



The Growing Child: School-Age (6 to 12 Years)

Children progress at different rates. They have different interests, abilities, and personalities. But there are some common milestones many children reach from ages 6 to 12.



What can my child do at these ages?

As your child grows, you'll notice him or her developing new and exciting abilities.

A child age 6 to 7:

- Enjoys many activities and stays busy
- Likes to paint and draw
- Practices skills in order to become better
- Jumps rope
- Rides a bike

A child age 8 to 9:

- Is more graceful with movements and abilities
- Jumps, skips, and chases
- Dresses and grooms self completely
- Can use tools, such as a hammer or screwdriver

A child age 10 to 12:

- Likes to sew and paint

What does my child understand?

As children enter into school age, their skills and understanding of concepts continue to grow.

A child age 6 to 7:

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- Understands the concept of numbers
- Knows daytime and nighttime
- Knows right and left hands
- Can copy complex shapes, such as a diamond
- Can tell time
- Understands commands that have 3 separate instructions
- Can explain objects and their use
- Can repeat 3 numbers backward
- Can read age-appropriate books

A child age 8 to 9:

- Can count backward
- Knows the date
- Reads more and enjoys reading
- Understands fractions
- Understands the concept of space
- Draws and paints
- Can name the months and days of the week, in order
- Enjoys collecting objects

A child age 10 to 12:

- Writes stories
- Likes to write letters
- Reads well
- Enjoys using the telephone

How will my child interact with others?

An important part of growing up is learning to interact and socialize with others. During the school-age years, you'll see a change in your child. He or she will move from playing alone to having multiple friends and social groups. Friendships become more important. But your child is still fond of you as parents, and likes being part of a family. Below are some of the common traits that your child may show at these ages.

A child age 6 to 7:

- Cooperates and shares
- Can be jealous of others and siblings
- Likes to copy adults
- Likes to play alone, but friends are becoming important
- Plays with friends of the same gender
- May sometimes have temper tantrums
- Is modest about his or her body
- Likes to play board games

A child age 8 to 9:

- Likes competition and games
- Starts to mix friends and play with children of the opposite gender
- Is modest about his or her body
- Enjoys clubs and groups, such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts

Is becoming interested in boy-girl relationships, but doesn't admit it

A child age 10 to 12:

Finds friends are very important and may have a best friend

Has increased interest in the opposite gender

Likes and respects parents

Enjoys talking to others

How can I encourage my child's social abilities?

You can help boost your school-aged child's social abilities by:

Setting limits, guidelines, and expectations and enforcing them with appropriate penalties

Modeling good behavior

Complimenting your child for being cooperative and for personal achievements

Helping your child choose activities that are suitable for his or her abilities

Encouraging your child to talk with you and be open with his or her feelings

Encouraging your child to read, and reading with your child

Encouraging your child to get involved with hobbies and other activities

Promoting physical activity

Encouraging self-discipline and expecting your child to follow rules that are set

Teaching your child to respect and listen to authority figures

Encouraging your child to talk about peer pressure and setting guidelines to deal with peer pressure

Spending uninterrupted time together and giving full attention to your child

Limiting screen time (TV, video, and computer)

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