

<b>IMPORTANT CHILD DEVELOPMENT MARKERS</b>		
<b>PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN 2-6</b>		
<b>LEARNING DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>THE ROLE OF THE ADULT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attention span is about 20-25 minutes</li> <li>• Highly curious, asks lots of questions about basic issues such as “why is the sky blue?”</li> <li>• Learning anywhere from 300 to 2500 new words during this time period.</li> <li>• Can usually talk in 6 or 8 word sentences (increases throughout this time period).</li> <li>• Learning basic self care tasks such as shoe tying, toileting and dressing. Usually full bladder control achieved by age 6 (some nocturnal enuresis may remain).</li> <li>• Developing basic academic skills such as colors, days of the week, letters, and categories. Also basic fine motor and gross motor skills.</li> <li>• Understands same and different, past, present and future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most important attachments are with parents and siblings, then extended family or other caregivers such as nannies or daycare providers.</li> <li>• Dependent upon close adults for nurturing and for basic self care tasks. Often insecure when away from primary caregivers.</li> <li>• Learning how to cooperate and playing alongside peers and siblings.</li> <li>• Learning basic social skills such as politeness and following directions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide structure and predictability.</li> <li>• Model and excitement for new experiences.</li> <li>• Develop trusting and nurturing relationship.</li> <li>• Model behavior and teach self care skills.</li> <li>• Teach the child about the world around him.</li> <li>• Remember, they repeat everything you say!</li> <li>• Learn how the child communicates and help interpret what he is saying and what others are saying (interpreter).</li> <li>• Teach independence skills.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for exploration and learning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>PREFERRED ACTIVITIES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pretend play</li> <li>• Exploratory play (playing with a variety of materials like mud and paint, fiddling with toys and trying to figure out how they work)</li> <li>• Simple games and social routines help with learning: nursery rhymes, songs, pat-a-cake and other lap games</li> <li>• Books are usually a fascination; child likes to have them reread over and over</li> <li>• Repetition is a feature in the play of most children this age. For example, if you are doing a small project such as making paper flowers, they will make a simple one quickly and then want to make another and then another</li> </ul>	
<p><b>HELPFUL STRATEGIES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use simple language.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities to explore.</li> <li>• Teach social skills over and over.</li> <li>• Remind about rules often.</li> <li>• Be prepared for short attention spans!</li> <li>• Approach the child slowly, let parent introduce you, allow parents to participate in the activity if the child.</li> <li>• Emphasize safety in activities.</li> </ul>	

<b>SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN (AGES 7-12)</b>		
<b>LEARNING DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>THE ROLE OF THE ADULT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intelligence and abilities grow very quickly.</li> <li>• Has mastered basic fine and gross motor skills as well as most self-care skills (dressing, toileting) .</li> <li>• Can do a lot of things well...likes to practice and gain mastery of things.</li> <li>• Attention span increases, can usually sit through a 30 or 45 minute lesson.</li> <li>• Thinking is more advanced and logical. Child understands cause and effect and can make judgments about right/wrong, correct/incorrect, true/false, fact/opinion.</li> <li>• However, reasoning is still concrete.</li> <li>• Very concerned about rules, rules are rigidly applied.</li> <li>• Causality is concrete—there has to be a reason for why things happen.</li> <li>• Has opinions and asserts them often and strongly.</li> <li>• As the child approaches adolescents, much less concerned about what others think.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child is building an identify separate from parents.</li> <li>• Child starts to look more to peers for learning.</li> <li>• Child is able to play cooperatively with peers; there is less dependence upon adult support for play and work.</li> <li>• Child has more defined interests, temperament, and self image; usually sees self in relation to a special interest (such as “I’m a basketball player” or “I’m a dancer.”)</li> <li>• Child clearly understands the differences between good and bad, fair and unfair.</li> <li>• Able to bargain and compromise.</li> <li>• Can play more complex games.</li> <li>• Needs to feel accepted by peers and part of a social group. Likes to have a “best friend.”</li> <li>• Focus is mainly on same-sex friends and playmates.</li> <li>• More sophisticated understanding of sex differences. Usually prefers gender-assigned activities, colors, etc.</li> <li>• Children in the late school age years are transitioning to adolescence may develop more sophisticated interests and may start an interest in the opposite sex.</li> <li>• Children are competitive and want to stand out above the crowd.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults help child define boundaries and limits during this time of exploration and increased independence.</li> <li>• Parents are still very important, but children are also being influenced by peers, teachers, coaches, clergy, etc.</li> <li>• Adult helps child feel important through involvement in activities (watching games, going to recitals, etc.)</li> <li>• Child is able to be away from caregiver more often and for longer periods of time, but still need the security parents provide.</li> <li>• Tweens may begin to question adult authority and treat adults a bit more disrespectfully (they no longer believe that adults are all-knowing and all powerful in their lives).</li> </ul>
<b>PREFERRED ACTIVITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any organized activity in areas of interest and competence.</li> <li>• Likes to be good at things, open to instruction</li> <li>• Imaginative and creative—will enjoy skits, make believe activities</li> <li>• Electronic entertainment</li> <li>• Enjoys competition</li> </ul>	
<b>HELPFUL STRATEGIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help children relate to peer group as much as possible.</li> <li>• Increase challenge and complexity of activities as child ages.</li> <li>• State expectations ahead of time.</li> <li>• Explain the reason for various decisions.</li> <li>• Provide positive reinforcement and provide opportunities to increase self esteem.</li> <li>• Express interest in things the child is interested in.</li> <li>• Make sure the child understand what you are saying by having him repeat or rephrase what you have said.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities to try new things.</li> <li>• Tailor activities to strengths and abilities</li> </ul>	

<b>ADOLESCENTS (13-18)</b>		
<b>LEARNING DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>THE ROLE OF THE ADULT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellect is built primarily from reading, discussion and experimentation.</li> <li>• Thinking is more abstract...the teen can make more complex references and draw conclusions more accurately.</li> <li>• The teen clearly understands the differences between fact and opinion.</li> <li>• Teens may have more intellectual interests.</li> <li>• Moral reasoning is more sophisticated. The teen understands that life has inequities, and that there is relative justice (i.e., all rules to not apply to all people).</li> <li>• Teen begins to understand the he can affect his own outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The increase in critical thinking allows the teen to develop values. Values are highly influenced by peers.</li> <li>• Teens are beginning to develop future goals and plan for the future</li> <li>• Hormonal fluctuations bring about an interest in the opposite sex and physical experimentation.</li> <li>• In early adolescence, being accepted into the peer group and being a leader in that peer group is important. There is an emphasis on blending and fitting in.</li> <li>• In later adolescence, teens group more according to interests, personality, temperament and beliefs. The older teen wants to be accepted by that interest or identity group. Being popular or accepted is not as much of a focus.</li> <li>• Teens are highly susceptible to peer pressure, especially for high risk behaviors.</li> <li>• Interests may change in adolescence. Younger interests may be abandoned in favor of new interests.</li> <li>• Hormonal fluctuation also results in moodiness and rapidly changing emotions. Sometimes the teen does not feel in control of emotions and reactions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teens need as much if not more guidance than they did as children, because they are making more decisions independently.</li> <li>• Challenging and questioning adults is an important mechanism for the development of autonomy.</li> <li>• Teens want to be independent, but also continue to need affection, attention and praise.</li> <li>• Adults should support independent decision making by helping the teen evaluate values and weigh consequences.</li> <li>• Adults need to listen to the teen and not jump to conclusions about what they are saying.</li> <li>• Teens respect adults who respect their opinions and who listen.</li> <li>• Lighten up on the tone of structure but not on structure itself.</li> </ul>
<b>PREFERRED ACTIVITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hanging out with friends</li> <li>• Talking about topics of mutual interest (the opposite sex, sports, clothing)</li> <li>• Listening to music, playing complex video games</li> <li>• Further honing and developing specialized skills</li> <li>• Spending time on appearance</li> <li>• Informal activities (as opposed to highly structured activities)</li> </ul>	
<b>HELPFUL STRATEGIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be less structured with teens and more flexible about where interactions will go.</li> <li>• The teen will respond to activities better when there is a relationship developed. Focused listening and a focused interest in the teen are necessary before a successful interaction.</li> <li>• Don't respond quickly to disrespectful comments or statements, but do respond at some point.</li> <li>• Be yourself (and stay the adult), but loosen the structure you provide and listen to what interests the teen.</li> <li>• Don't take rejection personally!</li> <li>• Camp activities should be fun but challenging, with plenty of opportunity for independent decision making.</li> <li>• Listen but don't judge or evaluate.</li> </ul>	

<b>YOUNG ADULTS (18-24)</b>		
<b>LEARNING DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>THE ROLE OF THE ADULT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued increase in complexity of thinking.</li> <li>• Capable of problem-solving, critical and hypothetical thinking and reasoning.</li> <li>• Increased cognitive flexibility</li> <li>• Moral reasoning becomes more sophisticated.</li> <li>• Young adult develops code of personal ethics based largely on past experience.</li> <li>• Understands behavior and responsibility in the context moving beyond self to the greater common good.</li> <li>• Learning to care for self with basic life skills: balancing checkbook, managing time, planning for future events.</li> <li>• Developing habits with regard to work performance (coming to work on time, doing as much or more than is expected).</li> <li>• Completing previous developmental learning tasks.</li> <li>• Young adults begin to realize that they shape their own environment, instead of the environment shaping them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The young adult, having made more separation from family, now looks toward forming intimate relationships outside of the family.</li> <li>• Relationships from adolescence might continue.</li> <li>• New relationships from learning and work environments.</li> <li>• Transition to intimate relationships critical for self-esteem and emotional development.</li> <li>• Personal identity formed largely through social connections, interests and values.</li> <li>• Some social values continue from family of origin, some are newly adopted.</li> <li>• Continued experimentation.</li> <li>• Learning social responsibility.</li> <li>• Continued development of social, religious and moral values.</li> <li>• A lot of behavior is biologically and hormonally driven.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist the young adult in conducting personal affairs independently –life skills.</li> <li>• Guide and support professional goals and studies.</li> <li>• The young adult continues to need “touchstones” at home and in their communities for support.</li> <li>• Parental approval is important during this stage.</li> <li>• Guidance in conducting intimate relationships.</li> <li>• Help in determining life goals.</li> </ul>
<b>PREFERRED ACTIVITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established hobbies in areas of interest</li> <li>• Socializing—more one-on-one</li> <li>• Travel, exploration</li> </ul>	
<b>HELPFUL STRATEGIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure expectations are clearly laid out.</li> <li>• Carefully gauge how much responsibility the person is ready for.</li> <li>• Remember, the young adult is still completing the tasks of adolescence, some of which continues to involve high risk behavior.</li> <li>• Give clear and frequent feedback about performance.</li> </ul>	