

# School Age

**School Age starts with the child's entry into formal education and ends with the onset of puberty – ages 6 to 11**

Five accomplishments occur during the school age period:

Growth remains slow and steady

Children move away from the family toward peer relationships

Children become less self-centered and more goal-directed

Deciduous teeth are lost, and the permanent teeth appear

Sexual tranquility replaces sexual curiosity and preoccupation

# Height and weight

- Average growth rate for the child during this period is 2 to 3 in per year
- Weight increases on average 4.5 to 6.5 lb per year

# Bone and Muscle Development

- Muscle mass and muscle strength increase
- Children experience “growing pains” mostly at night

# Sensory Development

- Visual maturity is usually achieved by 6 or 7 years of age

# Dentition

- Loss of deciduous teeth and the appearance of permanent teeth
- Tooth fairy game
- Visit the dentist every 6 months
- Regular toothbrushing after meals and before bedtime

# Gastrointestinal and Nervous Systems

- Fewer digestive intolerances
- Needs to eat less often
- Nervous system continues to mature as evidenced by the child's improved motor skills and expanded cognitive processes



# Development of the Immune System

- Maturing of the immune system
- When children begin school they have an increased incidence of upper respiratory tract infections

# Vital Signs

- Average of 90 beats per minute
- BP 100/60 mm Hg
- Average respiratory rate is 20 breaths per minute

# Motor Development

- Can run faster, farther, and for longer periods
- Boys are stronger and better at running, jumping and throwing and have greater endurance than girls

# Motor Development

- Girls are better at balance and coordination than boys
- Girls perfect their fine motor skills

# Motor Development

- A 6 year old child may appear grown up and independent they are easily frustrated and fatigued – it is not uncommon for them to cry and become very irritable and infantile
- They show their independence with swimming, skating, and bicycle riding

# Motor Development

- Competence in performing necessary self-care activities such as bathing, dressing, and feeding themselves
- School age children learn to write, draw, dance and develop many other creative talents
- Fearlessness may put them at greater risk for injury
- Children 9 or 10 years old can actively participate in team sports

# Sexual Development

- Sexual curiosity continues during this stage
- Freud describes this period as latency (children are more involved with cognitive skills and learning than sexual concerns)

# Psychosocial Development

Erikson viewed the primary task for this stage of development as industry

Children 6 or 7 years old are full of energy and anxious to try new skills but do not have the patience or attention span to see things to completion



# Psychosocial Development

Children need immediate gratification for their work efforts

Nine year olds can initiate a task and are motivated to see the task to completion

By age 11 most children are capable of working on more complex projects and can accept delayed rewards

# Psychosocial Development

Friendships are very important and are the cornerstone of the school-age child's social world

Privacy becomes very important to children of this age group

Valuables are off limits

They may spend time worrying about divorce illness and dying

There may be conflicts over personal hygiene and other home care activities

# Discipline

- Teaches boundaries and sets limits on their behavior
- Proper amount of discipline is crucial
- Too much – acting out
- Too little – may lead to insecurity and doubt

# Special Psychosocial Concerns

- Television violence
- “Latchkey” children

# Cognitive Development

- Conservation
- Causation
- Seriation
- Increased attention span and less restless

# Cognitive Development

- Able to master reading, math and science
- Bully v victim
- School phobia
- Grades 1-4 follow routines and concentrate on specific tasks

# Cognitive Development

- 8 and 9 year olds ready to take responsibility for learning
- Grades 5-8 learning a more independent task
- Early school age homework fun, later something to avoid

# Moral Development

- Kolberg – 6 year old at preconventional level, egocentric where they react to situations to be rewarded or to avoid punishment
- Later at conventional level, make decisions based on what family and society expect of them



# Moral Development

- School age children lie to improve self-esteem and status
- 11 yr old has need to be trusted
- Moral reasoning develops gradually with overlapping of stages

# Communication

- Language improves
- School emphasis on building vocabulary, proper grammar, pronunciation, and sentence structure
- Their sentences describe their feelings, thoughts and points of view
- The use of swear words and slang from peer influence

# Nutrition

- Calcium important to build dense bones
- Need 2-3 servings of meat, 2-3 cups of milk, 4-5 servings of vegetables and breads and cereals per day
- Maintain weight – avoid high cholesterol
- Low saturated fats
- Breakfast most important

# Sleep and Rest

- 6 yr old – 12 hours
- 11 yr old 10 hrs
- May benefit from short afternoon nap

# Play

- Permits the use of cooperation and compromise
- 9-11 yr olds very competitive and active
- Team play
- Some children prefer sedentary activities

# Safety

- Motor vehicle accidents
- Wear helmets and protective gear

# School Violence

- Zero tolerance policies
- Parents and teachers must recognize behaviors that lead to violence

# Health Promotion

- Increase in upper respiratory tract infections
- Continue to need supervision in hygiene and daily care
- Eye and ear tests should be completed
- Screen for scoliosis
- Urine and blood tests taken
- BP screening
- Monitor weight, height and growth



# Substance Abuse

- Easy prey through peer pressure
- Parents need to model behavior and offer information and guidance