

## Life-Span Development Overview

Stage of Life	Physical Development	Cognitive Development	Socioemotional Development
<b>Beginnings</b>	Prenatal stage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Germinal period</li> <li>• Embryonic period</li> <li>• Fetal period</li> </ul>	Foundational development for life-long learning. Highly susceptible to complications from drug use as well as environmental factors	Fetus is able to detect stress in the mother and may react negatively if environment is chaotic.
<b>Infancy</b>	Birth to 2 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gross motor skills (such as sitting and walking w/support)</li> <li>• Fine motor skills (ability to reach and grasp)</li> </ul> From birth to 1 year of age, infants triple their weight and increase their length by 50%. Newborns sleep 16-17 hours a day. By 4 months they should have more of an adult sleep pattern.	Piaget's "sensorimotor" stage = able to organize and coordinate sensations w/physical movement. Beginnings of language acquisition (once the first word is spoken, vocabulary rapidly increases). Crying is the method of communication for infants before they develop language.	The infant's most important experiences involve the process of attachment. <b>Attachment</b> is a close emotional bond between the infant and the caregiver. Individual temperaments begin to show at this stage. <b>Temperament</b> is an individual's behavioral style and characteristic way of responding. Emotions present at this stage = social smile (4-6 weeks), surprise (3-4 months), shame (6-8 months). Sense of self develops in the second year of life.
<b>Early Childhood</b>	Ages 2 through 6 The average child grows 2 ½ inches and gains 5-7 pounds per year. Two contributors to height differences are ethnic origin and nutrition. Nutrition importance = eating habits are ingrained at this stage.	Hand-preference begins to show. Piaget's "preoperational" stage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable concepts formed</li> <li>• Mental reasoning emerges</li> <li>• Egocentrism begins, then weakens</li> <li>• Magical beliefs constructed</li> </ul> Two limitations on pre-schooler's thoughts are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attention</li> <li>• Memory</li> </ul> Memory increases during early childhood. Language acquisition includes the use of lengthy and complex sentences.	Researchers have found that 3 year-olds have the highest activity level of any age in the entire human lifespan. Parenting style affects development. Peer group provides a source for information and comparison about the world outside their home. TV/video game violence can induce aggressive or antisocial behavior. Also limits creativity. Gender identity forms. Preference for being with same-gender peers. Moral behavior is influenced extensively by the situation.

Information adapted from *Life Span Development*

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Middle & Late Childhood	<p>Elementary school years (about ages 7 – 12). The average child grows 2-3 inches per year until age 11, gains 5-7 lbs per year, and doubles their strength.</p> <p>Motor skills become smoother and more coordinated.</p> <p>Physical activity is essential!!!</p>	<p>Piaget's "concrete operational thought" stage involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental actions (think before do)</li> <li>• Classify &amp; divide into subsets</li> <li>• Consider interrelationship of items</li> </ul> <p>Attention of most children improves dramatically.</p> <p>Long-term memory increases.</p> <p>Language is more analytical and incorporates rules for grammar.</p>	<p>Less time with parents, and more time w/peers. Average peer interaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age 2 ≈ 10% of time</li> <li>• Age 4 ≈ 20% of time</li> <li>• Age 7-11 ≈ 40% of time</li> </ul> <p>Some control transferred from parent to child (i.e., chores, school work).</p> <p>Parents should serve as "guides" to strengthen the child's ability to monitor himself.</p> <p>Friendships serve 6 functions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. companionship</li> <li>2. stimulation</li> <li>3. physical support</li> <li>4. ego support</li> <li>5. social comparison</li> <li>6. intimacy/affection</li> </ol>
Adolescence	<p>Middle and high school years (about ages 13-17).</p> <p>Puberty begins (about 10 ½ for girls and 12 ½ for boys) = rapid skeletal and sexual maturation in both genders.</p> <p>Increased interest in body image.</p> <p>Potential Hazards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eating disorders</li> <li>• Obesity</li> </ul>	<p>Piaget's "formal operational thought" stage. More abstract, logical , and idealistic. Able to perform hypothetical-deductive reasoning.</p> <p>Increased decision making abilities.</p> <p>There is a need for more opportunity to practice decision making.</p> <p>Pre-frontal cortex is developing (better self-organization and monitoring).</p> <p><b>At-Risk</b> youth engage in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delinquency</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> <li>• Risky sexual behaviors (possible adolescent pregnancy)</li> <li>• School-related problems</li> </ul> <p>(<b>"High Risk"</b> = 2 or more problem behaviors, and <b>"Very High Risk"</b> = all behaviors)</p>	<p>Identity development. Push for autonomy = independence.</p> <p>Parent/youth conflict increases.</p> <p>Friendships are more important, and peer acceptance is sought.</p> <p>Secure attachment and connectedness to parents promotes competent peer relations. Positive relationships with parents and others reduce drug use.</p> <p><b>When to get professional help:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs of depression, eating disorder, drug addiction, repeated delinquent acts, or serious school-related problems.</li> <li>• Socially withdrawn</li> <li>• Frequent truancy, chronic running away, or repeated/hostile opposition to authority.</li> </ul>

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<b>Early Adulthood</b>	(transition period – after high school) Usually lasts 2 – 8 years, but can last more than a decade. Marked by the acceptance of a permanent, full-time job. Physical performance peaks between ages 19 and 26. Health also peaks during these years. Potential Hazard = bad health habits formed here.	Five Cognitive Stages: 1. acquisitive 2. achieving 3. responsibility 4. executive 5. reintegrative Strong logical thinking as well as pragmatic adaptation to reality. Systemic approach to problem solving. Focus centers mainly on career development and advancement.	Their friends are much more like them than unlike them. Self-establishment = looking for love and beginning a family. Four forms of love: 1. altruism 2. friendship 3. romantic/passionate 4. affectionate/companionate
<b>Middle Adulthood</b>	Begins in the early 30's and lasts through the 60's. Marked by declining physical skills (seeing & hearing decline, and people often become shorter) and increasing responsibilities (work satisfaction increases). Seven of the 10 leading causes of death in the USA are associated with the <b><i>absence</i></b> of healthy behaviors	"Generativity" stage = making plans for what to do and the legacy you plan to leave. Also, may involve mentoring others. Poor health and negative attitudes are related to memory decline.	A critical time to enjoy leisure activities. Sibling relationships tend to reconnect and become stable. When religion is present, it is an important role in the individual's life.
<b>Late Adulthood</b>	Begins in the 60's and extends to approximately 120 years of age. • The young old (65 – 74) • The old old (age 75+) Health problems increase. Lung capacity drops 40% between the age of 20 and 80 without any disease factors.	Intellectual decline is due in part to the speed of processing of information vs. actual loss of intellect. Education, work, and health all influence cognitive abilities.	Interest in religion often increases during this age. Higher risk of isolation and loneliness. Often individuals will "look back" and evaluate their lives.