

6-8 Years



AGES & STAGES

Your school-ager is now ready for a steady pace of growing and learning, one in which real life tasks and activities overtake pretend and fantasy. Equipped with a longer attention span, your child also is ready to delve into projects, solve problems, and resolve arguments!

Physical development

- skilled at using scissors and small tools
- shows development of permanent teeth
- enjoys testing muscle strength and skills
- has good sense of balance
- can tie shoelaces
- enjoys copying designs and shapes, letters and numbers
- may have gawky awkward appearance from long arms and legs

Mental development

- may reverse printed letters (b/d)
- enjoys planning and building
- doubles speaking and listening vocabularies
- may show a stronger interest in reading
- increases problem-solving ability
- has longer attention span
- enjoys creating elaborate collections
- shows ability to learn difference between left and right
- can begin to understand time and the days of the week

IDEAS FOR PARENTS

- Provide opportunities for active play. Throwing at targets, running, jumping rope, tumbling, and aerobics may be of interest.
- Provide opportunities to develop an understanding of rules by playing simple table games: cards, dominoes, tic-tac-toe.
- Provide opportunities for your child to do noncompetitive team activities such as working a jigsaw puzzle or planting a garden.
- Encourage your child's sense of accomplishment by providing opportunities to build models, cook, make crafts, practice music, or work with wood.
- Encourage collections by allowing your child to make special storage boxes or books.
- Encourage reading and writing by encouraging your child to produce stories with scripts, create music for plays and puppet shows, produce a newspaper, record events, go on field trips, or conduct experiments.
- Help your child explore the world by taking field trips to museums, work places, and other neighborhoods.

Social and emotional development

- being with friends becomes increasingly important
- shows interest in rules and rituals
- wants to play more with similar friends—girls with girls, boys with boys
- may have a “best” friend and “enemy”



- shows strong desire to perform well, do things right
- begins to see things from another child's point of view, but still very self-centered
- finds criticism or failure difficult to handle
- views things as black and white, right or wrong, wonderful or terrible, with very little middle ground
- seeks a sense of security in groups, organized play, and clubs
- generally enjoys caring for and playing with younger children
- may become upset when behavior or schoolwork is ignored

Toy list

- arts and crafts materials
- musical instruments
- sports equipment
- camping equipment
- construction sets
- electric trains
- bicycles (use helmets)
- models
- board games
- skateboard (use helmets)

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BOOKS



Books for parents

Parent's Guide for the Best Books for Children, Eden Ross Lipson

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk, Adele Faber and Elizabeth Mazlish

Caring for Your School-age Child: Ages 5 to 12, American Academy of Pediatrics

Books for children

A Chair for My Mother, Vera Williams

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day, Judith Viorst

Anna Banana and Me, Lenore Blegvard

Everybody Needs A Rock, Byrd Baylor

The Garden of Abdul Gasazi, Chris Van Allsburg

The Kid Next Door and Other Headaches: Stories About Adam Joshua, Janice Lee Smith

Little House in the Big Woods, Laura Ingalls Wilder

Ramona, Beverly Cleary

A word on development

Your child is unique. Each child's learning and growth rates differ from other children the same age.

If, however, your child is unable to do many of the skills listed for his or her age group, you may wish to talk to an early childhood specialist. You are the best person to notice developmental problems, if any, because of the time you spend with your child. If your child has special needs, early help can make a difference.

If you have questions about your child's development or want to have your child tested, contact:

- Your pediatrician or health care professional
- The local health department
- Area Education Agency - Early Childhood Special Education Consultant
- Iowa COMPASS 1-800-779-2001, TTY: 1-877-686-0032

Contact your county extension office to obtain other publications about children, parenting, and family life.

The developmental information provided in this bulletin has been compiled from a variety of professional resources to help you understand your child's overall growth. It is not a standardized measurement tool.

... and justice for all

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