

**Providing Developmentally  
Appropriate Programming**

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## ***Understanding the Whole Child - “Typical” Characteristics***

### **The Moving Child (Physical Domain)**

Pre-School (under 5 yr.)	Childhood (5 - 8 yr.)	Late Childhood (9 -12 yr.)	Adolescence (13 - 18 yr.)
Gross motor skills developed; fine motor skills not developed	Large muscles more developed than small	Major growth spurt	Males reach growth spurt between 11-15 yr.
Bilateral movements are difficult	Lack muscular endurance	Feel awkward performing skills	Female growth spurt: 9 - 13 years
Poor balance because of cephalocaudal development	Ligaments and bones are stronger	Good fine motor skills	Vast diversity in physical characteristics
Enjoy moving quickly	Basic motor patterns are refined	Body grows at different rates	Most gross and fine motor skills have been developed, however, this varies from individual to individual
Interested in throwing and catching with different types of balls	Perform motor skills singly	Secondary sex characteristics	Combine motor skills together to play more “adult-type” physical activities
Hand-eye and foot-eye coordination starting to develop	Centre of gravity still a little high	Start to combine motor skills together	Start to become interested in specific type of activities
Enjoy moving in different directions	Need vigorous activity	Individual differences are distinct due to maturation and experience	
Competent in running and jumping	Visual and tracking abilities improving	Locomotor skills are refined	
Gross motor skills are being developed	Mastered most locomotor activities	Fine motor control is developing	
Close work tends to be difficult because of farsightedness	Manipulative skills are slowly developing	Girls tend to be taller and heavier than boys	
	Abilities of males and females not different	Flexibility begins to decrease	





### The Thinking Child (Cognitive Domain)

Pre-School (under 5 yr.)	Childhood (5 - 8 yr.)	Late Childhood (9 -12 yr.)	Adolescence (13 - 17 yr.)
Learn through play and exploration	Short attention span	Abstract thought	Complex thought capabilities are present
Children know their own name	Focus on one aspect of the environment (5 & 6 yr.)	Rapid processing of visual information	Variety in cognitive abilities
Do not like loud noises	Rapid development of perceptual abilities	Increased attention span	Attention span generally well developed but does vary from individual to individual
Learning new words	Enjoy repetition	Conscious of external influences	Variations in response to instructional approaches
Attention span is very short	Well-developed imaginations	Memory sharpens	
Associate words with objects	Amount of concentration varies	Egocentricity decreases	
Motivated to learn new skills	Want to be involved	Enjoy intellectual activities	
Thought processes are developing	Eager to learn	Enjoy contests	
Well-developed imaginations	Generally lack fear	Thought retention increases	
Memory is slowly developing	“Why” is often asked		
	Discourage easily		
	Concepts of time, weight, and space are developing		
	Desire approval from adults		
	Deals with small bits of information at a time		





## The Feeling Child (Affective Domain)

Pre-School (under 5 yr.)	Early Childhood (5 - 8 yr.)	Late Childhood (9 -12 yr.)	Adolescence (13 - 18 yr.)
Enjoy being hugged	Respond well to reinforcement	Formation of peer groups	Peers are a major source of motivation
Begin to smile	Respond poorly to criticism	Tension with adults	Identity formation
Afraid of strangers	Limited capacity to deal with stress	Clubs, gangs, and cliques begin to form	Variations in responses to winning and losing
Fearful of new situations	Egocentric	Becoming aware of gender roles	Tend to be very emotional
Very emotional	Learning to share and take turns	Role models from community, TV and movies	Sport and physical activity have the potential to be powerful socializing agents
Like to be independent	Sarcasm will be perceived as ridicule	Seek peer approval	Enjoy participating with peers
Seeking adult approval	Friendships shift continually	Establishing values	Morals and values formed
Starting to distinguish between right & wrong	May be intimidated by teacher who knows all	Males and females develop separate interests	
Enjoy watching others play	Winning and losing become important	Some gender antagonism	
Do not respond well to authority	Respect "fair" discipline and reinforcements	Desire to be popular and to assert themselves	
Egocentric			
Tend to be rough with each other			
Like to play with children			

Sources: (Gallahue & Ozmun, 1995; Moveability Manual, 1992; Nichols, 1994; Sportability Manual, 1990; SportCan Manual, 1996; Wall & Murray, 1994)

## Developmental Implications When Working with Children

	Pre School (0 - 4 yrs)	Early Childhood (5 - 8 yrs)	Later Childhood (9 - 12 yrs)
Moving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Encourage to work at own level</li> <li>☆ Encourage a variety of movements when ready (e.g., crawling, creeping, grasping)</li> <li>☆ Eliminate potential obstacles in the way</li> <li>☆ Focus on gross motor skills (e.g., running, walking)</li> <li>☆ Use small equipment to match development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ To avoid overuse injury, avoid specializing in one activity by offering a variety of activities</li> <li>☆ Focus on developing gross motor skills before fine motor skills</li> <li>☆ Provide informative feedback such that they will be able to replicate or improve performance</li> <li>☆ Modify equipment to suit developmental needs</li> <li>☆ Don't separate boys and girls</li> <li>☆ Take breaks if children get tired</li> <li>☆ Be allowed to progress at own rate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Increased emphasis on fine motor skills ... however, should still be allowed opportunities to refine gross motor skills</li> <li>☆ Gradual progression towards more specialized activities ... still important to provide variety of experiences</li> <li>☆ Continue providing informative feedback</li> </ul>
Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Minimal rules</li> <li>☆ VERY SHORT instructions</li> <li>☆ Include short demonstrations</li> <li>☆ Encourage active exploration and imagination</li> <li>☆ Change activities frequently b/c of short attention span</li> <li>☆ Use concrete examples ... unable to understand abstract concepts</li> <li>☆ Use soft voices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Short yet clear instructions</li> <li>☆ Frequent modifications of activities</li> <li>☆ Creativity is important</li> <li>☆ Introduction of simple rules is now possible ... likely not understand complex strategies</li> <li>☆ May need to be reminded of the purpose of the task</li> <li>☆ Encourage children to question, integrate, analyze, and apply</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Can now understand more complex rules and strategies/ tactics</li> <li>☆ Longer attention span - can provide more detailed instructions</li> <li>☆ Demonstrate or have others demonstrate more complex strategies or skills</li> <li>☆ Ask children to think of ways to make the activity optimally challenging</li> </ul>
Feeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Never leave child alone ... need comfort zone</li> <li>☆ Laugh and talk with children ... they enjoy the interaction</li> <li>☆ Interact with child at own level ... often intimidated by adult hovering over them</li> <li>☆ Praise children often for positive behaviours</li> <li>☆ Avoid using negative words ... use: "Try it this way"</li> <li>☆ Provide safe environments</li> <li>☆ Encourage cooperation rather than competition</li> <li>☆ Use small group activities</li> <li>☆ Encourage parental involvement at first to increase comfort in new situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Equal amount of playing time</li> <li>☆ Be positive!</li> <li>☆ Avoid placing children in threatening situations</li> <li>☆ Should be enjoyable and not stress winning and losing</li> <li>☆ Develop individual skills so they can do the activity</li> <li>☆ Encourage children to ask questions and to feel they have some ownership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Peers are major motivators - encourage positive peer interaction</li> <li>☆ Gradually introduce larger groups activities but still use small groups frequently</li> <li>☆ Discuss fair play strategies with them</li> </ul>

