

# AGE APPROPRIATE LEARNING

Age appropriateness is described as matching the learning environment (the physical setup, materials, schedule, curriculum and teaching methods) to the developmental levels of children. It means understanding the developmental changes that typically occur as a child ages, and how we can best support their learning and development during these years. Individual children of the same age group can differ greatly in their physical, emotional and intellectual growth. In the table below, you will find examples of each camp group's age appropriate characteristics.

<b>4 to 6-year-olds: (Preschool - Kindergarten)</b>	
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Make sense of world through play.</li> <li>· A human yo-yo, with mood swings in a wide arc.</li> <li>· Need encouragement, lots of praise, warmth &amp; patience from adults.</li> <li>· Deny responsibility. (also Social)</li> </ul>
Intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Can think of only a few things at a time. They think differently than we do.</li> <li>· Learning about everything all at once, all the time – absorbent!</li> <li>· Learning or has learned how to read &amp; understands the concept of time.</li> </ul>
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Can do it themselves.</li> <li>· Can swim well, walk up to a couple of miles, scramble up a tree &amp; weave a bike.</li> <li>· Need opportunity for activities, especially the use of their large muscles.</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· When in doubt, make it up.</li> <li>· Exaggerate everything &amp; it's about "Me!"</li> <li>· Play best in pairs – 2 by 2.</li> <li>· Enjoy group activities. Boys &amp; girls start to differ.</li> </ul>
<b>7 to 10-year-olds: (1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade)</b>	
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Self-conscious &amp; worry about being accepted. Can be hurt by a casual remark.</li> <li>· Need to be respectful, give praise &amp; reinforce positive behavior.</li> <li>· May be overly dramatic. Worry, complain &amp; take things hard.</li> <li>· Possess a new found ability to empathize. (also Social)</li> <li>· Follow the rules to win praise &amp; approval, but can rebel against authority. (also Social)</li> <li>· Quieter, more self-contained &amp; self-sufficient.</li> </ul>
Intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Hands are busy touching, exploring &amp; feeling everything in sight.</li> <li>· Can tell time &amp; name days, months &amp; numbers in serial order.</li> <li>· Anticipate story endings.</li> <li>· Need definite responsibilities &amp; reasonable expectations. (also Social)</li> </ul>
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Have a higher accident rate.</li> <li>· Tend to get stomachache or other ailment when tasks are difficult. (also Emotional)</li> <li>· Need active, rough &amp; tumble play.</li> <li>· 1/10 girls begins menstruating at this time. (also Emotional)</li> </ul>

Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Champion complainer – Need adults to be sympathetic, but not too serious.</li> <li>· Possessive &amp; protective of things. Act before thinking. (also Intellectual)</li> <li>· Beginning to understand honesty, truthfulness, etc.</li> <li>· Love rowdy jokes &amp; singing.</li> <li>· Conform to the crowd. Like to act, think &amp; wear same kinds of shoes as others.</li> <li>· Busy &amp; active. Enjoy new experiences.</li> <li>· Choose one special friend.</li> <li>· Like to practice “being an adult”.</li> <li>· Self-motivated, allowing them to be self-sufficient. (also Emotional &amp; Intellectual)</li> <li>· Cling to rigid rules – Make up their own way to control challenging situations.</li> <li>· Strong sense of fair play. Follow the rules &amp; expect others to also. (also Emotional)</li> <li>· Like doing things with their friends. Opinions of their friends are important.</li> <li>· Learn well with pictorial materials, like computers.</li> <li>· Love clubs, scouts &amp; secret passwords. Boys play with boys &amp; girls play with girls.</li> <li>· Believe in teamwork &amp; rules. Enjoy the chance to be a leader.</li> <li>· Example of joke: “There’s lots of mail in the mailbox!”, when actually there’s no mail.</li> </ul>
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### 11 to 12-year-olds: (5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade)

Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Painfully self-conscious. (also Social)</li> <li>· Can be overcome by sudden &amp; fierce anger, but not holding grudges for long.</li> <li>· Find fairness to be very important, especially in teachers. (also Social)</li> <li>· Less affectionate, but more willing to compromise, reason &amp; act like an adult. (also Social)</li> <li>· Not yet in control of anger, but moving toward it.</li> </ul>
Intellectu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Slow to respond, but quick to criticize. (also Social)</li> <li>· Understand why rules are made &amp; challenges them much less. (also Social)</li> <li>· Like change &amp; variety, but enjoy a routine &amp; organization. (also Social)</li> </ul>
Physica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Chemical &amp; nervous changes occurring in their body, which effects their behavior.</li> <li>· Enjoy competition. (also Social)</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Demand more freedom than he/she can handle.</li> <li>· Want to walk, talk &amp; look just like their peers.</li> <li>· Proud to be an individual. May choose to dress differently than their peers.</li> <li>· Calmer &amp; more prepared to sit &amp; listen.</li> </ul>

# CONFLICT MEDIATION MODEL

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A healthy, happy sense of well-being depends largely on a person's ability to effectively communicate with the significant people in their life. Where there is communication, there is likely to be conflict. The goal of this model is to communicate through the conflict so that everyone can get what they need, feel less estranged and be better understood. Teaching conflict resolution is teaching a life skill, whether it's with children or adults.

## Tips on How to Mediate

- Create a safe environment by remaining neutral. Don't take sides or express your opinion.
- Manage (don't direct) the conversation toward openness and respect.
- Notice that "the truth" may differ for those in conflict and for you.
- Trust that the conflict can be resolved through communication.
- Keep the lines of communication open. Drawing or writing may work for those unable to verbalize.

## The Process of Mediation

- Ask if both parties are willing to talk to solve the problem. If yes, find a neutral place to talk that is private, with no distractions.
- Set and agree to ground rules. Each person should:
  - Speak, uninterrupted by the other.
  - Show respect, avoid name-calling.
  - Speak the truth, as it is understood or perceived by that person.
  - Be willing to listen, as well as speak.
  - Agree to work together until the conflict is over (or a plan is in place).
- Ask who wants to speak first. Usually it is the offended person. Each person speaks in turn, without interruption.
  - Say what happened.
  - Tell how it felt.
  - Say what you need to have happen now.
  - Say what you are willing to do to move through the situation.
- The mediator's job is to keep the process on track, not to act as judge or detective by asking questions about details or the order of events.
- If responses are slow, you might ask, "Is that all?" or "Is there anything else you want to say?"
- Let the participants know you will ask each one to respond to the following, in order.
- If the conflict cannot be resolved, ask them what they want to do and come to some kind of an agreement about a plan.
  - If appropriate, celebrate the ending. Shake hands, hug or give high-five folks when you're done.
  - Some examples include: meet again in 30 minutes, talk to a friend and then return, sit quietly alone, draw a picture about the conflict (for younger children), take a silent walk together, play a game and talk again, etc.

## **Common Mistakes When Mediating**

- Don't draw your own conclusions about what/who is right/wrong.
- Don't lead the mediation toward a solution you think is best or would work for you.
- You don't need to uncover "the truth" or have someone admit a falsehood/wrongdoing.
- You don't need stick to the questions in order for each participant. Someone may want to jump straight to "What he is willing to do to help?", so go with the flow.
- Be patient with the process. Children don't always have the words, courage or trust to create a smooth, productive process. You are offering a small step in the direction of open, respectful communication and problem-solving.
- Children often recover more quickly from the conflict and want to "get on with life!"
- You don't have to mediate perfectly and neither do they. This is a model, so do whatever it takes to make things work.
- Remember – You shouldn't be working harder than they are! If conflicts arise that can't be resolved easily, you should take this issue to the camp director.