

Chapter 17 Lesson 3: Birth Through Childhood

Introduction:

In this lesson, you learned about how children generally develop physical, mental, and social skills. Children progress through several stages between infancy, when they are completely dependent on others for all of their needs, to their preteen years, when they can handle many things on their own. At this Web site, you can learn more about the patterns of physical development in early childhood.

Links to Explore:

Human Growth and Development—A Matter of Principles

<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/family/350-053/350-053.html>

Directions:

- Click on the link and read the page.
 - Answer the following questions:
1. According to the cephalocaudal principle, in what order does an infant gain control of his or her body parts?
 2. According to the principle of proximodistal development, which muscles develop last?
 3. Define “readiness” and give an example.
 4. How does a child’s environment affect his or her development?
 5. Should parents be concerned about a child who does not begin walking until 18 months old when an older sibling was able to walk at 11 months? Why or why not?

Answers:

1. From the head downward (the head first, then the arms, and then the legs)
2. Finger and toe muscles
3. Readiness is the level of maturity a child must reach before progressing to new skills.
Possible examples:
 - An infant’s inability to use language because the brain has not matured enough for the child to say and understand words
 - A child’s inability to draw without first developing the motor control to hold a pencil or crayon
4. A stimulating environment and varied experiences allow a child to develop to his or her potential.
5. No. Although the patterns and sequences for growth and development are usually the same for all children, the rates at which individual children reach developmental stages will be different.

Additional Links to Explore:

Use the links below to gather additional information on the activity topic. When appropriate, have students extend their research to include important concepts contained in these Web sites.

Milestones Checklist

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly/interactive/>