

10-12 Years

The Development of Language and Conceptual Abilities in Children

What the typical child might say and do:	What the typical child knows or thinks:	What you should say or do:	Cautions:
<p>Increasingly able to gather facts, discuss problems, and make plans</p> <p>Argues logically</p> <p>Shows interest in other people's ideas (at times)</p> <p>Enjoys peer and slang vocabulary</p> <p>Dramatizes and exaggerates</p> <p>Has highly developed vocabulary</p> <p>Normal nonverbal behaviors less obvious; is able to sustain good eye contact, sit quietly, and focus on a task, but still has enormous physical energy and needs outlets for it</p> <p>Can understand and apply health and hygiene rules</p>	<p>Thinks logically and objectively</p> <p>Grasps “double” meanings of words (puns)</p> <p>Sees others in more individualized and detailed ways (“T.J. is always in trouble because <i>he just doesn't get it</i>. He's stubborn and he acts stupid, but he's not really.”)</p> <p>Comprehends years as well as specific dates and understands historical chronology (“I was born in West Seneca, then when I was three we moved to Olean, then when I was 10, we moved to Troy.”)</p> <p>Recognizes that emotions come from “inner experiences”</p> <p>Experiences many fears and worries</p>	<p>Use the same strategies described in the previous entry, but refine them in the context of the child's increased ability to think logically and to be treated with respect.</p> <p>If a conversation is about something that might be highly emotionally charged for the child, allow ample time to “warm up” and to “cool down” after your interview.</p> <p>Take timing cues from the child's verbal and nonverbal behaviors.</p> <p>Give the child permission and encouragement to share whatever information s/he thinks you should have. (“Is there anything else you would like me to know about?”)</p>	<p>Don't rush the child into discussions of highly charged, emotional material.</p>

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Indicators of possible developmental problems:

Regresses in language use/skills

Doesn't speak or stops speaking

Cannot sustain conversations with adults or peers

Has a short attention span

Is inhibited; withdraws