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Welcome to the Parenting Hub!

December 2022

Ages & Stages



*Parent Connex™ is under the Beech Acres Parenting Center umbrella of programs.
Serving children and all the adults in their lives for over 170 years.*

Do you know what to expect and what's typical at each age?

Before you flip to the next slide take a moment to...

- Save this deck somewhere easy, so you can refer to it as your child grows.
- Reflect on your own thoughts/expectations around each stage.
- Put aside expectations for younger children based on their older siblings – each child has their own strengths and journey.
- Select a strength you'd like to use with your children today!

Set an intention to model one strength today with your children.



Appreciation of Beauty
I value and respect the unique qualities in everything I see around me.



Bravery
I take on challenges and speak up for what is right.



Creativity
I can think of lots of ways to solve problems and use my imagination.



Curiosity
I explore the world around me with an open mind and ask questions often.



Fairness
I believe everyone should have the same opportunities.



Forgiveness
I believe that everyone deserves a second chance. I can let things go.



Friendship
I get along well with others and my friends can count on me.



Gratitude
I appreciate the good things that happen to me.



Honesty
I am open and truthful.



Hope
I feel positive when I think about the future.



Humility
I let my accomplishments speak for themselves.



Humor
I like bringing a smile to others.



Kindness
I am helpful and nice to others.



Leadership
People value my opinion and look to me for direction.



Love
I value my close relationships with others.



Love of Learning
I get excited about discovering new things.



Perseverance
I work hard to achieve my goals and don't give up.



Perspective
I can see other people's points of view and offer good advice.



Judgment
I am open-minded and think through my decisions.



Prudence
I carefully and thoughtfully approach situations I encounter.



Self-Control
I can stop, wait and manage my emotions.



Sense of Meaning
I am discovering my purpose and place in the world.



Teamwork
I like being part of a team and doing my share.



Zest
I approach daily life with energy and excitement.

Take the complete survey at <https://www.viacharacter.org/>

**You may notice a few character strengths have different names as we made it more kid-friendly...
Social Intelligence = Friendship*

Growth & Development progress along 3 paths for a child.



Physical

How a child's body grows and acquires movement, including fine and gross motor skills. It offers them the abilities needed to explore and interact with the world.



Cognitive

How a child learns, remembers, solves problems, and thinks.



Emotional & Social

How a child develops the skills that allow them to interact with other people and to express and control their emotions.

Infancy: Birth to 1 year old



Physical
Learning to move and grasp objects



Cognitive
Exploring through touch, recognizing face and voices, learning through repetition.



Emotional & Social
Developing trust, responding to emotions.

You do not need expensive or fancy toy subscription services.
Give your baby mindful attention & trips to the library!



Foster growth and development by:

- allowing them to explore their environment
- talking to them throughout the day
- respond to their cries and cues
- read board books
- sing songs

Infancy: Birth to 1 year old



Physical

Learning to move and grasp objects.



Cognitive

Exploring through touch, recognizing face and voices, learning through repetition.



Emotional & Social

Developing trust, responding to emotions.

Physical

- Younger babies need tummy time. Older babies need to be able to crawl and move around in a safe space.

Cognitive

- Rhyming and repetitive sounds help with language development and literacy.
- Provide different textures for sensory exploration. Babies learn through their senses—putting things in their mouth is one way they explore. *Watch for choking hazards!*

Emotional & Social

- Hold and cuddle your child, make eye contact, talk to them, name their emotions.

Toddlerhood: 1 to 3 years old



Physical

Walking, throwing, pulling, kicking, carrying, using spoon and cup, graduates from diapers to potty.



Cognitive

imitating others, joining words, asking what and where questions, limited attention span.



Emotional & Social

Feeling pride in their newfound accomplishments, gets frustrated when his desires don't match his capabilities.

Toddlers learn through natural PLAY and exploration.

Physical

- Offer lots of opportunities to explore both inside and outside.

Emotional & Social

- Resist the urge to “fix it” when they are upset. Instead, name their emotions to help tame them and allow them to express they're upset. *“You’re so mad that puzzle piece doesn’t fit.”*

Cognitive

- Help problem solve when they are no longer upset. *“Hmm...I wonder what would happen if you turned it.”*
- Continue to read, sing songs, and talk to your child throughout the day.

Toddlerhood, cont.

Natural Strength Parenting™ Potty Training Tips:

Understand you and your child's unique **strengths** before making a plan. **Intentionally** address your own comfort level around accidents and mess. Your child will likely have a few accidents, so if this is stressful for you, use **mindfulness** to stay calm and remind yourself this is just temporary.

If you can be calm and confident, so will your child as your energy is contagious.

Intentionally create a strategy and pick a time to start. In picking a strategy, you know your child best, keep in mind there is no one perfect strategy. Weekends tend to be the best time to start potty training, if everyone is home. It is ideal if you can stay close to home for a few days.

Mindfully watch for your child's cues that they need to pee or poop. Your child will give you signals (hide in the corner to poop, pausing play to go, etc.).

Celebrate their strengths of bravery & love of learning. Communicate with your child about the plan and be excited about it. It's a fun new thing to wear underwear vs diapers. Remember, this is a big change in a child's life, so try to make it a positive transition.

Provide choices on where the child can go (big potty or little potty or which bathroom, etc.). Praise their success when they go, but do not overdo it. You can decide if you want to provide incentives, but they are not necessary as this is a normal developmental phase.

It is typical for children to be pee potty trained before poop. Be patient. Some children may still need a Pull-Up at nighttime even when they are potty trained during the day. **Research suggests to wait until at least age 6 to potty train at night due to brain/bladder development. Some children will potty train at nighttime immediately, but some may take time, and this is normal.**



Preschool: 3 to 5 years old



Physical

- Perfecting gross motor skills.
- Continue to allow ample opportunities for natural play and exploration.



Cognitive

- Beginning to read and write, experimenting with rhyming and humor, lacks concept of real time.
- Continue reading and singing.
- Focus on praising the process not the product. *"You worked really hard on this picture, tell me how you came up with the idea to make that?"*



Social and Emotional

- Learning how others feel and behave, learning from others how to respond, curious about private parts
- Name feelings—theirs "you are having a hard time with that puzzle, that can be frustrating" and others "she looks sad, I wonder why she feels that way?".
- Use proper terminology for body parts.

Preschool: 3 to 5 years old

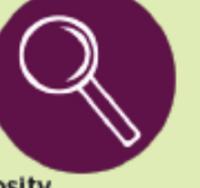
Natural Strength Parenting™ Tips for Picky Eating



Intentionally understand it takes at least 10-15 tries of a new food before developing a taste for it. Be a good role model.

Mindfully decide what foods are offered, when and where. As a child, they get to decide the food that is offered, what they will eat and how much. Avoid forcing kids to “*clean their plates*” as this discourages them from listening to their natural hunger/satiety cues.

Avoid food rewards but celebrate their **strength** of bravery!

A 3 Year Old has AMAZING Character Strengths	What you might see as a result of these AMAZING Character Strengths
 <p>Bravery I take on challenges and speak up for what is right.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to do things by myself. • I can take care of myself (wash hands, brush teeth, use restroom, etc.). • I might do risky things like climb to the top of the monkey bars and jump. • I get frustrated when people treat me like a baby.
 <p>Creativity I can think of lots of ways to solve problems and use my imagination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I enjoy imaginative play. • I start to understand simple jokes and may tell you a few. • I might have an imaginary friend. • I could be afraid of the dark and think there are monsters in my closet.
 <p>Zest I approach daily life with energy and excitement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am easily excited. • I might become angry very quickly. • I know what I want/like and I go for it. • I may refuse to do what is asked of me. • I might throw a tantrum.
 <p>Curiosity I explore the world around me with an open mind and ask questions often.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I explore the world around me and try new things. • If things don't go my way, I become frustrated. • If things go wrong, I will abandon them quickly.





At 4 years old, I am...

- Discovering my strength of fairness
- Working on developing my strength of friendship
- Learning about feelings and empathy for others
- Using my strength of creativity in imaginative play

Learn about Natural Strength Parenting and how you & your child have 24 character strengths to build on.

We just mentioned 4 above and one below for your little one to color!



At 4 years old, sometimes I...

- Tell lies
- Have trouble controlling my impulses
- Whine or use baby talk
- Struggle with listening

These are all normal challenges, but a Parent ConnexT™ Parenting Specialist can work with you in a few short sessions on tools you can use.

Email khelmes@beechacres.org to learn more.



School Age: 5 to 10 years old



Physical

- Their bodies are growing and changing rapidly. Be aware of body changes as puberty can begin during this stage.
- Start conversations about puberty and the changes they may begin to see in their body.

Cognitive

- Reasoning and problem-solving skills practiced but not perfected, curiosity about how everything works, challenge rules and question authority.
- Help them problem solve vs trying to fix their problems for them. This empowers them to feel capable.
- Continue to praise process vs the product. Instead of “you did a great job”, say “you worked really hard on that project, you should feel proud.”

Social and Emotional

- Very justice oriented and can tend to view things with a very right vs wrong lens. This can create challenges with friendships.
- Looking more towards their peers, sensitive to success and failure, friendships are critical. Help your child identify good qualities of friendships and what to look out for in a friend. Continue reading together and shared play time.

9 Emerging Strengths

Recognizing all 24 strengths, especially Judgment or Sense of Meaning, could be overwhelming for younger children.

These are the ones that emerge first, so are easiest to understand:

- Teamwork
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Love of Learning
- Perseverance
- Friendship/Social Intelligence
- Humor
- Kindness
- Love



“Twins” or Pre-Teen: 11 to 12 years old



Physical

- Puberty begins along with physical changes.

Through the pre-teen and teen years, children go through puberty. Girls typically go through puberty earlier than boys. **It can be tricky because there is a wide window during which puberty may occur, and children may feel self-conscious if they are "early" or "late".**

Reassure your child that the **changes to their body are normal**, be aware that they may be sensitive and self-conscious about the changes happening (or not yet happening) in their body.

Be a safe person for them to talk to about how they are feeling and help answer any questions they may have about puberty. Your pediatrician or Child Development Specialist from Parent Connex[®] can be a good resource if you aren't sure how to handle their questions.



“Tweens” or Pre-Teen: 11 to 12 years old



Cognitive

- Continue to practice reasoning and problem solving with more sophistication, negotiations with parents/caregivers begin and become frequent.



Social and Emotional

- Peers become really important, friendships become tricky, begin to have crushes on peers.
- Emotions can feel very intense at this age as their emotional and stress response parts of their brain are growing faster than their thinking/rational response part of their brain. Avoid minimizing their feelings, as they are very real to them. Instead, offer empathy, and maybe share a moment from your childhood where you may have experienced something similar. Even if they start to retreat to their room or connect more with friends, it's still important to try to connect with them. This can be playing video games together or taking them out for special one-on-one time.

Teenagers: 13 to 18 years old

What to expect...



Physical

- Adult body features develop, puberty continues and eventually completes.

Cognitive

- Independence testing, risk-taking, untouchable (feel invincible), want control, challenge parents and caregivers, learning becomes more complex.

Emotional and Social

- Dating relationships begin, first love, maneuvering among friend groups, parties with peers, may experiment with drinking, feel as if they have an “invisible audience” and that everyone is watching them and/or judging them. *Fitting in can be very important.*

What can you do during time?

- Help them understand the difference between belonging and fitting in with peer groups.
- You are their safe person to unload their stress.
- Remember emotions can be intense and seem dramatic at this stage. Try not to take anything personally and take **mindful breaths** before reacting.
- Their brains are still growing and developing, so try not to react when they make a mistake. Instead try to connect first, then use your strength of **curiosity** about what happened from their perspective.
- **Set an intention to avoid jumping in to provide solutions**, try active listening first. Then you can ask if they want help with problem solving a strategy to repair a situation. Often just processing with you opens opportunities for learning and growth.

BONUS ITEMS!



Ideas for Parents to Show Love & Support

Share messages of love openly and often. It may be corny, but anything parents can do to practice communicating and reaching out frequently is good.

Texts are something kids will always read whether they admit it or not.

Letting you know I love you! 🥰

Thank you for being you!

I know being a kid is hard, but you're pretty great at it.

You are unique.
You are spirited.
You are funny.
You are loved.

Today may not be your day, but maybe tomorrow will.

Whether it is for your child, or one of their friends, think about displaying these small squares somewhere in your home. Let them know your home is a safe one.

Remember, you can talk to me anytime, anywhere about anything...

I'm grateful to have a (funny, kind, smart, brave, creative, curious, humble) daughter/son like you.

Just sitting over here thinking about how brave you are... 🦁

Fill their 'bucket' with a compliment via text...

I like how you...

- put together that outfit this morning.
- helped with the dog/younger sibling/etc last night.
- persevered through those math problems last night.
- treat your friends. They're lucky to have you.
- make every day an adventure.
- make others feel better about themselves.



Resources:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line
Text HOME to 741741



Teens cannot help but read texts... use them to your advantage.

Find this PDF here:

<https://beechacres.org/ideas-for-parents-to-show-love-support/>

Complimentary Week-Long Classes on a Variety of Parenting Topics Delivered Via Text

Learn more [here](#).



Healthy Friendships For School-Aged Children K-12

Welcome to Healthy Friendships for School-Aged Children K-12, brought to you by the team at Beech Acres Parenting Center! In this course, you'll learn how you can...

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Welcome to Single and Solo Parenting! This five day course explores some basic aspects of Single Solo Parenting, such as the difference between the two and building...



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Welcome to Intentionality with Family Values! This five day course explores what your family's shared values consist of and how you can implement them into your daily...



Mindfulness With Intentionality

Welcome to Mindfulness with Intentionality! This five day course explores some basic concepts of mindfulness and how you can utilize them to set intentions for...



Transgender Youth - Support And Care

Welcome to Understanding and Supporting Transgender Youth, brought to you by the team at Beech Acres Parenting Center! In this course, you'll be given a brief...



Connect with us!

Families Report a Positive Change in Just 3 Sessions and it LASTS 3 Months Later

After 3 Sessions	3 Months Later... Effect is Still Felt
 Satisfaction as a Parent ✓	 Satisfaction as a Parent ✓
 Self-Confidence in their Parenting ✓	 Self-Confidence in their Parenting ✓
 Relationship with their Child ✓	 Relationship with their Child ✓
 Improved Self-Care ✓	 Improved Self-Care ✓
 Overall Score ✓	 Overall Score ✓

General Population
Statistically Significant Changes
Seen at 95% Confidence Interval
and p value <0.001

If you are interested in something more personal, feel free to contact Katie Helmes at khelmes@beechacres.org to set-up a **virtual** session with a Child Development expert.

In just 3 sessions, their approach has been proven to strengthen the parent/child relationship – with the effect lasting at least 3 months later.

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How are we doing?



Your voice matters. Please scan the QR code for a quick survey.

Help us do better!



Our vision is a world where every child’s natural strengths are nurtured so they realize their endless potential – use your **strength of honesty** to help us get there.

Answer 4 quick questions by scanning the QR code and enter to win a family game night package!

