



school age development

Six to Eight Years*

Physical Development

- Skilled at using scissors and small tools
- Shows development of permanent teeth
- Enjoys testing muscle strength and skills
- Has good sense of balance
- Can tie shoelaces
- Enjoys copying designs and shapes, letters and numbers
- May have gawky awkward appearance from long arms and legs

Mental Development

- May reverse printed letters (b/d)
- Enjoys planning and building
- Doubles speaking and listening vocabularies
- May show a stronger interest in reading
- Increases problem-solving ability
- Has longer attention span
- Enjoys creating elaborate collections
- Shows ability to learn difference between left and right
- Can begin to understand time and the days of the week

Social and Emotional Development

- Being with friends becomes increasingly important
- Shows interest in rules and rituals
- Wants to play more with similar friends – girls with girls, boys with boys
- May have a “best friend” and “enemy”
- Shows strong desire to perform well, do things right
- Begins to see things from another child’s point of view, but still very self-centered
- Finds criticism or failure difficult to handle

- Views things as black and white, right or wrong, wonderful or terrible, with very little middle ground
- Seeks a sense of security in groups, organized play, and clubs
- Generally enjoys caring for and playing with younger children
- May become upset when behavior or schoolwork is ignored.

Toy List

Arts and crafts materials	Musical instruments
Sports equipment	Camping equipment
Construction sets	Electric trains
Bicycles (use helmets)	Models
Skateboard (use helmets)	Board games

Books for Children

- *A Chair for My Mother*, Vera Williams
- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No good, Very Bad Day*, Judith Viorst
- *Anna Banana and Me*, Lenore Blegvard
- *The Garden of Abdul Gasazi*, Chris Van Allsburg
- *Little House in the Big Woods*, Laura Ingalls Wilder
- *Ramona*, Beverly Cleary
- *Everybody Needs a Rock*, Byrd Baylor

Resources for Parents

- *How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk*, Adele Faber and Elizabeth Mazlish
- *Caring for Your School-age Child: Ages 5 to 12*, American Academy of Pediatrics
- Parent Center – www.parentcenter.com
- Family Education – www.familyeducation.com
- Parent Stages – www.parentstages.com
- Michigan Dept. of Education – www.michigan.gov/mde

*Reprinted with permission from National Network for Child Care-NNCC. Oesterreich, L. (1995). Ages & stages-six through eight-year-olds. In L. Oesterreich, B. Holt, & S. Karas, *Iowa family child care handbook* [Pm 1541] (pp. 211-212). Ames, IA: Iowa State University Extension.

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