



DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE CHARACTERISTICS

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

Age 6 through age 12

Social interactions are important. Interest in clubs and other social groups

Emotional swings. Fragile emotional stage for self-esteem and self-confidence

Rebellious. Wants to be independent; tests limits of self and parents; "I'm not a baby anymore."

Developing ability to reason.
Gradual movement from concrete learner to abstract thinker

Still heavy emphasis on experiential learning.

Movement toward mental independence.
Gradually develops this skill by about 9 years old

Shifting from egocentric to altruistic. Becomes focused on others and cultures outside their own

Becoming aware of social justice and injustice. Becomes engaged in moral questions of right and wrong and wants to know moral and ethical reasons for everything

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE NEEDS

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

Age 6 through age 12

**Great things happen
when adults consider what
children need to grow
and develop!**

NEEDS FROM PARENTS

- Exercise your liberty to choose the most effective learning environment for your children.
- Seek the continuum of information about human development as your child grows and develops.
- Know where to access resources and support when your child's development takes twists and turns.
- Intentionally guide children and young adults toward a life of independence and contribution.
- Provide opportunities to explore extracurricular interests such as sports, the arts and age-appropriate social groups.
- Give them opportunities and encouragement to connect with nature on a regular basis.
- Act as role models for peaceful resolution of conflicts and guides in development of moral judgment and empathy.
- Provide firm, consistent and fair behavior guidelines and discipline.
- Provide appropriate amounts of praise for your child's efforts and abilities.
- Allow child to explore and learn from mistakes experienced through independent efforts and abilities.

NEEDS FROM EDUCATORS

- Demonstrate an understanding of human development from ages 6 through 12 and its application to learning.
- Create a school environment based on children's developmental needs and demonstrate a commitment to considering those needs when proposing any actions.
- Create a school environment that views parents and students as partners and thrives on community input.
- Provide learning environments that encourage active, hands-on, experiential learning.
- Provide learning experiences in the arts.
- Provide learning environments based on freedom of movement instead of confinement.
- Provide opportunities for peer teaching and collaborative learning.
- Provide opportunities to connect with and learn in nature.
- Recognize that 9-12 year olds are developmentally ready for computer-aided research, with guidance in critical thinking.
- Provide opportunities to build a self-image as a contributor to their school community.
- Provide guidance in your school culture for peaceful resolution of conflicts, development of moral judgment and empathy.
- Provide opportunities for in-depth, self-chosen study within their interests and timeline (6-9 year olds with guidance).
- Provide opportunities for them to help younger children and be mentored by older children.
- Let them learn from mistakes experienced through their independent efforts and abilities.

NEEDS FROM THE COMMUNITY

- Consider your community to be a classroom where children and young people can gain real experiences and have meaningful participation.
- Provide opportunities for young people to participate in community events where they can use their youth as a gift.
- Provide opportunities for young people to build a self-image as a contributor to their community.
- Provide fun, educational and cultural opportunities for parents and their children.
- For organizations that interact with young children (YMCAs, youth sports, etc.), understand what children need to thrive at this age and employ adults who can be good role models for character development, self-esteem and self-confidence.



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