

Developmental Milestones for Seventh Grade Ages 12-13

The Twelve -Year-Old

Physical Development

- High energy, but much rest needed
- Growth spurts; girls ahead of boys; wide differences among individuals in rates of development
- Physical activities and sports valued
- Eating patterns change, overconcern for dieting
- Feel awkward and may worry about body
- Increased need for personal hygiene

Social and Emotional Development

- Struggle with sense of identity
- Moodiness
- Can be enthusiastic at some times; lethargic at other times
- Friendships with both sexes are important
- Complain that parents interfere with independence
- More likely to express feelings by actions than words
- Peer vocabulary (slang) important
- Less overt affection and attention shown to parents, with occasional rudeness; test limits
- Impulsive, unaware
- Experience extremes of emotions
- Inclusion/exclusion; height of cliques, seek to belong, discovery of telephone
- Experimenting with behavior, roles, appearance, self-image
- Difficulty with decisions but need to be able to make some choices for themselves
- Demand privileges, but may avoid responsibilities
- Feel unique; believe that no one else has ever felt the way they do; suffered so much, or been so misunderstood

Intellectual Development

- Hormonal and physical demands of puberty may cause slowing of rate of cognitive development during early adolescence
- Increased ability to think abstract in intellectual pursuits
- Learn best when involved in activities that are active, hands-on, and related to real life
- Concerned with rules, standards of behavior and fairness, especially for themselves
- Lack of understanding of cause and effect as well as feelings of omnipotence and invulnerability ("It can't happen to me.") can lead to dangerous risk-taking behaviors--smoking, drugs, drinking, etc.
- Mostly interested in present, limited thoughts of future
- May show emerging ability in a particular skill or content area
- Show improved abilities to use speech for self-expression
- High interest in current events, politics, social justice; also pop culture, materialism
- More consistent evidence of conscience
- Idealistic; may offer "ideal" solutions to complex problems
- Development of ideals and selection of role models
- May question parents' religious beliefs, political beliefs, and other values

The Thirteen -Year-Old

Physical Development

- Wide differences in the rate of physical growth among individuals; girls 95% of mature height is average; boys - voice change; growth about a year behind girls
- Skin problems emerging; hygiene a key issue
- Eating patterns change
- Uneven coordination
- Worry about being normal, physically
- Feel awkward about body
- Most social/emotional/cognitive developments directly related to physical changes
- Hormonal/physical demands of puberty may slow intellectual growth
- Short term thinking may predominate over long term planning
- Abstract reasoning and "formal operations" begin to be functional in some thirteen year olds.

Social and Emotional Development

- Concerned about physical attractiveness to others; the mirror is their best friend and worst enemy
- Struggle with sense of identity:
- Increased distractions from doing homework: Sports, dress, telephone, computer, video games
- Music becoming a major preoccupation
- One word answers to adult questions (minimal feedback)
- Feel unique, believing that no one has ever felt as they do, suffered so much, loved so deeply, or been so misunderstood
- Peer relations/peer pressure (being "cool"):
- Parent relationships:

Intellectual Development

- Hormonal/physical demands of puberty may slow intellectual growth
- Short term thinking may predominate over long term planning
- Abstract reasoning and "formal operations" begin to be functional in some thirteen year olds.
- Not willing to take big learning risks (adolescent insecurity)
- Like to challenge answers
- Withdrawn and sensitive nature is protective of developing self-concept and intellectual ideas that are not fully formed yet
- Tentative approach to difficult intellectual tasks; not willing to take big learning risks; this has usually caused the fears and self-consciousness of adolescence
- Risk-taking behaviors spring from lack of cause-effect thinking
- Concerns with rules/fairness; idealistic

Reference: "GCISD - Curriculum Guides and Developmental Characteristics." 2002. Grapevine-Colleyville ISD. 7 Dec. 2007 .