



Normal Development: 8 Years Old

Physical Development

- Continues to be accident prone, especially on the playground
- Has more control over small muscles and, therefore, writes and draws with more skill
- Displays a casual attitude toward clothing and appearance
- Seems to be all hands and arms
- May agonize over height and weight
- Seems to possess boundless energy

Emotional Development

- Begins to realize others experience similar feelings of anger, fear, and sadness
- Is easily embarrassed
- Becomes discouraged easily
- Is often self-deprecating

Social Development

- Can be argumentative and bossy
- Can also be quite lovable and responsive
- Shows increasing ability to understand the needs and opinions of others
- Is preoccupied with finding compatible friends
- Especially likes to belong to informal “clubs” formed by children themselves
- Also, likes to belong to more structured adult-led groups such as scouts
- Begins to display a sense of loyalty
- Enjoys secrets
- Shows some hostility toward the opposite sex
- No longer wants to assist in household chores.

Mental Development

- Is often idealistic
- Is keenly interested in projects and collections
- Is proud of completing tasks
- Resists adult guidance at times.

Each child is unique. It is therefore difficult to describe exactly what should be expected at each stage of a child’s development. While certain attitudes, behaviors, and physical milestones tend to occur at certain ages, a wide spectrum of growth and behavior for each age is normal. These guidelines are offered as a way of showing a general progression through the developmental stages rather than as fixed requirements for normal development at specific ages. It is perfectly natural for a child to attain some milestones earlier and other milestones later than the general trend. Keep this in mind as you review these milestones. If you have any concerns related to your child’s own pattern of development, check with your pediatrician or family physician.

Written by Donna Warner Manczak, Ph.D., M.P.H. and Robert Brayden, M.D. This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.

Published by McKesson Clinical Reference Systems, Copyright 1986-2002 McKesson Health Solutions LLC. All rights reserved.

The Injury Prevention Program (tipp)

8 Years Old

Safety for Your Child

Did you know that accidents are the greatest threat to the life and health of your child? More school-age children die of injuries than all other diseases combined. **Yet you can prevent most injuries!**

At age 8, children are now taking off on their own. They look for friends for approval. They try to do daring things. They do not want to obey grown-up rules. But your child can learn safety rules with your help and reminders. Your child now goes out more without you and is more likely to drown or be hurt on a bike, or be hit by a car. And your child can still be hurt or killed while riding in a car if he is not buckled by a seat belt.

Sports Safety

Ask your doctor which sports are right for your child. **Be sure your child wears all the protective equipment made for the sport**, such as shin pads, mouth guards, or helmets. Your child's coach should also be able to help you select protective equipment.



Water Safety

At this age, your child is not safe alone in water, even if he or she knows how to swim. **Do not let your child play around any water (lake, stream, pool, or ocean) unless an adult is watching. Never let your child swim in canals or any fast-moving water.** Teach your child to always enter the water feet first.



And Remember.....Bike Safety

Make sure your child always wears a helmet while riding a bike. Now is the time to teach your child "Rules of the Road." Be sure he or she knows the rules and can use them. Watch your child ride. See if he or she is in control of the bike. See if your child uses good judgment. Your 8-year-old is not old enough to ride at dusk or after dark. Make sure your child brings the bike in when the sun starts to set.



Car Safety

NEVER start the car until you've checked to be sure that your child's seat belt is buckled. Your child may not do it every time without being reminded. Be sure that you and all others in the car are buckled up too. Install shoulder belts in the back seat of your car if they are not already there. Serious injuries can occur with lap belts alone.

