

Developmental Expectations

1st – 2nd Grades

This stage of development deals with the internalization of beliefs, roles, both personal and social with the understanding of personal limits. This includes understanding the need for rules, the freedom that comes from having appropriate rules, and the relevancy of rules. Examining the values on which our rules are based is important. Another major task of this age group is acquiring many kinds of skills.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A FIRST GRADER

- Loving and defiant
- Whatever this age does he does the opposite just as readily
- Changing rapidly from kindergarten age
- Growing more mature, independent, daring, adventurous
- Because of the ambivalence this child feels, it is difficult for them to make choices. They want it all
- Stubborn
- He wants to be first and best
- Relationship with mother gives him the greatest pleasure and the greatest pain. He adores mother and yet will take his frustration out with mother
- Emotionally sensitive
- Enthusiastic, warm and loving

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SECOND GRADER

- Withdrawn
- More silent and less giving in the company of others
- May see others as “mean”, “hateful”, “unfriendly” and “always picking on me”
- Come home with many tales of maltreatment and unfairness at school
- They are worriers
- Psychosomatic symptoms are common
- Often sees himself as the one with “all the bad luck”
- Good listener and a good student. Wants to learn
- Self-awareness relates to his body
- Want to be perfect – hates making mistakes

These grades are part of a developmental phase that extends over a six-year period, beginning at age six. During these years the developmental tasks are the same and are repeated with different levels of intensity and mastery.

SOCIAL SKILLS

- Learning to listen in order to collect information.
- Developing the capacity to cooperate and compromise.
- Disagreeing with each other.
- Experiencing the consequences of breaking the rules.
- Learning appropriate behavior for peer relationships.

PERSONAL SKILLS

- Developing self-control.
- Taking responsibility for their needs and actions.
- Practice thinking before doing.
- To identify what they are feeling, what they need and how to get what they need.
- Competitive to test their abilities.
- Managing personal limitations and disappointments.

ACADEMIC SKILLS

- Reasoning.
- Higher order thinking skills.
- Application of information gathered.
- Continued repetition and rote learning of basic skills. Grammar, math facts, vocabulary, etc.
- Curious and creative.

EXPECTED BEHAVIORS

- UNPREDICTABLE
- MOOD SWINGS
- COMPETITIVE
- PRACTICE A TASK OVER AND OVER
- ARGUMENTATIVE – “I’M RIGHT”
- WILL HOOK YOU INTO A POWER STRUGGLE
- TAKES ON A CHALLENGE
- QUIET AND WITHDRAWN AT TIMES
- INITIATES FAMILY ACTIVITIES
- FEARFUL

MOST HELPFUL FOR THIS AGE GROUP

- PREDICTABILITY OF A ROUTINE.
- CLEAR RULES AND CONSEQUENCES.
- Consistent follow-through.

- Listen-Ask about their thinking and ideas-Offer some alternative ideas-Comment positively on the results.
- Encourage independent actions and responsibility. Homework, getting up and ready for school, picking up and keeping their room clean, organizing their things and school work.
- Work closely with the school on their system of organization and expectations.
- Redirect them in a positive way.
- Compliment their thinking and problem solving skills.
- Encourage social interaction and manners.
- Do not take their mood swings or surprising behavior personally. Instead listen to their feelings and then respond with facts....not your emotion.
- Parenting from a “matter of fact” position helps shorten the mood swings.
- Be understanding of the ambiguity, intensity of feelings and sometimes confusing view of a situation children at these stages experience.