

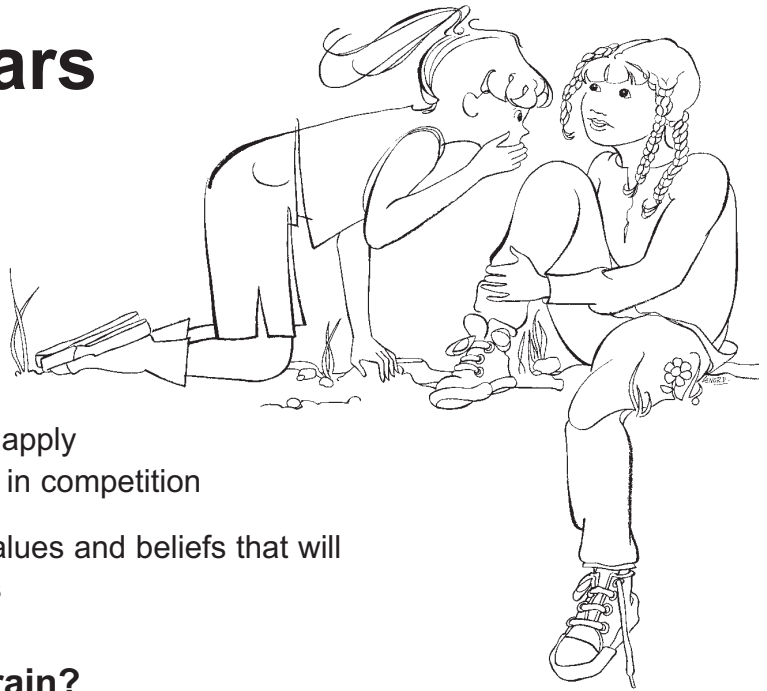
# Eight to Nine Years

## Developmental Tasks

Acquiring a sense of accomplishment centered on achieving greater physical strength and self-control

Increasing own ability to learn and apply skills, deal with peers, and engage in competition

Developing and testing personal values and beliefs that will guide present and future behaviors



## What's Happening in the Brain?

During this stage, the child's brain is:

- ❖ In a critical period of development; focused on setting goals and processing information
- ❖ Still vulnerable to trauma (both physical and psychological)

## Domains

### Physical

Typical Characteristics	Suggested Behaviors for Effective Parenting
Is busy and active; has frequent accidents	Provide care for bumps and bruises, along with comfort and sympathy. Protect the child's brain by always requiring that she or he wear a helmet when riding bikes, scooters, or playing sports. Follow your state's laws about booster seats and seat belts.
Makes faces, wiggles, and clowns around	Don't take such behaviors seriously.
May urinate frequently (as a result of anxiety)	Be tolerant and understand that loss of control is not deliberate.

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Physical	Typical Characteristics	Suggested Behaviors for Effective Parenting
	Has good appetite: may accept new foods, often “wolfs” down food, and belches spontaneously	Except for belching, rejoice!
	Has improved health, with just a few short illnesses	Maintain a healthy lifestyle; provide treatment for minor illnesses.

Emotional	Has more “secrets”	Provide the child with a locked drawer or box.
	May be excessive in self-criticism, tends to dramatize everything, and is very sensitive	Encourage efforts, and do not criticize; point out that others also make mistakes.
	Has fewer and more reasonable fears	Acknowledge and discuss real concerns.
	May argue and resist requests and instructions, but will eventually obey	Keep directions simple and straightforward; avoid “I already know” responses by not overdirecting.
	Likes immediate rewards for behaviors	Provide small but meaningful rewards for accomplishments.
	Is usually affectionate, helpful, cheerful, outgoing, and curious, but can also be rude, selfish, bossy, demanding, giggly, and silly	Allow expression of negative emotions while maintaining limits; be patient with giggling and accept humor.

## Social

Typical Characteristics	Suggested Behaviors for Effective Parenting
Demands love and understanding from caregiver(s)	Provide love and acceptance.
Makes new friends easily, works at establishing good two-way relationships, develops a close friend of the same sex, and considers clubs and groups important	Encourage development of friendships; assist with scouting or sport groups.
Enjoys school, doesn't like to be absent, and tends to talk more about things that happen there	Listen to the child's anecdotes about school; be a part of his/her school life, and attend school activities such as shows and concerts.
Is not interested in family table conversations, but instead wants to finish meals in order to get to other business	Remain tolerant and understanding of child's needs and feelings.
May "peep" at peers and parents; tells dirty jokes, laughs, and giggles	Set reasonable limits, and do not overly focus on behaviors.

## Mental

Wants to know the reasons for things	Answer questions patiently.
Often overestimates personal abilities; generalizes instances of failure ("I never get anything right!")	Direct child toward attempting what can be accomplished, but continue to provide challenges; stress what the child has learned in a process and not the end product.
Wants more information about pregnancy and birth; may question father's role	Continue to be available to answer questions.
Has some mastery of basic math facts and computations (e.g., $3+2=5$ ) and begins to grasp the concept of multiplication	Understand that in order for the child to succeed in math, he or she must use memory to recall rules and formulas and to recognize patterns. Support the child in reading instructions carefully, using sequential ordering to solve problems with multiple steps, and teach her or him how to seek help (e.g., from a teacher) when needed.

**Typical Characteristics****Suggested Behaviors  
for Effective Parenting**

May experience guilt and shame

Acknowledge and support the child's standards, encouraging self-forgiveness and (if necessary) discussing the reasonableness of personal expectations; if negative behaviors occur, work on changing the behavior but focus on the worth of the child rather than on the behavior.

**Indicators Related to Developmental Lag or Potential Trauma**

Excessive concerns about competition and performance (especially in school) Extreme rebellion

Extreme difficulty concentrating in school

Physical symptoms (headaches, nervous stomach, ulcers, nervous tics, bedwetting, etc.)

Procrastination (unconcern with completion of tasks)

Overdependence on caregivers for age-appropriate tasks (combing hair, going to the store, tying shoes, finding a restroom in a restaurant, etc.)

Social isolation and lack of friends and involvements; few interests

Inappropriate relationships with “older” people (teenagers)

Stealing, pathological lying, fire-setting, or other unusually reckless or dangerous behavior