

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT DURING CHILDHOOD

Child acquires a fair amount of stability and control over his emotions of anger, jealousy, fear and joy. When he is thwarted, teased and ridiculed, he gets angry but he may not betray the emotion by shouting or pugnacity. When he is jealous of a sibling or a better performing class mate, he does not bully the sibling or classmate he may display love and concern: it is said, the girls are more jealous than boys, because boys are "wanted". When he is frightened of the supernatural, he puts up a brave face: and when he is happy, his expression is in a smile and not a rollocking laughter. If some one nicknames him after a hero, he may keep quiet and feel flattered, but a derogatory nickname hurts his ego.

The following are the characteristics of emotional development in childhood: 1. Child gains the ability to suppress his emotions, emotions become less power ful. Due to process of socialization lack of intensity in exhibiting emotions is seen in childhood. Child exhibits his emotions in mannerful way. He does not present unwanted emotions in front of his parents, teachers and elders.

2. In this period of development fear does not exist, as it exists in infancy. Generally during this stage there are specific causes of a child's fear, such as fear of strict behaviour of teachers and parents, fear of punishment on not studying in the family or school, dangerous accident or illness etc.

3. The children suffer from disappointment and inability during this stage due to strict rules of family, society or school. They feel lonliness and rejected. When their needs and wishes are not fulfilled, they start feeling that nobody loves him.

4. Child feels happiness or unhappiness in his task. Feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction occurs when child faces success or failure in his task.

5. The child becomes a member of a group or another. He takes interest in group task or cooperative learning. He develops the feeling of envy, enmity, hatred due to one or the other reason, for example, it is found for the child brighter than him in the class and it can be due to victory-defeat in athletics. The children often express this feeling indirectly, for example: by taunting jeer ing, false allegation, cursing, disrespecting etc.

With the growth of the child, there occur differentiations of emotional expression. Side by side with this there occur co-ordinated movements and these movements begin to be grows adapted to the situation that produces a emotional response. The child, as he grows old, begins to show anger at something or somebody while previously his expression was not against something so specific.

As the child gains in years, his violent reactions give place to more subdued emotional expressions. The child, when he is below one year of age, shows signs of great anger when his feeding-bottle is snatched from him. His whole body participates in his emotional expression. He kicks, flushes, yells and throws his hands and feet wildly. At about the age of seven or eight, such child depicts his anger in more subdued forms. There occurs a decline in his crying in response to hurt or in connection with anger.

The factors which contribute to this decline in open expression of emotion are as follows:

1. The child has learnt a language and he can express his feelings through symbols. Hence, he uses these instead of showing violent reactions.
2. He has learnt through experience that in many cases his problems cannot be solved by violent demonstrations. Thus, he tries to avoid them as far as possible.
3. The child has been told again and again by parents and others that he is not to act like an infant but behave like a grown up boy. In the school the other children make fun of him if he behaves in an infantile manner. If he shows fear, he is ridiculed. Thus, he learns by degrees to hide his feelings to a large extent. But this hiding of feelings presents great difficulties to an educator in understanding the child's emotions. It is true that the child does not publicly express emotions but all the same he experiences them to a great extent. He is unable to express in words as his vocabulary is short; and this adds to the difficulties of the educator in understanding the child.