

MODULE 46 INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD: PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

MATURATION

- MATURATION is the orderly sequence of biological growth (nature) and sets the basic course of development while experience (nurture) adjusts it.

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

- Brain and mind develop together. From ages 3 to 6, the most rapid growth was in your frontal lobes, which enable rational planning.
- The association areas (thinking, memory, and language) are the last cortical areas to develop. Fiber pathways supporting language and agility proliferate into puberty.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

- Babies roll over before they sit unsupported and usually crawl on all fours before they walk. Genes guide motor development. Cerebellum (balance and memory) starts working about age 1 to help learn to walk.

BRAIN MATURATION AND INFANT MEMORY

- Infantile amnesia... as children mature, from ages 4 to 6 to 8 years, childhood amnesia is giving way, and they become increasingly capable of remembering experiences, even for a year or more. The brain areas underlying memory, such as the hippocampus and frontal lobes, continue to mature into adolescence.

BE ABLE TO ANSWER: What is the biological growth process that explains why most children begin walking by about 12 to 15 months?

PRACTICE FRQ: Define and give an example of maturation. Define infantile amnesia and explain how maturation contributes to this phenomenon.

BE ABLE TO ANSWER: What findings in psychology support the concept of stages in development and the idea of stability in personality across the life span? What findings challenge these ideas?

Your friend's older sister – a regular drinker – hopes to become pregnant soon and has stopped drinking. Why is this a good idea? What negative effects might alcohol consumed during pregnancy have on a developing fetus?

PRACTICE FRQ: What is habituation? How is the phenomenon used by researchers in examining newborns' abilities?