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Dr. M.G.R

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Maduravoyal, Chennai - 600 095, Tamilnadu, INDIA

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Delivered by	:	Dr. P. Senthamizh Pavai

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Meaning of Growth

Growth is an indication of physical existence or life. Growth refers to physical changes like, increase in size, length, height and weight. It is the quantitative changes that occur in the body of an organism. However, growth does not continue throughout the lifespan of an individual. It slowly slows down and stops when maturity has been attained. The physical changes achieved by growth are noticeable and can be assessed. Physical growth can not ensure development. As an example, an individual may grow physically in soze, weight and height but that doesn't mean he develop in terms of functional improvement.

Meaning of Development

Development, unlike growth, is the process of qualitative as well as quantitative changes. Growth indicates to physical and structural changes while development refers to growth as well as changes in behaviour. Development is wider and growth is a part of development. Development is a continues process. It doesn't stop with the attainment of maturity and continues throughout the lifespan of an individual. Development refers to functional improvement in behaviour that generates qualitative changes that can not be computed directly.

Factors influencing Growth and Development

1. Heredity:

Hereditary factors in the form of genes and chromosome determine the pattern of growth and development to a large amount. Hereditary determines the potentialities and restrictions of the growth and development of an individual. It is the basis for all the growth and development that take place in life. It the hereditary which influences eye colour, body size, skin, hair and nervous system of an individual.

2. Environment:

The environment in which an individual is born and raised determine the form of growth and development. Environmental factors provide directions to the genetic possibility of the growth and development of an individual. Environmental factors that affect growth and development include climate conditions, nutrition, socio-economic conditions, emotional support, the opportunity of play, language training etc.

3. Hormone:

Endocrine or the ductless glands secrets hormones or chemical substances internally into the bloodstream. These hormones influence the growth and development of an individual.

4. Nutrition:

Growth and Development are highly dependent upon nutrition. A balanced diet and nutrition lead to normal growth. A diet filled with an adequate amount of vitamins, zinc, calcium, amino acids, protein affects the rate of growth and development.

5. Sex:

The sex of an individual also influences growth and development. In general man has more strength than a woman. And girls attain puberty before the boys.

6. Socioeconomic and cultural factors:

Socio-economic background and cultural differences influence human growth and development. Different socio-economic and cultural background lead to differences in the physical development of individuals with a differential rate of growth, maturation and development. For example, the physical growth of Asian is different from the of African.

7. Exercise and Health:

Exercise and health also influence growth and development. A healthy person has the potential for good growth as well as development.