

Normal Development: 11 to 12 Years

Physical Development

- May have a growth spurt if female (usually a year or two later for males).
- May tire easily and seem lazy.
- May look out of proportion.
- Is self-conscious and thinks a lot about appearance.
- Appetite may fluctuate sharply.
- May enjoy watching or playing competitive sports.
- Is keenly interested in learning about body changes.
- May be curious about drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

Emotional Development

- May have sudden, dramatic, emotional changes linked to puberty.
- Goes back and forth between being mature one moment, and immature the next.
- Tends to hide feelings.
- Is hard on self and very sensitive to criticism.

Social Development

- Wants parents' help, but may resist when offered.
- Is critical of parents.
- Is concerned with prestige and popularity.
- Likes to belong to a group and be like others.
- Becomes quite faddish.
- Prefers to spend time on weekends with friends.
- Friendships may change due to different levels of maturity.
- Becomes aware of sexual feelings.

Mental Development

- Has an increasing attention and concentration span.
- Strives to succeed.
- Has strong opinions.
- Starts to understand other peoples' motives.

These guidelines show general progress through the developmental stages rather than fixed requirements for normal development at specific ages. It is perfectly natural for a child to reach some milestones earlier and other milestones later than the general trend. If you have any concerns about your child's own pattern of development, check with your healthcare provider.

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References

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