. Many children leave their schools/classes and waste their time.

**13. Change in sense of sex-** During this stage boys and girls form their own groups. He starts to adjust himself in his environment. Girls like to mix with girls and boys with boys.