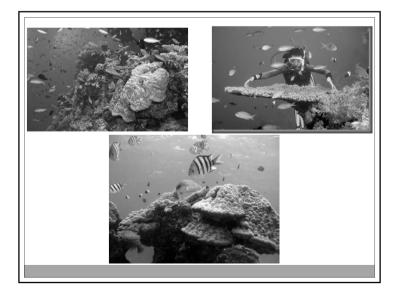
# Child's Developmental Stages:

A Challenge to Relevancy and Curriculum Development in Children's Church

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- Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these (Matthew 19:14).
- Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:26-28).

# Development

- **Development:** Changes that occur in an individual over time
- Areas of development
- o Physical growth
- o Intellectual: Thinking
- o **Social:** Interactions with others
- **Emotional:** Understanding and regulating feelings • *Spiritual:* Understanding and relationship with God

# **Periods of Development**

• **Prenatal:** Nine months of pregnancy

• Infancy and Toddlerhood: Birth through 2 years

Early Childhood: 2 to 6 yearsMiddle Childhood: 6 to 11 years

Adolescence: 12 to 18 years
Young Adulthood: 19-30 years
Middle Adulthood: 31-60 years

• Old Adulthood: 61+ years

# **Assumptions of Development**

- All individuals of all ages have the capacity for positive developmental change in response to the environment
- Individuals develop at different rates
- o Age does NOT determine a child's developmental level
- Development is orderly
- New skills and abilities build on already known skills and abilities
- o Instruction CANNOT require students to learn something if they have not mastered prerequisite skills
- Development takes place gradually
- o Parents and teachers have to be patient with pupils

# Early Childhood (3 to 6 years) Physical Development

- Gross motor skills: Large movements
  - o Lay, Crawl, Walk, Run
- Fine motor skills: Coordination of small muscle movements
- o Writing, Drawing
- Supporting Physical Development
  - o Provide proper nutrition
    - ⋆ Children with proper nutrition have more energy, are more eager to explore new environments, and are more alert
  - o Provide adequate healthcare
  - $\circ$  Provide opportunities for children to be active and practice motor skills

#### Early Childhood Intellectual Development

- Characteristics of early childhood intellectual abilities:
- o Unidimensional reasoning: Focus only on one dimension\_ of a problem
- o **Egocentrism:** Belief that everyone sees and experiences the world the way that child does
- o **Private speech:** Children's use of language to plan and direct their own behavior, particularly in difficult tasks
- o **Representational skills:** The ability to represent objects with symbols or models
- o Very curious

#### Early Childhood Social and Emotional Development

- Young children are learning:
- o To regulate their emotions
  - **x** Recognize and label their feelings
  - \* Accept their feelings
  - **★** Appropriate responses to feelings
- o Empathy and prosocial behavior
  - x Friendships, sharing, helping, cooperation
- o Skills for controlling their behavior
- o Controlling their anger and aggression

## Early Childhood Intellectual Development

- However, young children still have difficulty:
  - o Paying attention
  - o Remembering things
- o Systematically applying strategies to solve a problem
- o Knowledge in general

- Which statement do you agree with more?
- o Play distracts young children from the real work of learning.
- o Play is the means by which young children learn.

# Play

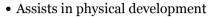
# Types of Play

- Constructive Play: Use objects to build or construct things
- o Learn rules that govern physical reality
- First Pretend Play: Use toys to symbolize real objects
   Learn the ability to use symbols
- Substitute Pretend Play: Use objects to stand for something altogether different
- Sociodramatic Play: Play in cultural roles together with other children
- o Learn language and social skills
- Rule-Governed Play: Play by rules and formal games
- $\circ\,$  Learn to follow rules and transition into more systematic thinking

# Early Childhood

- Instruction in early childhood:
- $\circ$  Use concrete materials to help children see and experience what is to be learnt
- $\circ\,$  Use hands-on activities to help children be actively involved
- $\circ$  Give children many and varied experiences to help keep interest and attention
- o Allow children to talk out their thinking
- Allow children plenty of time to play
- $\circ$  Young children make plenty of mistakes. Be gentle in correcting them
- o Read and/or tell stories with children. Discuss the stories
- o Model appropriate behaviors

# Benefits of Play



- Enables children to develop social skills
- Helps children control their emotions
- Allows children to build more elaborate ideas about the world
- Allows children to develop abstract symbolism.
- Enhances children's language skills
- Helps children become better at problem solving
- Helps children become more creative

# Early Childhood

- Young children are gifted learners, but they should not be expected to learn in the same manner as older children
  - $\circ\,$  Lecture method is completely ineffective in early childhood

# Middle Childhood (6 to 11 years) Intellectual Development

- Middle childhood children are:
- o Learning to focus their attention on what is important
- o Improving their memory skills
- o Improving their thinking speed
- o Increasing their general knowledge

# Middle Childhood (6 to 11 years)

- To foster intellectual development:
- o Use concrete objects to demonstrate lessons
- Use analogies: Relate what is taught to something similar that is well-known
- o Tell stories to demonstrate concepts
- Ask students for their relevant experiences
- $\circ$  Give students many examples and practice activities to develop their skills
- o Ask students questions beyond what has been directly taught
- o Make students explain their reasons for their answers: Why?
- o Answer questions with questions

# Middle Childhood Intellectual Development

- However, they still have difficulty with:
  - Abstract Thought: Ability to think about things that are not directly experienced
  - o Focusing on multiple aspects of a problem
  - o Systematically solving problems

### Middle Childhood Social and Emotional Development

- Peer relations are becoming more central
- **Bullying** (more powerful person attacks a less powerful person over time physical and/or verbally) becomes more common
- Effects of media become more prominent in social development, particularly violent films/video games
- Fear and anxiety is a common problem (ghosts, bad dreams, injury, death)
  - ⋆ Nigerian children express more fears than Kenyan and Western children (Ingman, Ollendick, & Akande, 1999)

#### Middle Childhood Social and Emotional Development

- Social skills to be learnt in middle childhood:
- o Respect rules
- o Resolving conflict positively
- o Communication Skills
  - $\boldsymbol{\times}$  Active Listening, Nonverbal Skills, and Polite communication skills

# Adolescence Social and Emotional Development

- Adolescents are developing their identity
- o Who am I?
- o Education/Career choices
- o Spiritual identity
- o Purpose in life
- $\circ$  The two primary considerations in the development of identity are:
  - \* Has the adolescent explored various identities?
  - **★** Has the adolescent committed to an identity?
- Risky decision-making is a key problem among adolescents

#### Adolescence (12 to 18 years) Intellectual Development

- Adolescents are learning:
  - o Think abstractly
  - o Systematically plan solutions to a problem
  - o Apply appropriate strategies to learning
- To foster intellectual development:
- o Make lessons relevant to students' lives
- o Give students choices when appropriate
- o Discuss the relevance of lessons to big life issues

# Teach using **Developmentally Appropriate Practice**

- Developmentally appropriate practice: Focusing instruction on the developmental level of the pupil
  - Curriculum, teaching methods and classroom environment should be based on an in-depth understanding of child development and learning.

#### **Developmentally Appropriate Practice**

- Characteristics of DAP:
- o Focus first on the developmental abilities of students, NOT on what must be taught.
- o Learning is viewed as an active process
- o Play is essential in active learning
- Provide an environment to foster all aspects of children's development: physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual
- o Parents are actively involved in the educational process

# 7 Principles of Development to Inform Teaching

- <u>All</u> people, particularly children, learn best when taught with a wide variety of strategies
- Play is an important tool for developing language, thinking skills, and social skills
- Development advances when children are challenged just above their current mastery and have many opportunities to practice newly acquired skills

#### 7 Principles of Development to Inform Teaching

- All areas of development are important to education and are interrelated
- Individuals learn best when they have secure, consistent relationships with adults
- New development must build on prior abilities, skills, and knowledge
- Early experiences have profound effects on later development and learning
  - o Nursery and primary school teachers are the most important teachers in the entire school system!