

Brain Development And Young Children

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Special Time

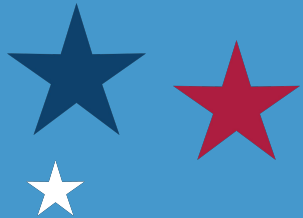


Therapeutic Play

Depositing emotional bucks in
the bank

Harder to do than you think

The reason why it works is all
linked to Brain Development



Brain Development

Vita Biddle



Brain Development

Making Sense of the World

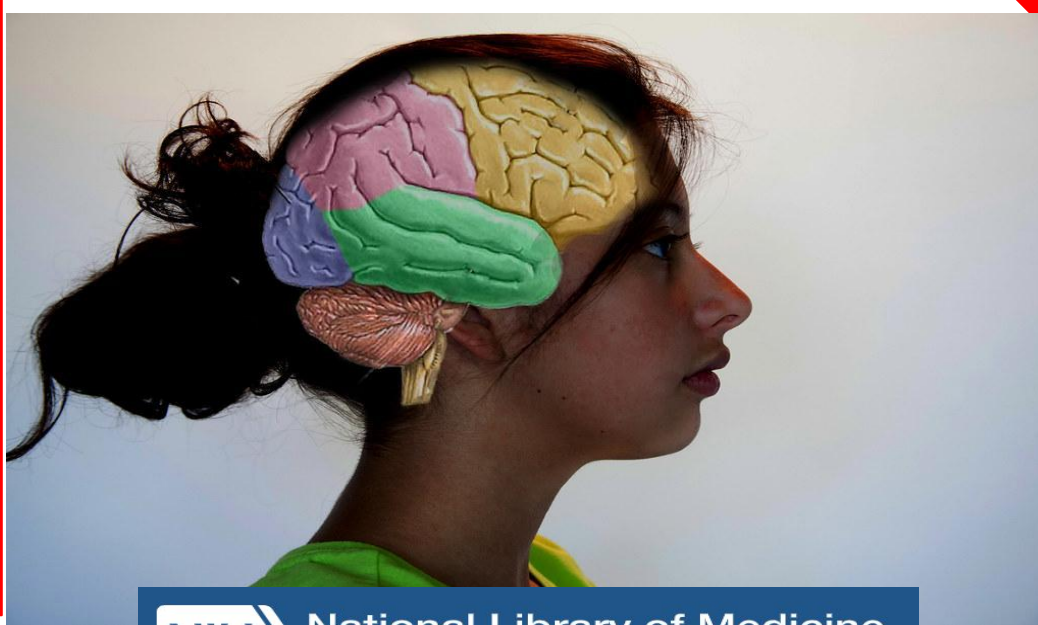
Executive Functioning Skills

Hearing/
Language
Processing

Vision

Movement/
Balance

Breathing



National Library of Medicine
National Center for Biotechnology Information



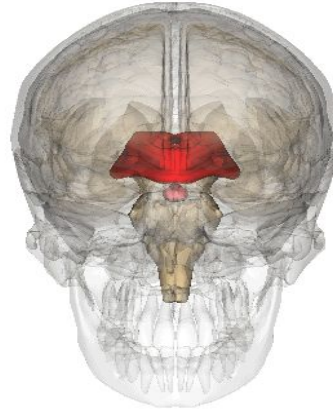


The Amygdala

Plays a role in shaping your child's emotional and social behavior.

Engaged during anxious behavior.

Help your child to use their words to express themselves (anger, frustration, sadness, etc.)



Encourage children to express complex emotions like pride, guilt. Give those emotions proper names.

Teach children that some activities elicit feelings of ambivalence.

Life with Little Kids

- Fun and Fast Paced!
- Noisy!!
- Messy!!!
- Lots of opportunity for teaching!
- Lots of opportunity for tantrums!
- Lots of opportunity for things to go wrong!
 - Limited verbal abilities
 - Limited expressive abilities
 - Limited cognitive abilities
 - Have needs and want them solved NOW





Development in Young Children

- Growth stages follow a reasonably predictable pattern
- Not everyone moves through the stages at the same rate
- Not everyone gets to the stages at the same time
- Growth is uneven





Development in Young Children

- **Lots of websites have lists of developmental expectations based on age**
 - Children's Hospital of Orange County <https://choc.org/primary-care/ages-stages/>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>
 - <https://childmind.org/guide/parents-guide-to-developmental-milestones/>
 - <https://kidshealth.org/>
- **The book Yardsticks is also great resource by Chip Wood**



Developmental Domains

- Social/Emotional
- Language/Communication
- Cognitive
- Movement/Physical Development





Development and Expectations

The following slides are not meant to be exhaustive. Just highlights from various resources



Three Year Olds: Social/Emotional

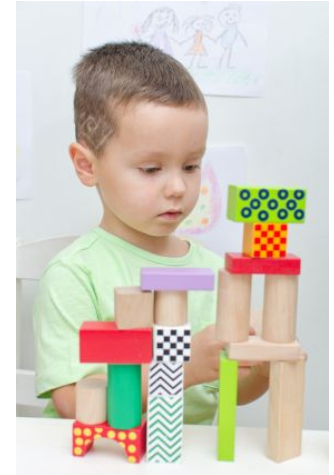
- Copies adults and friends
- Shows affection for friends
- Takes turns in games
- Shows concern for crying friend
- Understands idea of “mine”, “his”, and/or “hers”
- Shows wide range of emotions
- Separates easily from mom and dad
- May get upset with changes in routine



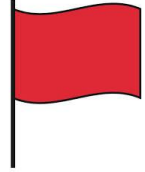
Three Year Olds: Cognitive



- Can work toys with buttons, levers, and moving parts
- Plays make believe with dolls, animals, and people
- Does puzzles with 3 or 4 pieces
- Understands what “two” means
- Copies a circle with pencil or crayon
- Turns book pages one at a time
- Builds towers of more than 6 blocks
- **Asks “why” constantly**
- Counts up to four objects by 4 years old
- Says full name and age



Delays to Watch For at Three Years



- Falls down often or has trouble with stairs
- Drools or has very unclear speech
- Can't work simple toys such as peg boards, simple puzzles, turning handles
- Doesn't speak in even simple sentences
- Doesn't understand simple instructions
- Doesn't play pretend or make-believe
- Doesn't want to play with other children or with toys
- Doesn't make eye contact, point, or use gestures
- Loses skills once had

Four Year Olds: Social/Emotional



- Enjoys doing new things
- Plays “mom” and “dad”
- Is more creative with make-believe play
- Would rather play with other children than by himself
- Cooperates with other children
- Often can't tell what's real and what's make believe
- Talks about what she likes and what she is interested in

Four Year Olds: Cognitive

- Names some colors and numbers
- Starts to understand time
- Remembers parts of a story
- Likes to tell stories
- Understands idea of “same” and “different”
- Draws a person with 2 to 4 body parts
- Uses scissors
- Tells you what he thinks is going to happen next in a book
- May put together four to five words into a sentence
- Will ask questions constantly

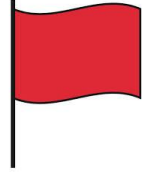


Four Year Olds: Cognitive

- Watch out for the content that is consumed by kiddos
- They may not always be able to distinguish between what is on the screen and what is ok for real life



Delays to Watch For at Four Years



- Can't jump in place
- Has trouble scribbling
- Shows no interest in interactive games or make-believe
- Ignores other children or doesn't respond to people outside the family
- Resists dressing, sleeping, and using the toilet
- Can't retell a favorite story
- Doesn't follow 3-part commands
- Doesn't understand "same" and "different"
- Doesn't use "me" and "you" correctly
- Speaks unclearly
- Loses skills he once had



Five Year Olds: Social/Emotional

- Wants to please friends
- Wants to be like friends
- More likely to agree with rules
- Likes to sing, dance, and act
- Shows concern and sympathy for others
- Is aware of gender
- Can tell what's real and what's make-believe
- Shows more independence
- Is sometimes demanding and sometimes very cooperative

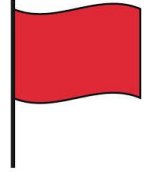


Five Year Olds: Cognitive

- Counts 10 or more things
- Can draw a person with at least 6 body parts
- Can print some letters or numbers
- Copies a triangle and other geometric shapes
- May put together six to eight words into a sentence
- May know four or more colors
- Knows about things used everyday, like money and food
- Curious about real facts about the world

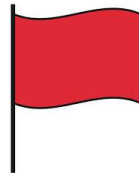


Delays to Watch For at Five Years



- Doesn't show a wide range of emotions
- Shows extreme behavior (fearful, aggressive, shy, or sad)
- Unusually withdrawn and not active
- Is easily distracted - has trouble focusing on one activity for more than 5 minutes
- Doesn't respond to people or only responds superficially
- Doesn't play a variety of games and activities
- Can't give first and last name

Delays, continued



- Doesn't talk about daily activities or experiences
- Doesn't draw pictures
- Can't brush teeth, wash and dry hands, or get undressed without help
- Loses skills he once had

Six Year Olds: Cognitive

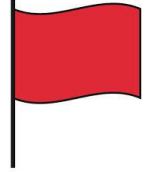


- Understand concept of numbers
- Know daytime and nighttime
- Can differentiate right and left hands
- Can copy complex shapes, such as a diamond
- Can understand commands with three separate instructions
- Can explain objects and their use
- Can repeat three numbers backwards
- Can read age-appropriate books and/or materials

Six Year Olds: Social/Emotional

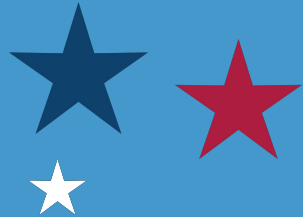
- Still have fears typical of the preschool years, such as fear of monsters and large animals.
- Want their parents to play with them.
 - Parents are their main source of companionship and affection.
 - A gradual shift begins, though.
 - They will start to fulfill more of these needs with friends and other people they admire, such as teachers.
- Play in ways that include a lot of fantasy and imagination.
- Often like to be the "big kid" and feel as if they are taking care of a younger child.
- Usually like to play with friends of the same gender.
- Start to understand the feelings of others, with at the encouragement of parents and other caregivers. But they are still most focused on themselves.
- Are developing a sense of humor. They may like simple jokes and funny books and rhymes.

Delays



- Slow to acquire age/grade appropriate academic skills
- Focus and Attention limitations
- Difficulty getting along with peers
- Not understanding consequences (e.g logical consequences)





What we see in the classroom

Neely Awtry
Kindergarten Aide



Understanding Young Learners

- Children's thinking differs from adults
- Assume they need guidance for new tasks and encouraging autonomy
 - Try new tasks
 - Experiencing failure safely
- Modeling is a powerful teaching tool
- Keep instructions simple and positive
- Recognize and praise good behavior



Understanding Young Learners (cont.)

- **Use open ended questions**
 - “I’m curious, tell me more about...”
 - “Tell me why you think that?” or “What makes you think that?”
- **Engaging in physical play (rough and tumble)**
 - Limited for obvious reasons at school
 - Develops social skills
 - Teaches social signaling
 - Builds understanding of consent and boundaries
 - Enhances non-verbal communication skills



Conflict Resolution

A  and a Wish...

It **BUG**s me when you...

I **WISH** you would...