

The Ten -Year-Old (grade 5)

Physical Development

- Girls are generally ahead of boys in physical maturity; onset of puberty for some girls
- Increase in body strength and hand dexterity
- Have improved coordination and reaction time
- Desperately need outdoor time and physical challenge
- Snacks and rest periods needed for growing bodies

Social and Emotional Development

- Concern for fairness peaks
- Humor is broad, labored, and usually not funny to adults
- Usually direct, matter fact, clear-cut
- Generally easygoing, content, friendly, and balanced
- Talkative; likes to tell stories; can talk something “into the ground”
- May belittle or defy adult authority, but are closer to their families than at many other levels
- Enjoy both family and peers
- Developing more mature sense of right and wrong
- Often interested in caring for animals
- Shrug off responsibility; can usually toss off criticisms and bad grades

Intellectual Development

- Can be voracious learners and readers
- Expressive, talkative, like to explain
- Cooperative, competitive and inquisitive
- Classification and collections of interest; like to organize
- Able to concentrate, read for extended periods
- Good problem solvers
- Like to complete a task but doesn't usually wish to enlarge or elaborate on it; wish to try everything
- Interest span is short
- Have a stricter ethical sense than most other ages
- Very concerned about fairness
- Generally love to memorize, but don't generalize or correlate facts, or care what to do with the knowledge

- Often enjoy “place” geography--names of states, capitals, but vague about actual geographic characteristics
- Not able to plan own work, need schedules
- Better able to see the perspectives of others
- Most interested in concrete learning experiences and learning of specifics
- Like to talk

The Eleven -Year-Old (grade 6)

Physical Development

- Vast appetite for food, physical activity, and talking
- Growth spurt of early adolescence for some girls, may feel awkward and clumsy
- Girls ahead of guys in physical maturity; boys’ big growth spurt may not start until 14; Boys worry if they are ever going to grow
- Wide differences among individuals in rate of development
- Curious about opposite sex; girls usually interested first
- Tiredness; need for more sleep
- Often uncomfortable with questions and observations about how much they have grown and physical changes
- Increased need for personal hygiene.

Social and Emotional Development

- Less overt affection and attention shown to parents, with occasional rudeness; tests limits
- Impulsive, unaware
- Focus on self, alternating between high expectations and poor self-concept
- Have tendency to return to childish behavior, particularly when stressed
- Experience extremes of emotions
- Inclusive/exclusion; height of cliques, seek to belong, discovery of telephone
- Experimenting with behavior, roles, appearance, self-image
- Difficulty with decisions but need to be able to make some choices for themselves
- Demand privileges, but may avoid responsibilities

- Feel unique; believe that no one else has ever felt the way they do; suffered so much, or been so misunderstood

Intellectual Development

- Mostly interested in present, limited thoughts of the future
- Intellectual interests expand
- Increased ability to de-center and see world from various perspectives
- Development of ideals and identification of role models
- May experiment with dangerous risk-taking behaviors
- Even if students can make abstractions, they learn best when activities are active, hands-on, and related to personal experiences
- Concerned with rules, standards of behavior and fairness, especially for themselves
- Do not distinguish between what they are thinking and what others may be thinking; assume that every other person is as concerned with their behavior and appearance as they are better at planning than carrying out the plan.

The Twelve -Year-Old (grade 7)

Physical Development

- High energy, but much rest needed
- Growth spurts; girls ahead of boys; wide differences among individuals in rates of development
- Can be physically awkward
- Physical activities and sports valued
- Eating patterns change, over-concern for food and dieting
- May worry about body image
- Increased need for personal hygiene

Social and Emotional Development

- Struggle with sense of identity
- Moodiness
- Can be enthusiastic at some times; lethargic at other times
- Friendships with both sexes are important
- Complain that parents interfere with independence
- More likely to express feelings by actions than words

- Peer vocabulary (slang) important
- Less overt affection and attention shown to parents, with occasional rudeness; test limits
- Impulsive, unaware
- Experience extremes of emotions
- Inclusion/exclusion; height of cliques, seek to belong, discovery of telephone
- Experimenting with behavior, roles, appearance, self-image
- Difficulty with decisions but need to be able to make some choices for themselves
- Demand privileges, but may avoid responsibilities
- Feel unique; believe that no one else has ever felt the way they do; suffered so much, or been so misunderstood.

Intellectual Development

- Hormonal and physical demands of puberty may cause slowing of rate of cognitive development during early adolescence
- Increased ability to think abstract in intellectual pursuits
- Learn best when involved in activities that are active, hands-on, and related to real life
- Concerned with rules, standards of behavior and fairness, especially for themselves
- Lack of understanding of cause and effect as well as feelings of omnipotence and invulnerability ("It can't happen to me.") can lead to dangerous risk-taking behaviors - - smoking, drugs, drinking, etc.
- Mostly interested in present, limited thoughts of future
- May show emerging ability in a particular skill or content area
- Show improved abilities to use speech for self-expression
- High interest in current events, politics, social justice; also pop culture, materialism
- More consistent evidence of conscience
- Idealistic; may offer "ideal" solutions to complex problems
- Development of ideals and selection of role models
- May question parents' religious beliefs, political beliefs, and other values.

The Thirteen -Year-Old (grade 8)

Physical Development

- Wide differences in the rate of physical growth among individuals; girls 95% of mature height is average; boys - voice change; growth about a year behind girls
- Skin problems emerging; hygiene a key issue
- Eating patterns change
- Uneven coordination
- Worry about being normal, physically
- Feel awkward about body
- Most social/emotional/cognitive developments directly related to physical changes
- Hormonal/physical demands of puberty may slow intellectual growth
- Short term thinking may predominate over long term planning
- Abstract reasoning and “formal operations” begin to be functional in some thirteen year olds.

Social and Emotional Development

- Concerned about physical attractiveness to others; the mirror is their best friend and worst enemy
- Struggle with sense of identity:
 - Concerned with physical appearance; focus on self
 - Striving for independence; at home, like to be alone
 - Desire to be honest can conflict with other pressures
- Increased distractions from doing homework: Sports, dress, telephone, computer, video games
- Music becoming a major preoccupation
- One word answers to adult questions (minimal feedback)
- Feel unique, believing that no one has ever felt as they do, suffered so much, loved so deeply, or been so misunderstood
- Peer relations/peer pressure (being “cool”):
 - Moodiness, feelings easily hurt
 - Confide in peers; minimal answers to parents and other adults
 - Increased interest in opposite sex
 - Humor highlighted by growth of sarcasm and put-downs

- Parent relationships:
 - Parents' values important but also begin to question them
 - Extreme language and volume in face of parental involvement
 - Occasional rudeness; highly critical of parents
 - Complain that parents interfere with independence.

Intellectual Development

- Hormonal/physical demands of puberty may slow intellectual growth
- Short term thinking may predominate over long term planning
- Abstract reasoning and "formal operations" begin to be functional in some thirteen year olds.
- Not willing to take big learning risks (adolescent insecurity)
- Like to challenge answers
- Withdrawn and sensitive nature is protective of developing self-concept and intellectual ideas that are not fully formed yet
- Tentative approach to difficult intellectual tasks; not willing to take big learning risks; this has usually caused the fears and self-consciousness of adolescence
- Risk-taking behaviors spring from lack of cause-effect thinking; highest incidence of experimentation with drinking, drugs, smoking, etc. takes place between ages 12 and 16
- Concerns with rules/fairness; idealistic.

Reference: "GCISD - Curriculum Guides and Developmental Characteristics." 2002. Grapevine-Colleyville ISD. 7 Dec. 2007 .