**Chapter 2**

**Human Development Across the Life Span**

**Learning Outcomes**

1. **Relate the principles of growth and development to the nursing process.**

* **Suggested Classroom Activity:** Ask students todiscuss environmental factors, internal and external, that affect growth and development that nurses must consider in assessing clients across the life span.
* **Suggested Clinical Activity:** Ask students to choose an adult client and discuss his or her life accomplishments or milestones. Determine if the client has met the developmental milestones appropriate for his or her age according to Erikson’s psychosocial theory.

1. **Examine theories of development.**

* **Suggested Classroom Activity:** Ask students to briefly paraphrase the three major theories of development and identify the major differences between two of these theories.
* **Suggested Clinical Activity:** Ask students to select a client age 40 or older and discuss his or her developmental milestones across the life span. Ask students to provide examples that demonstrate successfully meeting milestones according to Erikson’s psychosocial theory.

1. **Appraise stages of development.**

* **Suggested Classroom Activity:** Ask students to summarize the importance of height, weight, and head circumference in assessing physiological growth of infants.
* **Suggested Clinical Activity:** Ask students to observe an infant interacting with a parent or primary caregiver and determine goodness of fit between the infant and caregiver.Ask students tonote positive and negative observations and suggestions of what can be done to improve interactions between the infant and the adult.

1. **Differentiate between various tools used for measurement of growth and development across the age span.**

* **Suggested Classroom Activity:** Ask students to compare and contrast the Denver Developmental Screening Test II and the Child Development Inventory.
* **Suggested Clinical Activity:** Ask students to select a geriatric client and administer the Geriatric Depression Scale. Recommend follow-up to professional staff should the client produce a score greater than 5.

1. **Examine growth and development in relation to health assessment.**

* **Suggested Classroom Activity:** Ask students to pair off and practice role-playing communication methods when assessing the adolescent patient.
* **Suggested Clinical Activity:** Ask students to observe adolescents in a group setting. Record methods of communication and interaction including verbal and nonverbal communication as members of the group interact.

1. **Appraise factors that influence growth and development.**

* **Suggested Classroom Activity:** Ask students to explain the importance of nutrition to growth and development.
* **Suggested Clinical Activity:** Ask students to select a patient with an international or ethnic background. Discuss with the patient their family cultural practices that differ from Western or typical American norms and what healthcare providers should know about his or her culture or subculture.

**Key Concepts**

1. Nurses’ knowledge of normal growth and development across the life span is essential in order to determine abnormalities when assessing patients.
2. Nursing interventions across the life span should reflect and synchronize with the health-related goals of *Healthy People 2020*.
3. Growth is defined as measurable physical changes that are normally rapid in infancy, slower in childhood until puberty, and slow in adulthood.
4. Development reflects a dynamic and progressively complex evolution of several aspects of the total person beyond physical changes.
5. Rates of growth and development vary based on heredity as well as environmental factors such as nutrition, family, religion, climate, culture, school, community, and socioeconomic status.
6. A single theory does not encompass all aspects of human development.
7. Cognitive theory explores how individuals learn to think, reason, and use language.
8. Piaget theorized that cognitive development is orderly and occurs in four stages: sensory motor, preoperational skills, concrete operations, and formal operations.
9. Psychoanalytical theory is based Freud’s theories of personality development and the structures of personality: the id, ego, and super ego.
10. Psychoanalytical theory posits that children pass through five stages of psychosexual development in which needs must be met without overindulgence or fixation: oral phase, anal phase, phallic phase, latency phase, and the genital stage.
11. Erikson’s psychosocial theory describes eight stages of ego development across the life span.
12. Tasks in each of Erikson’s stages must be met in order to achieve the essential task or milestone in the next stage.
13. Infancy describes ages 1 month to 1 year.
14. Infants develop close relationships with their primary caregiver, and interact with and relate to their environment.
15. Height, weight, and head circumference measurements provide the most consistent growth markers of infants.
16. Early development, infancy to adolescence, focuses on motor development based on neurological maturity, language development, cognitive development, and psychosocial development.
17. Young adulthood represents independence from parents and choices in lifestyle and career.
18. Middle-age adulthood is a time for evaluation of the past and adjustment for the future.
19. Middle-age adulthood represents the beginning of physiological signs of aging such as hormonal changes in both men and women and visual decline.
20. Older adults vary greatly in both psychosocial and physical changes, but generally include adjusting to declining health and physical strength, adjusting to retirement, adjusting to death of friends and spouse, conducting a life review, and preparing for death.
21. Health assessment includes gathering objective and subjective data to develop plans to maintain health or address health needs in patients of all ages.
22. When conducting health assessments, the professional nurse must be able to obtain accurate data and interpret findings in relation to expectations and predicted norms and ranges for patients at various stages of physical and emotional development.
23. Knowledge of anatomical and physiological changes as well as theoretic information about cognitive, psychoanalytical, and psychosocial events and expectations at each stage of human development is invaluable for the nurse.
24. Health assessment includes the use of clinical growth charts to index individual patient measurements of height and weight (and head circumference in infants) as expected normal values for age and gender.
25. In addition to expectations about physical growth and development, there are expectations about cognitive, psychosocial, and emotional development across the age span.
26. Numerous standardized instruments and tools measure growth and assessment from infancy to older-adulthood.
27. Many instruments assess depression, stress, intelligence, and several other personality traits and characteristics.
28. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) provides numerous health screening and assessment tools across the life span as preventive measures to healthcare problems.
29. The Geriatric Depression Scale is one instrument that assesses elements of depression in the older-adult population.
30. Malnutrition can delay and prevent growth and development.
31. Slow growth of a child, when compared to growth charts, may indicate inadequate nutrition.
32. The family reflects a social system that influences physical and emotional development and influences values and rituals, safety, nutrition, and support.
33. Cultural factors such as child rearing and family roles influence growth and development.
34. Socioeconomic status is a major factor in growth and development of children.
35. Poverty impacts the ability of a family to meet nutritional needs of children and affects children’s health status and their physical well-being**.**