



Child Development Characteristics

Directions

Cut out and mix up the boxes below and distribute one set to each group. Task each group with sorting the characteristics by age group.

- Experience slow, steady physical growth
- Learn best if physically active
- Are learning to use their bodies and master physical skills; skills are not yet polished

- More interested in the process than the outcome
- Are able to sort things/ideas into categories
- Concrete thinkers that see issues as black or white

- More interested in self than others
- Starting to play in mixed sex groups and may have several “best friends”
- Depend heavily on adults and parent guidance

- Are motivated and excited to try new things
- Are naturally curious and enjoy exploration
- Sensitive to criticism and does not “lose” well

- Still experiencing slow and steady growth
- Puberty may be starting for some early maturing girls
- High amount of energy and are not comfortable sitting for long periods of time

- Are beginning to think more logically but still have limited decision-making ability
- Need adult guidance to stay on task and think critically
- Are very curious, constantly asking “why?”





Child Development Characteristics

- Like group activities, group membership is important
- Are more comfortable same-sex peers
- Show independence by disobedience and rebelliousness

- Admire and imitate older males and females as they learn more about themselves
- Do not like being compared to others
- Need recognition and praise for doing good work

- Some youth may experience growth spurts with occur across a wide range of areas (hands and feet may grow faster than arms and legs)
- Girls mature before boys
- May be self-conscious about body image due to rapid physical changes

- Starting to move from concrete thinking to understanding abstract concepts and ideas
- Can set short-term goals, brainstorm options and think hypothetically
- Can imagine consequences
- Tend to reject adult ready-made solutions in favor of their own

- Prefer spending time with peers rather than parents
- Are increasingly more influenced by peers, role models and public figures
- Beginning to feel more comfortable with members of the opposite sex
- Start to question authority

- Want to be part of something important
- Experience challenges to their self-concept
- Compare themselves with others
- Emotions can swing back and forth rapidly



Child Development Characteristics

- Girls' growth is complete while boys are still growing
- Very concerned with physical appearance
- Are accepting physical changes and recognizing physical abilities

- Begin to think of the future and make realistic plans
- Reach high levels of abstract thinking and problem solving
- Strong need to set own goals (not set by others)
- Can initiate and carry out tasks without supervision

- Have high social needs and desires
- Wants to belong to the group but also wants to be recognized as a unique individual
- Developing a growing concern for the well-being of others

- Want and need a strong voice in planning own programs
- Need freedom from parental control in making decisions
- Want adult leadership roles