



**GROWING AND SCHOOLING:
UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
VOLUME 1
(6- 12 YEARS)**

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*We reach backward to our parents and forward to our children
and through their children to a future we will never see, but
about which we need to care.*

—CARL JUNG

Swiss Psychoanalyst, 20th Century



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Chapter 1: Introduction

When children begin school (grade 1), they have entered the “middle childhood” stage and proceed onwards “late childhood” and before they reach adolescence. This volume will help parents and other adults look at the general characteristics of children in the middle and late childhood stage, **ages 6 to 12**, consider special concerns of parents and caregivers, and give practical recommendations to ensure optimal development.

As in volume one, consideration will be given to the areas of development which include:

- Physical Development (Physical Growth and Motor Development)
- Language Development
- Cognitive Development
- Socio-emotional Development



Chapter 2: Physical Development – Physical growth

Considerable progress is made in children's physical growth as they reach ages 6 and upwards. They grow taller, heavier and stronger. They become better in sporting activities.

Unlike the earlier stages, growth at this point is slow and consistent. In height, they add about 2 to 3 inches every year till 11 years. The average girl is 4 feet, 10.5 inches tall while the average boy is 4 feet 9 inches tall.



Physical Development- Motor Development



Sporting activities e.g. running, jumping, skipping, football, basket ball, bicycle riding, etc.



Cutting paper with scissors, dressing oneself, tying shoe lace, tracing around hand, handcrafting , sewing, drawing, coloring, writing, etc.



Gross Motor Development

This is implicated in a child's ability to walk, run, play sports etc.

Gross Motor Skill	Fine Motor Skill
Skips with alternating feet	Copies a triangle
Rides bicycle	Copies a diamond
Gain athletic skill	Prints letters
Coordination increases	Ties shoes
Refined running, jumping, hopping, and ball skills	Draws recognizable man, with body, arms and legs
Flexibility, balance, agility, and force increases	Writing tends to be large at first, and legibility gradually increases
	Can produce fine quality hand crafts and can play musical instruments
Boys out perform girls in tasks involving gross motor skills	Girls out perform boys in activities involving fine motor skills



Chapter 3: Language Development

At this stage of development, children have improved in their receptive and expressive language ability . This stage is characterized by the following :

- ❖ Ease of pronouncing sounds
- ❖ Fluent verbal expression with confidence
- ❖ Shift from self centered speech to social speech
- ❖ Ability to identify right and left
- ❖ Independent reading by ages 7 to 9
- ❖ Ability to understand 20, 000 to 26, 000 at ages 7 and about 50, 000 by age 12
- ❖ Awareness of errors in other peoples speech
- ❖ Decline in use of incomplete sentences
- ❖ Ability to form complex and compound sentences



Chapter 4: Cognitive Development

Cognitive development of a child relates to the child's ability to think, and understand the world around. This aspect of development is central to the child's ability to learn. Below are some of the milestones in children at this stage of development:

- ❖ Children can begin to think about their own behavior and see consequences for actions. In the early stages of concrete thinking, they can group things that belong together (for instance babies, fathers, mothers, aunts are all family members).
- ❖ They can think abstractly about objects and situations
- ❖ They are able to order objects of different gradients/ size along a continuum
- ❖ They master sequencing and ordering, which are needed for math skills.
- ❖ They have the ability to use memory recall strategies (mnemonic devices)
- ❖ Children begin to read and write early in middle childhood and should be skillful in reading and writing by the end of this stage.
- ❖ They can think through their actions and trace back events that happened to explain situations, such as why they were late to school.
- ❖ Children learn best if they are active while they are learning. For example, children will learn more effectively about traffic safety by moving cars, blocks, and toy figures rather than sitting and listening to an adult explain the rules.



Cognitive Development contd.

- ❖ 6 to 8-year-olds can rarely sit for longer than 15-20 minutes for an activity. Attention span gets longer with age.
- ❖ Toward the beginning of middle childhood, children may begin projects, but finish few. They should be allowed to explore new materials. Nearing adolescence, children will focus more on completion.
- ❖ Teachers set the conditions for social interactions to occur in schools. Understand that children need to experience various friendships while building esteem.
- ❖ Children can talk through problems to solve them. This requires more adult time and more sustained attention by children.
- ❖ Children can focus attention and take time to search for needed information.
- ❖ They can develop a plan to meet a goal.
- ❖ There is greater memory capability because many routines (such as brushing teeth, tying shoe laces, and bathing) are automatic now.
- ❖ Many children want to find a way to earn money.



Chapter 5: Socio-emotional Development

Characteristic traits of the socio-emotional development of school age children are highlighted below:

- ❖ Children show signs of growing independence
- ❖ They have same sex friends
- ❖ They averagely have five best friends and at least one “enemy,” who often changes from day to day.
- ❖ Children act nurturing and commanding with younger children but follow and depend on older children.
- ❖ Children are beginning to see the point of view of others more clearly.
- ❖ Children define themselves in terms of their appearance, possessions, and activities.



Socio-emotional Development contd.

- ❖ Children often resolve conflict through peer judges who accept or reject their actions.
- ❖ Children are self-conscious and feel as if everyone notices even small differences (new haircut, facial hair, a hug in public from a parent).
- ❖ Tattling is a common way to attract adult attention in the early years of middle childhood.
- ❖ Inner control is being formed and practiced each time decisions are made.
- ❖ Children often are attached to adults
- ❖ Children's feelings get hurt easily. There are mood swings, and children often don't know how to deal with failure.
- ❖ There are fewer angry outbursts and more ability to endure frustration while accepting delays in getting things they "want."



*If I had my child to
raise over again*

*If I had my child to raise over again,
I'd finger paint more, and point the finger less.
I'd do less correcting, and more connecting.
I'd take my eyes off my watch, and watch
more with my eyes.*

*I would care to know less, and know to care
more.*

*I'd take more hikes and fly more kites.
I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.
I would run through more fields, and gaze at
more stars.*

*I'd do more hugging, and less tugging.
I would be firm less often, and affirm much
more.*

*I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.
I'd teach less about the love of power,
And more about the power of love.*

— Diane Loomans

Practical Recommendations

Physical Development

- ❖ Childhood obesity is increasingly becoming common in children aged 6 to 11, as such children's diet need to be monitored. Junk foods should be avoided and they should eat foods rich in protein, minerals and vitamins.
- ❖ It is important to help children feel proud of who they are and what they can do. Avoid stereotyping girls into particular activities and boys into others. Let both genders choose from a range of activities.
- ❖ Encourage children to balance their activities between high energy and quiet activity. Children release tension through play. Children may be extremely active when tired. Encourage quiet reading, painting, puzzles, or board games before bedtime.
- ❖ Regular dental and physical check-ups are an important part of monitoring a child's growth and development. This allows parents to screen for potential problems. If a child accidentally loses a permanent tooth, finding the tooth and taking it and the child to the dentist may save the permanent tooth.



Practical Recommendations

Socio-emotional development

- ❖ Encourage non-competitive games, particularly toward the beginning of middle childhood, and help children set individual goals.
- ❖ Give children lots of positive attention and let them help define the rules.
- ❖ Talk about self-control and making good decisions. Talk about why it is important to be patient, share, and respect others' rights. Adults must pick battles carefully so there is limited nagging and maximized respect while children build confidence in their ability to make decisions.
- ❖ Teach them to learn from criticism. Ask “how could you do that differently next time?”
- ❖ Always be alert to the feelings associated with what children tell you.
- ❖ Give children positive feedback for successes.

Practical Recommendations

Cognitive development

Rapid mental growth creates many of the positive as well as negative interactions between children and adults during this stage. Some of the ways adults can help children continue to develop their thinking skills are:

- ❖ Adults can ask “what if...” or “how could we solve this” questions to help children develop problem solving skills.
- ❖ Reading signs, making lists, and counting prices are all exercises to practise sequencing skills.
- ❖ Asking children if you can help them think about ways to talk with other children can provide limited guidance as they negotiate social relationships.
- ❖ Picking focused times to talk — without distractions — allows adults and children to converse and listen.

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