

# Three stages of the child development

[Psychology](#), [Child Development](#)



Question 2: What are three stages of child development? Maria Montessori divided the process of child development into three stages. 1. First stage: Absorbent Mind (0-6 years) This is the period of transformation and the characteristic of this period is known as the Absorbent Mind. The child absorbs environment into himself. The child creates the person she will become once given an appropriate and specially prepared environment to work. Montessori said that during the absorbent mind, the Sensitive Periods are at the strongest and facilitates the child's learning process.

This period can be divided into two sub-phases. Unconscious Absorbent Mind (0-3 years). The child cannot be dictated in this period nor can be directly influenced by the adults. The child learns unconsciously from his environment by using his senses of seeing and hearing. No formal schooling is suggested in this period however provision of a suitable environment greatly helps a child in making good early impressions of the world around him. Children under the age of three, do not need to have lessons in order to learn, they simply absorb everything in the environment by experiencing it, being part of it.

It is therefore important that the environment set up is good, nice and positive since this is what the child will absorb whether he chooses to or not. Conscious Absorbent Mind (3-6 years). Child becomes sensitive to adult influence. The period from 3 to 6 years of age is a period of conscious construction when the child takes consciously from the environment. This is the best time to play. The child realizes the environment by the work of his hands. The child starts building personality basing on the impressions stored during first three years of his life.

The sense of touch gets coordinated with the mind. Hands become a prime tool of learning. This is also a time of social development. The child wants to have company of other children and can be separated from mother for short periods of time. Children of this age are also very drawn to activities that engage the five senses. Montessori materials are designed to clearly isolate specific concepts such as length, weight, shape, size and color. Children learn to compare and contrast using their senses of smell, taste, touch, sight and hearing.

2. Second stage: Later Childhood (6-12 years)

For many children, these years from six to twelve are the glory years—a time of calm and steady growth and expansion of interests. At approximately six to seven years of age, children experience a major transformation. This transformation leads from the sponge-like absorbent mind of early childhood to the reasoning, thinking adult mind. This is the period when children develop logical thinking skills. They have to think and consciously study in order to learn. During the stage of the absorbent mind, learning happened almost automatically through exposure, but the reasoning mind needs to be consciously engaged in the learning process.

This is a period of uniform growth, an intermediate period or the second stage of childhood. At this stage children are more stable, calm and of great energy. As the child has mastered most of the basic human skills, he no longer has the Absorbent mind but learn through reasoning using his imagination to explore further. It is also a period of self discovery and a period for developing characters, morals and ethics. Montessori offers an exciting idea for guiding education: “ The secret of good teaching is to regard

the child's intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds may be sown, to grow under the heat of flaming imagination.

Our aim therefore is not merely to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his inmost core. " (Montessori, 1967, pg. 15). Maria Montessori identified three primary developmental drives of the elementary years. First, the child develops a voracious appetite for facts. Second, the child enters a period of moral formation and begins to ask questions about right and wrong. Third, his imagination becomes his most powerful learning tool.

To feed this hungry mind and active imagination, Maria Montessori suggests that children need a vision of the whole universe starting with the solar system, the history and geography of the earth. Only a vision of the universe offers a framework for understanding all of the component parts. On the moral level, it helps children begin to understand that they are part of an integrated whole. 3. Third stage: Transformation (12-18 years) This is a period of Transformation, both physically and psychologically. Mentally, they have developed logical thinking and do not like to be told or pressure into learning.

During this time, age twelve to eighteen years others become more important. Little by little they leave the family, first emotionally then physically. This is hard on parents. Parents are asked to see the adult in the child. Parents need to change how they talk. What was appropriate before is not anymore. They see adulthood coming and are very interested in themselves. All children at this age have an inferiority complex. They are convinced they are being watched. They imagine everyone is looking at

them. They don't have a stable inside or outside anymore. It is also a very idealistic time.

They need to be exposed to heroes and idealists. They want to know they have a role to play. They respond to people who make a difference. The hardest part in our society is that they are seen as useless. Society is telling them there is no place for them until they get older. The way out for this is often the arts, music and drama. This is the time that the child develops significant relationships with other adults. There is a decrease in IQ during this period. The child has a decreased interest in academic learning when they are really growing and going through great physical changes.

It is a time to train for self-sufficiency. Connect lessons with practical, concrete experiences. This is a good time to learn about the independence and interdependence of nature. Like the first stage of development it is also divided again into two sub-phases: Puberty (12-15 years) At this stage the child is like a new born baby. His character is seldom stable and there are signs of indiscipline and rebellion. The advent of puberty indicates the end of childhood. Marked physical changes take place and the child becomes very sensitive of his self.

All the confidence and joyfulness of the childhood is suddenly lost. At this stage, the child needs full emotional support of parents and teachers. Adolescence (15-18 years). This period is marked with an attitude of rebellion, discouragement, hesitation, and doubts. There is an unexpected decrease in intellectual capacity as compared to an extrovert of 6-12 years. The creativeness takes charge. The child now transforming into adulthood wants to explore the world. Sensitive to criticism and hates to be ridiculed.

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Parents and teachers need to accommodate mistakes and encourage new ideas.