

KINDERGARTEN

Child Development: Ages 5 – 6

Physical Development

When observing these students in the classroom, they tend to:

- Stand up while they work
- Need lots of physical activity
- Tilt their heads while writing
- Chew on pencils, fingernails, hair, books, and other objects
- Be noisy and sloppy—they move in a hurry

Language and Literacy Development

- Students at this age tend to think out loud and enjoy explaining and sharing new things by giving elaborate answers and using enthusiastic language.
- In Kindergarten, students tend to express fantasy through actions rather than words.
- These young students love jokes and guessing games.



Self Concept, Identity, and Motivation:

As these young students learn and grow in our classrooms, they can only work for short periods of time. They seek permission to move forward to new tasks given by their teacher. These students feel safe with consistent guidelines and learn through modeling and directed role play. Kindergarten students respond better to frequent reminders and redirection as they may sometimes become oppositional to school rules and expectations.





Peer Relations

At this age, students may:

- Care more about their friends and may have a best friend in the class.
- Become very competitive and want to be first. Their competitive attitudes may result in poor sportsmanship if they do not win.
- Become bossy and very critical of others around them.



Moral Development

Kindergarten students enjoy helping, cooperating, and following the rules and expectations of their classrooms and schools. They learn best through teacher-modeling of appropriate behavior and emotions. Kindergarteners need consistent routines, rules, and discipline as they struggle to determine what is “right” and “wrong” in daily situations. These young students struggle with seeing other viewpoints and may become oppositional in certain situations.

These young students seek adult approval and become dependent on adult authority. They want verbal approval from adults before doing something. You will often hear, “Can I...” in kindergarten classrooms.



Cognitive Development

In kindergarten classrooms, students are developing mentally, emotionally, and physically. You may observe some of the following in these classrooms:

Younger Kindergartners:

- Learn best through repetitive activities, active play, and hands-on activities
- Struggle with seeing numerous ways of completing a task.
- Assign life to inanimate objects
- Think intuitively rather than logically
- Make lots of mistakes and will recognize some of them

Older Kindergartners:

- Learn best through discovery activities—these students love to ask questions!
- Very ambitious and motivated to learn. They enjoy working and will produce a high number of products; however, they are unconcerned about the quality of their work.
- Love to color, paint, read, and write
- Begin to understand the past and the present

