

OUTLINE

1. DEVELOPMENT OF INDEPENDENCE

2. DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE

3. DEVELOPMENT OF MOVEMENT

DETAILED EXPLANATION:

INDEPENDENCE:

The journey to independence starts the day we are born; from the very beginning of life, as soon as we are separated from our mother. Independence is not only physical it is also psychological; it is basically both inner and outer self development.

The CRY means "Help me to help myself" it is an independent way of the child to grab our attention. Children have their own timetable and they keep working towards becoming independent and being capable.

By the age of 3, a child wants to attain independence; they consolidate their independence from the age of 3-6, and do a lot of things on their own.

Tantrums are a form of expression and they start growing more independently.

At this age they also become capable of looking after younger children; they start to enjoy their independence which comes from their capabilities and power.

ADULT ROLE:

One of the goals of a Montessori education is to teach children to do things themselves. This is achieved by giving the child opportunities, opportunities to move, to dress, to choose what they want and to help adults with tasks. When we allow them to do so, there is an increase in self belief, self confidence, and esteem that may carry on throughout their life.

In Montessori independence is an ongoing and organic process. The drive for independence starts right from birth and when the child starts to walk away from the mother that is the biggest accomplishment and a sign that the child is ready to be independent.

We as guides should let children figure things on their own, to some this may seem like a paradox, even though the child seems like he is at his weakest and most vulnerable stage of life, this is when it is the most important time to help foster independence. We need to create a relationship based on love and respect- not dependence, or we will be an obstacle in their growth. This is a fine tuned balance act between taking care and releasing at the same time. We should provide only the assistance that is necessary, just enough at the right time.

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LEVELS OF INDEPENDENCE

The levels of independence correspond with the four planes of development and each of the planes corresponds with stages in child development.

In plane one the child becomes physically independent.

In plane two the child attains mental independence.

In plane three they grow onto being socially independent

In plane four they attain spiritual and moral independence

He is 24 when he is finally independent and it is considered the longest childhood.

Language, communication and movement are essential for independence.

When we allow them to be independent they:

Understand others, they speak for themselves, they achieve it in their own time.

It is a creational and step by step process.

It boosts their confidence and makes them realize they are capable, they learn to live without any inhibitions and they are born to try.

They can express their independence through language and social interaction.

Independence is a vital need for the child.

This independence can be attained only through purposeful work.

“NEVER HELP A CHILD WITH A TASK AT WHICH HE FEELS HE CAN SUCCEED” - MARIA MONTESSORI.

In conclusion Independence leads to empowerment on all emotional and social level as well as creating confidence in the child's ability for anything in life.

LANGUAGE:

“CRY” is the first language of the child; it's the child's way of communicating until he can talk. When the child cries he becomes the center of attraction and the entire family is on its toes.

The child is a powerful communicator, they can start hearing in the womb at the 3 month itself, language development starts right from the womb, the voices that the child hears when in the womb are familiar to him when he hears them after he's born, the child is always surrounded by language and the mother's voice has a soothing effect on the child.

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The preparation for speech happens even before birth, the child is constantly absorbing language, and as adults we need to talk to them using full sentences, rich language, and when we are talking they observe our lips very keenly which is an important sign of language development.

We need to talk softly and gently, with a smile; also children are mesmerized by language, it's like music to their ears.

They look at the speaker intensely when we are talking, they are keen observers.

They start with babbling with long a-a-a-a which are vowels, also it's because they are learning to control their breath.

Next they move on to babbling, we need to make sure to respond with full sentences, as it help in the child's language development.

At 7-8 months they start using consonants, they joyfully do it, and there is no stopping them.

They are working towards their construction and are trying to strengthen their vocal cords and for that their environment plays a very important role.

When they know the language of their life and surroundings they become independent.

When we talk with actions the child imitates us, and around 1 year they realize our words have meaning.

The first word usually comes at 1 for some children, and communicating the one word and action is a sign of development.

We must let them communicate, or else they give up, and the environment must be supportive.

We also need to point out to objects and explain its meaning.

Within one year, they can differentiate between languages, but that power goes away after 1 year.

Suddenly they say a lot of words together; Montessori says that it is an explosion of words and this is an important milestone; she compares it to a fizzy drink, they love to experiment and try talking many different words.

They also start using grammar, appropriate words, unbothered or conscious about anything; this is a creative period. If the environment is rich, they'll learn to talk soon.

We need to expose children to active and passive vocabulary and reading should be introduced as early as possible.

Children are hungry for words, so we need to use adjectives, nouns etc in our language.

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When the child is unable to communicate, he becomes frustrated, we as adults should help them when needed.

We should have lots of conversations with them and offer the child the richness of language, connection can be made through movement and language, they need limitless language.

There is no visible step by step in language, some children take a long time to speak, we must support them by listening to them, it's the child's right that we listen to them. We need to pay attention to them when they talk.

They pick up on multiple languages and the mother tongue comes to them naturally.

They love to mix and match words, and language gives them emotional security.

After 3 years of age they create their own language which leads to expansion of language.

Spoken language is important for reading and writing and expansion of language.

It is a fulfilling experience for the child and we must give them continuous support.

Creation and consolidation happens naturally and joyfully for the child

In conclusion, Language development is important for the child's social life.

MOVEMENT:

Human movement is unique because we have coordinated movements that is our movements are directed by the mind, based on the surrounding they create their movements.

We can work upon and make changes in the environment by movements; and create an impact in the environment.

Even as a new born, they might seem helpless, but they are born with involuntary movements and they have many reflexes and protective movements; the inherent need to move and be independent manifests itself in many new ways, like holding the head, rolling over, sitting up, creeping, crawling, standing, walking and running are all nature's way of helping babies establish their independence. It's amazing to think that within the first three years of a child's life he accomplishes all major movement milestones.

So it's important to not restrict their movements by placing them in cribs, playpens and high chairs. They just need a clean place to move freely; children are born to move, we shouldn't cage them, the very reason they came out of the womb is because they didn't have enough space.

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Placing toys around them is a motivation for them to move further and crawl, they just pullout everything around them; the child is a sensorial explorer. When they are trying to crawl or walk or even fall down we must not run and pick them immediately, we should allow them to experience things for themselves, once they starts crawling, there is no stopping them. When the child puts his hand in the mouth, we say it's bad and we remove it immediately, but that's also just a part of the growth of the child, it is a basic instinct and later it helps in independent eating and also helps with a good grip and beautiful handwriting.

Montessori believed that "what the hand does, the brain remembers, research shows that the hand is the strongest link to the developing brain. A baby must place his hands in front of him to push up from his tummy before he is able to grasp something put in front of him, later he starts crawling and sits, thus sitting alone is a major milestone as it leaves the hands free to explore. At first, hand movements maybe uncoordinated, later the baby learns that his mind can control his body to do his will. As days go, they learn to grasp and their hands get powerful.

They are fascinated looking at their hands and with free hands they move about exploring everything in the environment.

We need to offer purposeful activity for the child, while doing so the child learns to sit up and walk as well. We need to keep sturdy furniture around them, it helps in supported movement. They try to hold it and stand and start cruising across the furniture.

They start by falling many times and finally learn to walk; as days go by they find their equilibrium and confidently walk, because their head isn't steady. Their nerve cells grow; their bones become harder which helps in movement.

When they start to walk, it's not a steady walk, we must allow them to walk on their own, and we should not put them in walkers and create an obstacle in their natural development.

We can certainly present a push cart for support to walk, and it also will help control their speed. Once they are confidently walking they love to carry around things, it helps in coordination.

We must collaborate with the child in our daily lives by including them in daily activities and chores.

As explorers they love to move around and climbing stairs and crawling around the house, jumping, running, experiencing speed, all these activities increases their confidence and helps them become independent.

As caregivers/guides we should observe the movements carefully and help them attain the highest level of independence.

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To conclude, development of independence, language and movement is essential for a child's life, they become self aware and they are ready to live life independently.

