



Stages of Development with reference to children with disabilities

Dr. Aruna Anchal

Dean & Head in Dept. Of Education

Baba Mastnath University, Asthal Bohar Rohtak, Haryana.

Abstract

Because of the growing number of school-aged children who have disabilities (CWDs), questions have been raised regarding residential schools, inclusive education, and special education. These questions have arisen as a result of the shifting social definition of childhood and the development of free public education. This chapter examines the developmental activities that are required of children who do not have any disabilities (CWODs) as well as the additional developmental tasks that are required of children who have some kind of disability. It addresses learning difficulties, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders, and Tourette's syndrome, among other types of disability. Before the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the 1970s, children and adults with developmental disabilities in the United States did not have access to free public education. CWDs were either placed in an institution or allowed to live with their families. The continuum of school placement options for students with cognitive disabilities is discussed in this chapter. These options include residential schools, special education resource rooms, and full inclusion in regular community schools. The vast majority of teachers in today's society believe that children with disabilities should be educated in their local community schools, which should also provide appropriate special education classes.

Children with special needs

Every kid develops in their own "special" way, although in many ways, they are quite similar to one another.

However, there are certain children who are so unlike to their peers of the same age that they "stand out." These children have to cope not just with the typical and expected challenges of growing up, but also with any and all challenges that may occur as a result of their being "different." The youngster is unable to cope with the accompanying social and emotional issues due to a lack of coping skills. The child's personal and social development will be significantly impacted as a result of this.

Normal Child and Disabled/ Disadvantaged Child

A typical and healthy kid has the capacity to develop normally and engage in activities that will prepare them for life beyond childhood. Children who are unable to cope with the stresses of day-to-day living are often referred to as handicapped, impaired, or disadvantaged children. This is because they are unable to function normally. Children of this kind are sometimes referred to as children with "differently abled" abilities. A well-known psychologist by the name of Baker provided the following definition of a disabled child: "one who deviates from what is supposed to be an average child in physical, mental, emotional, and social characteristics to such an extent that the child requires special educational services to help develop to the maximum capacity

Special Needs of a Visually Challenged Child:

Physical Needs:

Parents who have children who are visually impaired have the additional responsibility of teaching their children how to do tasks that are part of their daily routines, such as using the restroom, taking a bath, clothing themselves, and eating. To assist them in moving about the home without injuring themselves or knocking things over, further assistance and care is required.



Emotional and Social Needs:

Parents and siblings need to develop social contact and provide constant reassurance by hugging, petting and reassuring the handicapped child when scared and emotionally upset.

Educational Needs:

Books with big print and a desk with proper light and recorded tapes are of considerable help to the child with defective vision. The special tool called “Braille” is also helpful.

The Braille dots are punched out one at a time from right to left. Children learn to use Braille with ease once coached properly.

do you know

White cane day is celebrated worldwide on October 15th every year. This is celebrated to create awareness and celebrate the importance of the white cane used by visually challenged people.

2. Hearing Impairment

Definition

A child with hearing impairment is one who has lost the sense of hearing before learning the language. This means that the child is born without the ability to hear. Such children are often mute and silent.

Hard of hearing on the other hand is a defect that is acquired later in life. The child experiences varying degrees of hearing loss.

Causes of hearing impairment

Hearing impairment and loss can be due to the following factors:

(a) Conductive hearing impairment

The passage of air in the outer ear is called the ‘Conductive Pathway’. The conductive pathway can get affected due to

- i. Build up of wax in the ear,
- ii. A foreign body in the pathway
- iii. Any swelling of the outer ear.

These conditions can cause temporary hearing impairment that can be medically treated.

(b) Sensory Neutral hearing loss is due to the damage of the ear drum, cochlea, auditory nerve and the associated brain cells.

(c) Mixed Hearing Loss is a result of hearing impairments arising due to a combination of conductive and sensory neural defects.

Characteristics of a Child with Hearing Impairment:

- The child may be speech impaired besides having hearing impairment.
- They may have difficulty in learning language/vocabulary. It is an enormous challenge to learn to communicate in a language one cannot hear.

Special Needs of a Child with Hearing Impairment

Hearing defects cause a lot of problems ranging from language and vocabulary to comprehension and communication. Physical needs can be effectively taken care of by providing physical comfort. Parents can use play way techniques to help child.



Emotional and Social Needs:

Suspicion is almost the second nature with deaf children. Their social behaviour also needs to be improved and refined. Love and affection provide emotional security besides the much needed encouragement for better learning.

Educational Needs involve child's ability to understand the language. They learn to communicate through visual and manual means.

- **Oral Method or Lip-Reading** is a slow method involving a lot of patience for the learner as well as the educator.

- **Manual Method or Sign Language** helps the child to communicate with gestures, cues and finger-spellings.

3. Orthopaedic Impairment

A child with an affected limb is not able to fully perform the activities involving the use of bones, muscles and joints. Similar handicap is experienced by children with a missing limb. Such children are known to be orthopedically crippled.

Characteristics of A Child With Affected / Missing Limb

- Physical defect leads to inferiority complex among young children.
- The feelings of inadequacy result in self-pity.
- The child often goes through psycho-logical trauma because of discrepancy between his/her aspirations and the ability to perform.

Special Needs of Children with Missing / Affected Limbs

Physical Needs consist of being able to cope with one's daily routine. The attitude of parents should help the child do his/her duties independently rather than "do things for them". Use of special contraptions like calipers, shoes and artificial limbs along with proper training has yielded very good results. Use of crutches and wheel chair improves the mobility besides boosting their confidence.

Social and Emotional Needs. Children with affected limbs are very often left out of social group activities. The child may feel frustrated, dejected and neglected. Loving care and proper training to be independent and self-reliant are the basic needs of all handicapped children.

Educational Needs involve and include such activities that require 'doing'. Writing, playing, drawing, painting, knitting and even dancing are some much activities.

4. Children with Impaired Speech

The main purpose of speech is effective communication. When speech is defective communication is also defective.

Causes of Speech Defects

There are many causes for speech defects.

They are as follows:

- i. **Physiological causes:** Defects and deformities of the larynx and the vocal cords affect the speech produced. Incomplete development of the skull and head produces a cleft palate and cleft lip which produce speech defects



ii. **Neurological causes.** When nerves connected with the areas of speech and learning process are impaired, some type of speech defect or dis-order of articulation occurs

iii. **Psychogenic Causes.** These are causes related to one's mind. Some types of stuttering are purely psychogenic in origin. General self consciousness added with speech defect may produce stuttering.

iv. **Sociological causes.** Some speech habits such as too rapid or too slow speech, or speaking in the low tones insisted by the parent may lead to speech defects.

Special need of children with speech defects

Physical needs

Surgery can correct some of the physio genic causes like cleft palate, extremely enlarged tonsils, adenoids, etc. Motor activities, dramatic play of all kinds, excursions, discussing and planning group activities will help in developing correct speech patterns.

Educational Needs

Classes under special teachers will be use-ful for correction of pronunciation

Emotional needs

Children should be given opportunities to listen to stories. The teacher and par-ents should always make it a point to pronounce words clearly themselves.

5. Mentally Challenged Children

The intelligence possessed by a normal individual is said to be between 90 and 110 I.Q. Some children possess less than average intelligence and they are said to be mentally challenged or mentally handicapped.

Meaning of I.Q.

The letters IQ stand for Intelligence Quotient. It is a measure of intelligence. The formula used to calculate the I.Q. is $MA/CA \times 100$. MA stands for Mental Age and CA stands for Chronological Age. The mental age of a person is found out by intelligence tests. If the mental age corresponds with his chronological age or the physical age, then his mental growth is said to be normal. The mentally retarded children have a lower mental age than their chronological age.

Classification of mentally challenged people

Depending on the I.Q possessed, mentally challenged people/children are classified as slow learners, challenged, moderately challenged and severely challenged.

Children who are mildly retarded are referred to as educable. Those who are moderately challenged are called train-able. Those who are severely and pro-foundly challenged are called totally dependent.

The characteristics of mentally challenged children

a. Physical traits- For majority of them, their height and weight is normal for their respective ages. Muscular control is fairly well developed. Senses are well developed but occurrence of speech defects such as stammering and lipping is fairly large among these children.

b. Other traits- Socially they are found to be less adjustable. Vocab-ulary is very much limited. They find adjustment to new situations difficult.

Causes of Mental Challenges in Individuals

The causes may be endogenous or exogenous.



Endogenous type mainly consists of hereditary conditions. Defect in the germ cell produces a retarded condition called microcephaly. Defects in the nervous system and weaker nerve potential inherited also lead to mental challenges. Marriage between men and women who are close blood relatives is said to lead to mental challenges in their children.

Exogenous causes for mental challenges includes venereal diseases in the mother, brain injury at birth and various forms of anoxia at the time of birth. Toxic conditions in older mothers during pregnancy causes mongolism. Thyroid deficiency in children causes cretinism or dwarfism. Brain injury due to accidents, brain fever in the new born, also lead to mental challenges after birth.

Needs of Mentally challenged Children.

Proper prenatal care including immunization, good diet, and medical check-up delivery attended by a trained person, preferably hospital delivery and proper weaning foods for the baby will reduce the incidence of individual attention and instruction. In the case of slow learners, they need more help and stimulation. The teacher needs to give clear direction and encouragement. The learning process must be made simple and more of concrete examples must be used.

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