

Normative
development way of
using stages of
development



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" Normative development" is viewed as a way of " using stages of development, matching ages to ability or skills and using the 'milestones approach'" (Dryden, L et al 2005 p68) Milestones demonstrate what most children are likely to be doing by a specific age for example being able to hold your head up, look and communicate between the ages of 0 to 8 months and started walking and talking by the ages of 24 and 36 months. However, these may be helpful documented series of steps but there are individual factors that may influence the child's individual development. Beaver. M, et al (2002) p100/101

These influences are now recognised as being critical in the growth and development of the brain and in the process of how children learn and develop. The adult is the most important factor in children's learning and part of the of adult's role is to gain important knowledge of the factors and life experiences surrounding the child that are influencing the child's holistic development. (Dryden, L et al 2005 p68)

Along with observations, all background information and relevant knowledge surrounding the individual child can be taken into consideration. This assists the practitioner in understanding the stage of development the child is that and helps to provide essential and efficient learning and support for the child.

Some of these may include genetic or medical factors where inherited genes impact on a child's physical development. For example, a child with additional support needs may not walk or talk at the documented milestones of 24 and 36 months, so the medical model of disability would, in the past,

concentrate on what the child was unable to do. When working with any child, practitioners should provide a suitable curriculum that changes to the needs of the individual child. Adults providing the necessary learning that supports the individual child will be respecting, responsive and be able to concentrate on what the child is able to do and get it right for the individual. (Dryden, L et al (2005) p69)

Kellmer Pringle (1980) highlighted four developmental needs that have to be met equally to ensure development and these include " the need for love and security, the need for new experiences, the need for praise and recognition and the need for responsibility", cited in Essential Early Years, Dryden, L et al (2005). The availability and influence of love, affection and security can impact on the child's mental and social development and these needs can be met by the parents or main carer by providing a stable, continuous, dependable and loving relationship.

In practice, practitioners will have the responsibility to be aware of promoting positive relationships and by ensuring they put this into action they can influence positive outcomes for children. Pre-birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families, (2010)

Other influences on a child's development can include environmental factors of overcrowding in housing, air pollution or poverty. Poverty can have a severe effect on a child's holistic development, for example a child may live in an area that is dangerous to play so the child's play is restricted. Lindon, J (2010) p205 This restriction could influence on the child's social and emotional development. Children living in an environment of poor or no

income may see their basic needs not being met and because of this may underachieve at school. Practitioners should work alongside parents and gain background knowledge of the child's home situation to enable them to provide the appropriate care, support and learning the individual child needs. Appendix 1

It is with this in mind that the Scottish Government has decided that practitioners are required to use the Pre-birth to Three documented guidance to help children and young people improve their outcomes.

Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years explains: " Through prevention and early intervention, we can provide children with the social and emotional support needed to help fulfil their potential and break the cycles of underachievement which often blight some of our most disadvantaged communities." Pre-birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families, (2010)

My knowledge of the child's holistic development now includes an understanding of how the developing brain influences a child's learning and development. I gained knowledge of how the critical period from pregnancy to around three years can have an influence on the outcomes the child is likely to have in later life.

During pre-birth a baby's brain cells are developing, connecting and communicating and this is enabling the baby to learn and develop some of their senses and in particular, taste and hearing. It is during this period that the mother's emotional experiences can influence and affect the baby's

developing brain. (Pre-birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families, (2010)).

Brain development relies on the formation and connection of cells and these connections can grow quickly with the help of the baby's early experiences and relationships. However, the mother's use of either drugs or alcohol can be badly damaging for the developing brain. (Dryden, L et al 2005 p68) The developing brain makes many more connections than required and if the baby has had proper care and support in the first year of life, some of the connections can start to be removed. In order for further brain development to progress appropriately there must be sufficient involvement and action through interactions with others for the child. These interactions allow the child to revisit and reinforce the brain connections and keep alive the signals already made.

I believe it is crucial for practitioners to have knowledge of the developing brain because they will understand the learning process that children use in their normal development and how this can impact on their future outcomes.

" It is during our very best earliest years and even pre-birth that a large part of the pattern for our future adult life is set." (Scottish Government, 2008d, p1)

The Scottish Government has introduced a document of national guidance for early years establishments to guide practitioners in providing the best start every child deserves. " Pre-birth To Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families" lays out the requirements, support and information practitioners need to provide children and their families the best
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opportunities available. The four key principles are: " Rights of the Child, Relationships, Responsive Care and Respect" and within these principles are nine equal features of practice that can be used to support staff in their implementation of the key principles. These features include: " Role of staff, Attachments, Transitions, Observations, Assessment and planning, Partnership Working, Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy, Environments and Play". (Birth to Three document 2010 p11)

I used this guidance for my own professional development and self-evaluation of observations of a child under three and I have related my findings of Shannon's development to some relevant theorists and their theories around normative development.

Observation one seen Shannon interact in role play with another child and an adult. The play is initiated by Shannon by telling Uncle Dale " I am a dolly". Uncle Dale knows that this statement from Shannon means she wants to play her game. Bruce, T (2006) suggests that children aged from 2 to 3 years will become absorbed in symbolic play where " they pretend to be someone else" and in this case " the talking doll". Moreover, from the ages of 3 to 4, children will develop " Theory of Mind by trying out what it is like to be someone else". Bruce, T (2006) p328

Appendix 2

In observation two, I believe I was able to maintain the positive relationship I have with Shannon and this is shown through her confident interactions with me with the pretend spider. My sensitive actions and interactions of smiles, hugs and giggles enabled her to feel safe, secure and loved within an <https://assignbuster.com/normative-development-way-of-using-stages-of-development/>

environment that was not her home. Through these interactions, she can build on her ability to create other relationships, build up trust and satisfy her individual social and emotional needs and development. I

In addition, Shannon was able to develop her physical development by carrying out simple age related physical movements involving her fine motor skills and hand to eye coordination when holding the spoon to ice the cakes.

Beaver, M, et al (2002) p76

This planned experience enabled me to respect Shannon as a unique individual. Through my responsive care I was able to reassure Shannon that, as a significant adult in her life, I was reliable and trustworthy and would respond to her needs. This will enable her to feel secure within herself and able to trust other adults. As she had built up trust and a positive relationship with me, she was able to express herself through her imaginary play and develop her social and emotional development.

Observation two also gave me the opportunity to assess Shannon's language and communication development. Lindon, J (2010) explains how children can use gestures and sounds "to attract and hold the attention of adults".

Lindon, J (2010) p122.

I believe Shannon's gesture of clapping her hands when finished the task showed she wanted to get my attention and also relayed to me her sense of excitement and accomplishment. This form of communication by Shannon was rewarded from me through responsive care of praise and recognition, a feature of the Skinner's behaviourism theory of language. (Skinner, B. F), as

cited by Lindon, J (2010) P115

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Appendix 3

In observation 3 I observed Shannon using patterns of repeated behaviour ("schema") in her play by repeatedly connecting and disconnecting the toys she was playing with. Piaget believed that children organise their thinking to past experiences and events and linked them to what will happen next.

Lindon, J (2010) p 29

In the context of Shannon's observation, I believe the connecting and disconnecting of the doll and parts were her way of trying to organise her thoughts and making sense of her world, i. e. she was getting a new friend (connection) and Mason was not going back to Donna's (disconnection). Shannon's level of development can be related to Piaget's theory of stages of cognitive development and in particular the Pre-operational stage where language abilities develop quickly.