LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT
The What and When Behind Growing Up... If All Things Go According to Plan
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AGE 13-15

COGNITIVE
- Formal operational reasoning, the capacity for abstract, scientific thought, emerges
- Thinking becomes more self-conscious, idealistic, and critical
- Metacognition and self-regulation further develop

PSYCHOSOCIAL
- Issues of identity emerge, potentially leading to crises in sense of self
- Sexual orientation begins to emerge
- Psychological disorders and psychiatric-educational disorders may emerge
- Strives for autonomy in relation to family continues to increase, and parent-child conflicts may likely occur

BIOLOGICAL
- Body continues to grow in height and weight
- Girls’ growth spurt peaks, while boys typically grow taller than their female peers
- Girls tend to grow wider in the hips, and breast development continues for several years
- Girls’ motor performance peaks, while boys’ continues to improve

AGE 16-19

COGNITIVE
- Development of identity continues in relation to adult world
- First dating begins process of developing and maintaining intimate relationships
- Clues decline in importance
- Identity achievement greatly influenced by personal factors, including family and peer relationships with family and peers, and economic and political circumstances
- Increased assertiveness and lack of self-discipline often create conflicts with parents

PSYCHOSOCIAL
- Reaching through problems in symbolic terms and through use of formal logic improves
- Fluid intelligence, the ability to cope with new problems and situations, is reached by the end of this period
- Ability to understand and integrate rules into sense of self becomes basis for character development

BIOLOGICAL
- Girls’ growth spurt peaks, and growth is mostly complete by end of this period
- Boys develop deeper voices and patterns of facial hair, and typically grow taller than their female peers
- Girls’ body fat continues to increase

AGE 20-40

COGNITIVE
- Thinking may become practical and dialectical to adapt to the inconsistencies and complexities in daily experiences
- Short-term memory peaks
- Wisdom and expertise begins to develop
- Vocabulary and knowledge continues to grow through work interactions and everyday problem-solving

PSYCHOSOCIAL
- Issues of identity and intimacy peak by age 30
- Need for affiliation filled by friends and often a marriage/partner
- Friendships become particularly important for people who are single

BIOLOGICAL
- Physical functioning increases through the 20’s and peaks at about age 30, but can be maintained through exercise
- Body shape changes, with gradual increase in weight and body fat and decreases in lean muscle mass
- Physical appearance changes; gray hair and wrinkles develop toward end of this period

A development framework that explains how adaptation throughout life depends on how each of us negotiates the internal and external factors that enhance or constrain our abilities to reach our full potentials.

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**Age 0-2**

**Cognitive**
- Basic structure of language learned through body talk with adults
- First communication emerges through crying, then cooing and babbling
- Language skills progress from speaking a few words by age 1, to constructing sentences by age 2
- Awareness of world progresses through immediate sensorimotor experiences to mental representations of events
- Thinking includes concept of object permanence; objects still exist when out of sight or awareness
- Ability to group conceptual categories begins; by age 2 numerous definite concepts develop

**Psychosocial**
- Emotional responses change from basic reactions to more complex, self-conscious responses
- Independent behaviors increase with parental encouragement around feeding, dressing, and toilet training
- Development of secure attachment set stage for child’s increasingly independent exploration
- Ability to relate to playmates emerges by end of period
- Early personality traits, such as introversion and extroversion, develop

**Biological**
- Body doubles in height and quadruples in weight
- Neonate gains in increasingly dense connections, becoming coated with layers of myelin, enabling faster and more efficient message transmission
- Experiences help to fine tune the brain’s responses to stimulation
- Motor skills progress from simple reflexes to coordinated motor abilities, such as grasping and walking
- Sensory and perceptual abilities develop rapidly

**Age 2-6**

**Cognitive**
- Use of mental representations and symbols, such as words, begins
- Ideas about the world continue to be somewhat illogical
- Social interactions with parents and playmates teach about the world
- Language abilities develop rapidly, resulting, on average, in a 5,000-word vocabulary and extensive grammatical knowledge by age 6
- Ability to adjust communication to audience begins
- Metacognition, the ability to think about thought, forms

**Psychosocial**
- Play alone or with others becomes increasingly complex and imaginative
- Increased energy allows ability to initiate new activities, especially if child receives praise for actions
- First awareness of gender roles emerge
- Desire for independence and control over environment increases, making parents’ supervisory role more challenging
- Parenting styles influence child’s psychosocial development
- Socialization in school encourages thinking about world outside the home

**Biological**
- Brain attains 90% of its adult weight by age 5, developing faster than any other body part
- Myelination proceeds at different rates in various areas of the brain, resulting in different rates of readiness for certain types of activities
- Physical strength increases and body proportions become more adult-like
- Fine motor skills, such as writing and drawing, develop slowly
- Gender differences in motor skills begin to emerge

**Age 7-9**

**Cognitive**
- Ability to understand logical principle develops
- Memory capacity and ability to use economics expands
- Metacognition, the ability to think about thought, enables organization of own learning
- Proficiency in more than one language code may begin, sometimes resulting in bilingualism

**Psychosocial**
- Peer group becomes more significant as independence skills to friends for help, loyalty, and sharing of mutual interests
- Awareness of and involvement in outside world increases awareness of family, economic, and political conditions
- Motivational systems build around achievement, competence, and affiliation
- Coping strategies develop for problem solving and stress tolerance
- Interpersonal strategies develop to aid in understanding others’ behavior

**Biological**
- Brain growth slows
- Physical growth slows, but slight height spurt occurs
- Expansion of heart and lung capacities supports more physical endurance
- Athletic and fine motor skills become more refined

**Age 10-12**

**Cognitive**
- Logical thought progresses to abstract thinking
- Planning skills and memory strategies improve
- Long-term basic grammar
- Language skills expand to include synonyms, categories, double meanings, metaphors, humor, and complex grammatical structure

**Psychosocial**
- Changes in physical, sexual, cognitive functioning, and society’s treatment may challenge sense of self
- Appreciation of connection between moral rules and social conventions strengthens
- Peer groups often divide into cliques
- Awareness of gender stereotypes continues to increase
- Issues increase around autonomy, sibling rivalry, and separation from family

**Biological**
- Puberty begins with rising hormone levels
- Gross growth spurt begins with gains in height, weight, and musculature
- Gender specific physical changes appear within first year: enlargement of breasts in girls and testes in boys
- In physical maturation, boys lag, on average, 2 years behind girls
- Variations in onset of puberty impact personally development

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**Family Care**

**Access to Food**

**Access to Healthcare**

**Housing Stability**

**After School Activities**

**Sexual Orientation**

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