

Parenting with a Developmental Lens

Jane Greenstein, Ph.D.

**Power Series
Decision at Every Turn
Ashland Public Library**

January 18, 2017



Just like you, kids have different needs at different stages.

These vary from person to person, of course.

But there are some developmental patterns that are helpful to understand.

Goals for tonight

- **To increase your understanding of the different stages of child development**
- **To guide you in being more attentive to assessing what your child needs from you**
- **To help you think about how to adjust your parenting strategies to match your child's developmental needs**

Erik Erikson's Stages of Development

APPROXIMATE AGE	PSYCHOSOCIAL GOAL	EXISTENTIAL QUESTION	KEY TASKS	BENEFIT/OUTCOME
Infancy 0 -18 months	Trust	Can I trust the world?	Having basic needs met—feeding, nurturance, health and safety	Hope
Early childhood 2–4 years	Autonomy	Is it okay to be me?	Toilet training, clothing themselves, taking charge of their own needs	Will
Preschool age 4–5 years	Initiative	Is it okay for me to do, move, and act?	Exploring, using tools, or making art	Purpose
School age 5–12 years	Industry	Can I make it in the world of people and things?	Skill acquisition	Competence
Adolescence 13–19 years	Identity	Who am I? Who can I be?	Social relationships	Fidelity
Early adulthood 20–39 years	Intimacy	Can I love?	Romantic relationships	Love
Adulthood 40–64 years	Generativity	Can I make my life count?	Work, parenthood, contributions to society	Care
Maturity 65-death	Ego Integrity	Is it okay to have been me?	Reflection on life	Wisdom

Infancy

As parents, our goal is to help our children feel safe and nurtured

Our children need us to do most things for them

Everything that follows is impacted if we don't develop trust and hope

Early Childhood

As parents, our goal is to help our children differentiate themselves from us

Our children need us to let them separate

We can't take another's perspective until we think of others as different from ourselves

Pre-School

As parents, our goal is to help our children take initiative in exploring the world

Our children need us to be close by as we encourage them

We can't grow if we don't see ourselves as capable

School-Age

As parents, our goal is to help our children build their competence

Our children need to develop independence

We must work with them to help them build their own success

We can't achieve goals until we have skills

Adolescence

As parents, our goal is to help our children develop a strong and confident sense of who they are.

And who they want to be in relationship to others

Our children need us NOT to do for them but to support them as they do for themselves

We can't thrive without a sense of where we belong and the ability to sustain relationships with those outside our family

Young Adulthood

As parents, our goal is to help our children launch their own adult lives and develop intimacy with peers

Our children need us as sounding boards, cheerleaders, and mentors

We can't truly be adults if we stay embedded in our family of origin

Brain development impacts these developmental goals and a child's readiness for mastery

Some key cognitive skills that impact psychosocial readiness:

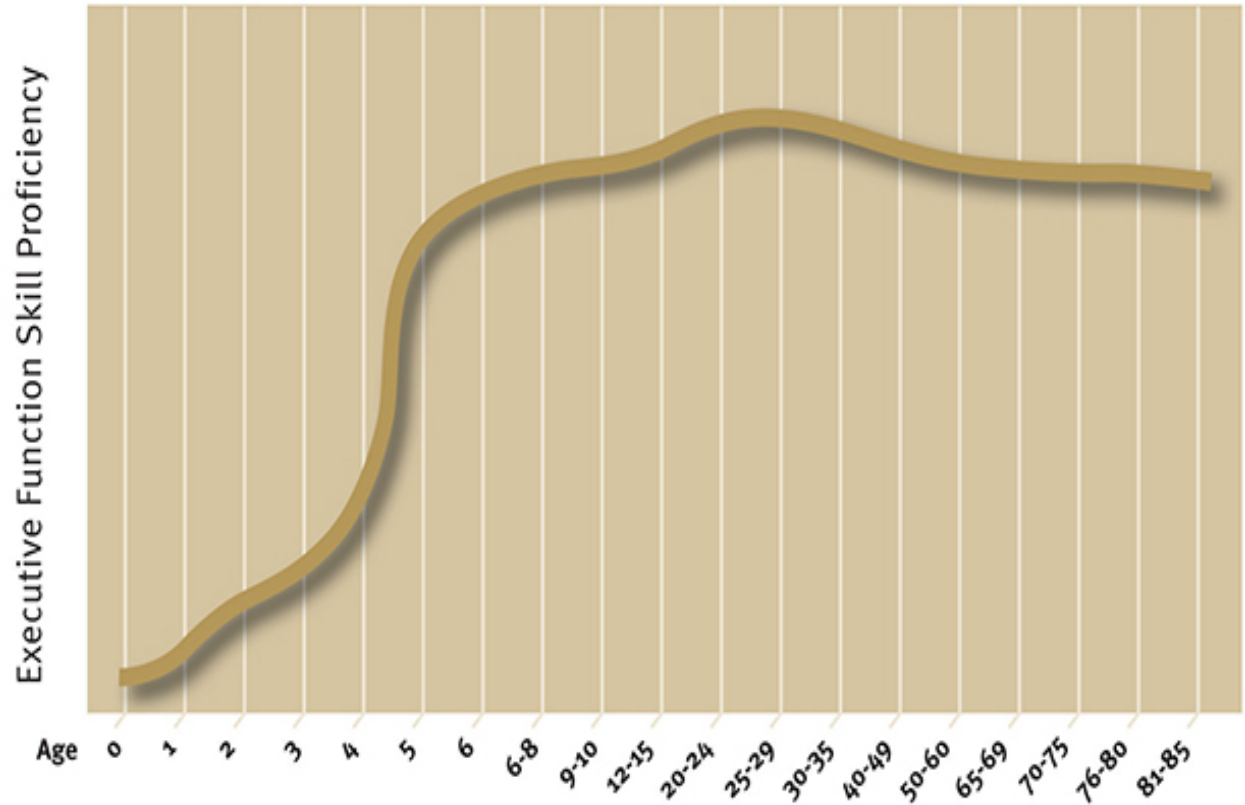
- **Object permanence**
- **Language**
- **Abstract reasoning**
- **Executive functioning**
- **Focus on future**

https://youtu.be/efCq_vHUMqs

Executive Functions

begin to develop shortly after birth, with ages 3 to 5 a period of dramatic growth. Development continues throughout adolescence and early adulthood until about age 25.

Executive Function Skills Build Into the Early Adult Years



**Harvard University Center on the Developing Child*

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-executive-function/>

**When our children are young,
our job is to meet their needs.**

**As our children get older,
we need to help them figure out
how to get
their own needs met.**

We don't pull the rug out from them all at once. But we must work on slowly, incrementally pulling back.



IT'S A DANCE



not a formula