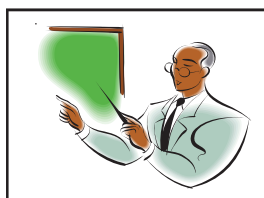
- Various characteristics of Early Childhood stage are -
  i) A period of physical development,
  ii) A period of language development,
  iii) A period of emotional development,
  iv) A period of social development,
  v) A period of development of understanding, and
  vi) A period of development of Interests.
- Some common problems during Early Childhood are -
  i) Eating Problem
  ii) Elimination Problem
  iii) Sleeping Problems,
  iv) Accidents and
  v) Social Adjustment Problems.
- Early Childhood stage has some Educational Importance, they are–
  i) Healthy Atmosphere.
  ii) A Rational Treatment.
  iii) Satisfaction of Curiosity.
  iv) Developing Self-Sufficiency.
  v) Proper Method of Teaching.
  vi) Coordination between Maturation and Learning .
  vii) Proper Method of Reward and Punishment.
  viii) Supply Good Reading Materials.
  ix). Learning By Doing.



4.8 FURTHER READING

1) Aggarwal, J. C.; : Essentials of Educational Psychology, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.
2) Mangal, Dr. S. K., : Psychological Foundations of Education, Prakash Brothers, Ludhiana.

Adults, they find, make favourable comments about their clothes and their playmates often admire them or envy them because of their clothes. Religious beliefs are, for the most part, meaningless to young children although they may show some interest in religious observances. So many of things often mystify children, such as - birth, death, growth and the elements. These are explained in religious terms by elders and they accept them. Even young children endow all their beliefs with an element of unreality; therefore, this stage has been called as “the fairytale stage” of religious belief. Young children are also curious about where babies come from and ask many questions about this. Many children show their interest in sex by talking about it to their playmates when adults are not present, by looking at pictures, by enjoying the adult scenes in the T.V. shows and movies etc. Normally in this stage male child is attached to the mother and the female child to the father.



LET US KNOW

Characteristics of early childhood

- A period of physical development.
- A period of language development.
- A period of emotional development.
- A period of social development.
- A period of development of understanding.
- A period of development of interests.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.2. Physical Development of Early Childhood, explain.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

4.5 PROBLEMS DURING EARLY CHILDHOOD

Now we are familiar with the characteristics of early childhood. We must also discuss the problems associated with this period. In learning to adjust to the world as children grow up, they often develop certain kinds of problem behaviour. The most common problems of early childhood are as follows–

- **Eating problems :** Children's eating problems have received considerable attention from theorists and practitioners. They have suggested that early eating experiences of children play a significant role in determining their later personality characteristics as eating has a direct relationship with the physical well-being of the child. There are a number of common eating problems among the young children as experienced by parents and other family members. The most common problems are -

  i) Not eating,
  ii) Vomiting,
  iii) Dawdling, and
  iv) Weaning.

  Problems related to not eating tend to occur with considerable frequency during infancy and pre-school years. Vomiting is also frequent in young children. Children vary greatly in

- **Supply Good Reading Materials :** Children at this stage are interested in stories and multi-coloured pictures. So, colourful good stories and picture books should be provided by parents and teachers.
- **Learning by Doing :** At this age, children are very much fond of activities. The teacher should try to provide them as many activities as possible so that their proper physical, mental and creative power is developed and emotional, intellectual development can take place. Children must be provided scope to do activities in groups so that it will help in their social development.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.5. Write four points of educational importance that parents and teachers must keep in mind for 3-6 years children while planning the education for them.

.....

.....

.....

.....



4.7 LET US SUM UP

- Early Childhood, which extends, from 2-6 years, is labelled by parents as the problem, the trouble some, or the toy age; by educators as the pre-school age; and by Psychologists as the pre-gang, the exploratory, or the questioning age.
- Early childhood is a period of physical, mental, emotional, social and language development.

following points should be kept in view both by parents and teachers while planning the education of the child at this stage.

- **Healthy Atmosphere :** Parents and teachers should see that the child can enjoy a healthy social atmosphere. The home for the child should be sweet and secured. In the school also the child should feel 'secure' and freedom must be provided for their balanced development.
- **A Rational Treatment :** The child expects that everybody should love him. The family members must be affectionate, caring, sympathetic and courteous towards the child.
- **Satisfaction of Curiosity :** The instinct of curiosity is at its peak of development at this stage. The child is very curious to know about his surroundings and the social environment. These should be explained to the child in a rational way by parents and teachers.
- **Developing Self-Sufficiency :** At home children depend on their parents for the satisfaction of their various needs. The parents and teachers should encourage them to be self-sufficient as a possible by assigning them works of minor responsibility.
- **Proper Method of Teaching :** Education may be imparted to children for their all round development with the help of the methods like - Montessori Method, Kinder-garten method, play-way method etc.
- **Coordination between Maturation and Learning :** The teacher should keep in view that there is a definite relationship between maturation and learning. The teacher should keep in view that until and unless the child is able to learn a particular activity, he should not be forced to learn another.
- **Proper Method of Reward and Punishment :** Parents and teachers should encourage children and reward them occasionally when they develop good habits. Punishment should be avoided as for as possible.

their proneness to vomit. Vomiting tends to occur during the highly stimulating events, changes in environment and stressful experiences associated with food. Dawdling means doing something in a slow, lingering way - taking more time to finish the act than is needed. Most of the young children at this age take more time to finish a meal. Dawdling creates so many problems to the parents and it also affects the child's health. Another problem of early childhood is weaning.

The introduction of new food is usually correlated with the weaning process and presents its own problems. Children tend to reject the food that is different from their regular food in either taste or consistency. They push the food out of their mouths, or if forced to eat, they vomit. These eating problems affects in child's physical as well as mental development.

- **Elimination Problem :** Next to eating, toilet training has perhaps been given the greatest attention.

Method of toilet training have long term consequences for later personality characteristics. Toilet training is very important and the mother has a great role to play in this regard.

Children vary greatly in their progress towards successful toilet training. The child who has a regular elimination pattern is easier to train. But sometimes it has been observed that a well trained child begins to wet again or strongly resists sitting on the toilet; these kinds of behaviours create problems for the parents or the caretakers or the teachers.

In this case, re-training must be provided. Proper toilet training should be provided from a very early age, otherwise elimination process will create lots of problem to the parents, caretakers and to the pre-school teachers.

- **Sleeping Problem :** Problems connected with sleep are certain to arise at some time. Unless they are dealt with correctly, they can lead to other more serious problems that may harm the general state of the child's health.

Many of the sleeping problems that parents encounter in children occur when the child recognizes the discrepancy between his hour of retiring and the bed time of the other family members. The child does not want to be left out of any activities by going to sleep early. The young child cries when he does not want to be put to bed. Sometimes the refusal to go to sleep is accompanied by emotional responses reflecting fear on the part of the child. Pre-school children are particularly prone to the development of fears. Events such as loud, sudden sounds and unfamiliar light patterns coming through the windows are sometimes sufficient for the conditioning of fear to the darkened bedroom.

Awakening during the night may be initiated by many different events: illness, nightmares, changes in daytime routine, bed wetting etc. Once the rhythmic sleep pattern has been broken, there is a tendency for the child to continue night time awakening in the absence of the original event. This situation may create stress on the parents. A child's sleeping problems not only create problems to parents, but also these will hamper the physical as well as mental well-being of the child.

- **Accidents :** Accidents in early childhood can be and often are one of the most serious problems that affect the physical well-being of children. Young children tend to have more accidents than the babies. Because young children are no longer as carefully supervised and protected as they were when they were babies. Nor are young children as aware of possible dangers and as careful as they will be when they grow older. Accidents can affect the head, feet, legs, hands, arms, body and face of a child.

  Accidents affect the child both physically and psychologically, which may affect the child's personality development in his later life.

- **Social Adjustment Problems :** Children under 4 years of age cannot be expected to be have in a truly social manner. They will push, grab, fight and refuse to share their things with others. However, by the time they are 5 years old, children should have overcome some of these behaviours.

  Children who still behave in an unsocial way after other children of the same age have developed more socially acceptable patterns will find that they have no one to play with. Normally other people also dislike children with unsocial behaviour. As a result, these children will develop adjustment problem in the social environment. So, unsocial behaviour should be checked as soon as it appears problems during early childhood.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.3. Mention three common eating problems of early childhood.

.....

.....

Q.4. Write four lines about a child's social adjustment problem.

.....

.....

.....

.....

4.6 EDUCATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

This period of a child's life is of great educational significance. It has been correctly said by Watson that "the scope and intensity of learning during this period exceeds that of any other period of development." The