



Select Developmental Characteristics: (approximately age 6)

A typical 6-year-old child...

- can learn her/his full name, age, address, and phone number with repetition.
- enjoys moving in a variety of ways - although far from proficient in motor skills, most children this age display enthusiasm for trying new activities and sports.
- is developing self-esteem as a central task.
- is confident and expresses delight in showing talents.
- is starting to display an increasing awareness of his/her own feelings and beginning to develop better techniques for self-control - enjoys sharing toys and snacks with friends, although conflicts among peers may remain quite frequent.
- experiences predictable routines as important sources of stability and security.
- draws emotional stability from interactions with adults with whom he/she feels secure, particularly during challenging situations and circumstances - trust in a "secure base" of relationships with adults (parents, teachers) comes from feeling understood and responded to in regular and predictable ways.
- develops new skills in non-social areas (such as at school) most effectively when feeling safe and secure with the adults present in that situation.
- may want to be like his/her friends and often seeks to please these friends, which may make the child more susceptible to peer influence.
- often develops modesty related to their bodies around this time.
- is beginning to show an increasing awareness of others' emotions - can label what others are feeling (e.g., happy, sad, and angry) and begin to identify reasons for others' feelings (e.g., says, "He's feeling sad because..."), but typically offers reasons for others' feelings based on direct observations or experiences (e.g., "...he fell down." or "...he didn't get to stay up late.")
- is very interested in the difference between truth and lies.
- needs encouragement and praise, and to know that it is okay to make mistakes because that is how we learn about the world - too much pressure for perfect grades and model behavior increases tension and is not appropriate.
- needs adults who focus on being attentive and accepting to help the child feel good about being himself/herself.
- is beginning to become aware of gender - may start to gravitate toward playing with children of her/his own gender.
- learns best through movement and physical manipulation - likes to find out how things work and wants to touch, feel, and experience what he/she is being asked to learn.
- may have a short attention span.