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Developmental changes

Summary

The book Human Attachment deals with period of human life. Each chapter is devoted some period of human life. Each chapter also describes actions which are typical at concrete part of life. I chose part of book which deals with memory, language, emotion, social interaction, coy behaviour and the limits of preschooler's abilities. These all increase in complexity as the child gains age and experience.

When it comes to memory, most theorist and researchers currently believe that children rely mainly on procedural memory throughout infancy. Procedural memory is based on fact that children may be able to classify knowledge into only two categories. For example good or bad things. Procedural memory retains skills which were learnt and they became automatic. These skills are something like habits. Into this category belong skills like a riding a bicycle or swimming. When it comes to semantic memory, it retains knowledge about words and relationships between them. This system of memory retain our knowledge about surrounding world. Semantic memory abilities start to develop in infancy, but the child is not yet adept to using them. It's useful to know that semantic memory clearly emerges in most children before the second birthday.

Concerning language, for a child who has supportive caregivers, new linguistic skills help him fine-tune his/her interactions with other people (more rapidly than he/she previously could). It's caused by fact that words can correct childish misinterpretation. Different social partners can offer widely different meanings for themselves, others, and events. When a child does anything wrong, there are many possibilities how to explain him/her that situation. Parents may decide if they will say something calmly or will shout or will be silent. It depends on them. The consequences for the child's understanding would be quite different.

Also emotion are very important. By the age of 18 months, most toddlers are able to recognize basic feelings such as happiness, sadness, anger, or scare. They can make inferences about another person's feelings and soon enough, they can label how the other person feels. So already at this age emotion influence childish behaviour.

Another element which influence behaviour are social interaction. Around the age of 7 to 9 months infants become able to associate their own feelings with other people's behaviour. If a parent is ignoring a little child, the child's screaming and hitting the parent is very likely to elicit the parent's attention. Then the child becomes larger and stronger. For 1 or 2 critical years the parent must become skilful at setting limits. The 2-year-old child has been described by many as a wilful bundle. If all goes well, the child soon enough develops a respectable level of self-control.

Some typical behaviour at early age is coy behaviour. Coy behaviour in human children relies on the same sorts of behavioural signals that other mammals use to disarm aggressive behaviour. When it comes to mammals, among animals the specific behaviours include displaying the belly, offering the bared neck, opening the mouth while covering the teeth, and glancing sideways toward the victor. Among humans, coy behaviour uses a similar

set of signals: wide smiles, sideways glances, and exaggerated signals of vulnerability. For example, when stranger meets a family, the preschool-age child will often hide behind the parent and peek out with shy smiles. The behaviour combines elements of invitation and elements of submission. They confess that the other is more powerful and so disarm aggression. This set of coy behaviours may be important to the child's survival.

And in conclusion I mention the limits of preschooler's abilities. Young children have difficulty to understand that the same person can be both „nice“ and „mean“. Another limitation is that very young children are cognitively egocentric.

All these items affect to child during his/her growing. These pieces of knowledge are useful because they can help us when we bring up our children or when we will work with them. It's important to know, that for example semantic memory emerges in most children before second birthday. Because it's caused that at this age children create their own opinions about surrounding world. At this age they need our support; they have to learn how much they can be trustful. They also need our support in connection with language. We can teach them how to fine-tune interactions with other people. Also we can expand and influence their vocabulary. We also can influence childish behaviour by showing our feelings, because at early age we are an example for them. So we have to be patient and try to teach them all right what we know.