

Basic Childhood Development

Early Childhood
2-6

Middle Childhood
6-12

Adolescence
12-Adulthood

Physical

- Grow 3 inches per year
- Brain reaches 95% of adult weight
- Gross motor skills like climbing, jumping, running, and balance
- Fine motor skills like drawing, turning door handles, and using utensils

- Grow 2 inches per year
- Gain muscle strength
- Greater control over movement
- Can ride a bike and run longer
- Hand-eye coordination improves

- Rapid growth spurt of 20-25% of height
- Brain is more interconnected and specialized
- Hormone increases lead to development of primary and secondary sex characteristics

Cognitive

- Start to understand time
- Understand idea of same vs. different
- Predict what happens next in a story
- Count 10 or more things
- Understands from 200 words to over 10,000

- Develop organized and rational thinking
- Can sort objects by multiple categories
- Working memory expands
- Understands over 40,000 words
- Learn to read and write

- Abstract thinking
- Question social norms
- Imagine hypotheticals
- Debate ideas
- Cognitive empathy increases
- Increased risk taking due to reward center brain development

Social & Emotional

- Prefer group play over independent
- Can differentiate reality and make believe
- Want to be similar to friends

- Develop stronger self-concept
- Develop conflict management, turn taking, and compromise through play

- Experiment with identity in peer groups
- Friendships based on sharing thoughts and feelings
- Desire independence from family of origin

SOGIE

- Start to express gender identity through clothing, behaviors, and interest in gender roles
- Model gender roles seen in adults

- School is often a gender segregated space
- Toys are thought of as “boy toys” and “girl toys”
- Most children become aware of their sexual orientation through crushes

- Gender dysphoria can increase as puberty develops secondary sex characteristics inconsistent with gender identity
- Experiment with sexual identity in casual and romantic relationships



Orr, A., & Baum, J. (2015). Schools In Transition A guide for Supporting Transgender Students in K-12 Schools (B. Sherouse, Ed.).

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