



Over 50 Years of Hope and Opportunity

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

**Annual Mandatory Training Manual
Residential Services**

PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FACT SHEET

- 1) People with developmental disabilities have delays in their growth and development. All people, disabled or not, have the need to be loved, acknowledged as a special person, feel productive or useful, receive praise and recognition and be accepted unconditionally as part of the human community.
- 2) Developmental delays are unique for each person and they may develop more strongly in one area than in another.
- 3) In infancy and early childhood there may be deficits in sensory motor development, acquisition of self-help and communication skills, and development of socialization skills. These skill deficits are usually displayed in adaptive behaviors such as self-care, communication (speech and language), social skills and vocational skills.
- 4) During childhood and early adolescence there may be deficits in learning and coping skills.
- 5) In late adolescence and adult years there may be deficits in social and vocational skills in relation to independence in the community, employment and conforming to community standards.
- 6) All people have their strengths and all people have areas where they need to grow. It is our task to help them improve their strengths and to provide help in the areas where they can further develop.
- 7) Development never ends. People are always growing.

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Most human beings develop in a somewhat systematic progression. However, people who have a developmental disability do not develop in an orderly progression. They do not follow the same developmental phases. The phases do not emerge within the same time frame. These differences in time periods reflect differences in physical growth, in personal experiences, in other aspects of psychological growth, in basic physical makeup, as well as some differences in the ability to think, reason, and learn.

All people, however, whether disabled or not, do have the need to be loved, acknowledged as a special person, feel productive or useful, receive praise and recognition and be accepted unconditionally as a part of the human community. While people who are mentally retarded/developmentally disabled have certain deficiencies, they are quite capable of living in our society in ways that are valued by most of us (i.e., live in a decent home, be productive, have a social life, etc.).

The following is an outline of a “normal” pattern of human growth and development, followed by problems encountered by people who are mentally retarded/developmentally disabled.

During infancy and early childhood in:

Sensory-motor skills development
Communication skills (including speech and language)
Self-help skills
Socialization (development of ability to interact with others)

During late adolescence and adult:

Application of basic academic skills in daily life activities
Application of appropriate reasoning and judgment in mastery of the environment
Social skills (participation in group activities and interpersonal relationships)
and

During late adolescence and adult life in:

Vocational and Social responsibilities and performances

During infancy and early childhood, sensory-motor, communication self help, and socialization skills ordinarily develop in a sequential pattern reflective of maturation process. Delays in the acquisition of these skills represent potential deficiencies in adaptive behavior and become the criteria for mental retardation.

The skills required for adaptation during childhood and early adolescence involve a complex learning process. This involves the process by which knowledge is acquired and retained as a function of the experiences of the individual. Difficulties in learning are usually manifested in the academic situation, but in evaluation of adaptive behavior, attention should focus not only on the basic academic skills and their use, but also on skills essential to cope with the environment, including concepts of time and money, self-directed behaviors, social responsiveness, and interactive skills.

In the adult years, vocational performance and social responsibilities assume prime importance as qualifying conditions of mental retardation. These are assessed in terms of the degree to which the individual is able to maintain himself independently in the community and in gainful employment as well as by his ability to meet and conform to standards set by the community.

It is these deficiencies in adaptive behavior which usually determine the need of the individual for programs or services and/or legal action as a mentally retarded person.

In **infancy and early childhood**, deficits in sensory-motor development, in acquisition of self-help and communication skills, and development of socialization skills point to the needs for medical services, for early childhood education, and for family guidance.

During **childhood and early adolescence**, deficits in learning and coping skills indicate needs for specialized educational, prevocational, and recreational programs.

In the **late adolescent and adult years**, deficits determine the needs for vocational training, placement and a variety of supportive services. MDC / OPWDD is dedicated to ensuring that people who have a developmental disability receive the best possible services that are truly valued by our society.

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
REVIEW QUESTIONS

People who are mentally retarded and developmentally disabled develop in the same way as other people do.

TRUE

FALSE

All people, whether disabled or not, need to be accepted as valued, productive members in our society.

TRUE

FALSE

Self-help skills are first learned in later childhood and early adolescence.

TRUE

FALSE

Delays in sensory motor skill development and communication skills could be utilized as a criterion for mental retardation.

TRUE

FALSE

Social skills acquisition could be a problem for people who are mentally retarded/developmentally disabled and might require specialized training.

TRUE

FALSE

Most adults in our society work, but people who are mentally retarded/developmentally disabled should not receive vocational training to hold real jobs.

TRUE

FALSE

STAFF MEMBER

FACILITATOR/REVIEWER

DATE