



How do children grow and develop?

Children pass through stages of development and it is helpful for you to know what behaviors to expect during each stage.

However, keep in mind that each child is a growing, changing, one-of-a-kind person. Your child may be ahead of or behind other children who are the same age.

Why is it important to know what children can do at each stage of development?

When we expect things of children that they are not able to do, they feel badly about themselves. The ways in which they think, feel, and act are different from the ways adults function. If you know what to expect from children, you will be able to offer them activities they can complete with success. If we push children too hard and expect more than they can deliver, their failures make them feel they can never be good enough.

What should my school-age child be doing?

By the time children reach school-age, they should be able to be away from their parents without feeling too much anxiety. School-age children face many challenges including:

- > Completing school work
- > Learning how to get along with others
- > Learning how to respond to authority figures other than their parents
- > Exploring how things work
- > Becoming involved in hobbies, games, and sports



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Most girls like to play with girls and boys will choose to play with boys. Children of this age are eager to please. They like being given responsibility and showing adults they can finish a task.

The early school years set standards for work habits that children will display throughout their lives.

When a Parent is Extremely Permissive:

- > Parents have few rules.
- > Parents allow the children to do as they please.
- > Children are cranky and whiny.
- > Children may be aggressive and want their way all of the time.

When a Parent is Extremely Strict:

- > Parents expect immediate obedience.
- > Parents do not explain their demands.
- > Parents use physical punishment.

When a Parent is Moderate:

- > Parents have rules appropriate for the child's age and enforce the rules consistently.
- > Parents are firm and everyone acts with kindness, warmth, and love.
- > Parents take the child's age and uniqueness into account.
- > Parents try to understand why the child acts and feels the way they do.
- > Parents try to see the situation from the child's point of view.
- > Children are responsible and cooperative.
- > Children have healthy self-esteem and are considerate of others.

The type of discipline parents use influences the type of person a child will become. Positive discipline techniques help children learn right from wrong, build self-esteem, and develop important life skills. Try these positive discipline strategies to discover what works best for your family.

Ignoring

If your child's inappropriate behavior does not hurt the child or others (ex. – whining, pouting, or begging), try to ignore it until it stops. Praise children when they stop the behavior. Children tend to repeat behaviors that adults praise and reward.

Redirection

Children sometimes act in ways that are potentially dangerous or destructive. When they "rough house," ask them to go outside and join you in a game of tag. If they want to make a costume out of their best clothes, offer them older clothes that they can cut, paint, or sew. Children need to explore to learn.

Fix Up

When children break or spill something, expect them to try to help fix it or help clean it up. If they do something that hurts someone else, have them apologize and do something nice for the person. This technique teaches children that actions have consequences and helps them to develop a positive attitude.

Be Firm

Using a firm tone of voice, state what the child needs to be doing in language that they can understand. Be specific. For example, instead of yelling, "Clean up this mess!", explain in a normal tone of voice that all the clothes on the floor need to be put in the laundry basket and that the toys need to be put in the toy box. When you raise your voice or threaten, children know that you are not in control. Remember to make your expectations

Rules

Post a list of written rules in a "high traffic" area the number of rules to five or fewer. State them positively – make them do's rather than don't rules that are appropriate for your child's age. Your child have a voice in developing the rules. make a list of consequences for breaking the rules consistent in applying them.

Rewards

How often do you "catch" your children being good? Pay attention to all of the positive things your children do each day. Reward good behavior with praise and nurturing touches. Avoid giving children more attention when they misbehave than when they act appropriately. Protect and preserve children's self-esteem. Speak to them with kindness and respect so they will view themselves as lovable and capable.

Separation

When children fight, hit, or kick, have them rest or play apart for awhile. Being apart gives the children time to calm down. Then you can use other positive discipline techniques such as rules and rewards to encourage better behavior.

Parenting is both challenging and rewarding. All parents need information and support to be at their best. Ask for help if you need it!