

AGES  
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## Understanding your child

Here is some information about how children learn and grow. Remember that each child grows at their own pace and not all children will be learning the same things at the same ages. Use this information to notice where your child is growing at *their* pace, and to support their growth as only you can. If you have questions about your child's development, please bring this information and your questions to your child's next medical appointment.



### WHAT I CAN DO

I am becoming my own person! I have my own interests, and my personality is really starting to blossom. I have ideas and strong opinions. I can go to school and have friendships. I can ask for what I want, but sometimes I can't understand if I don't get it right away. I can be emotional and self-centered. That's just a part of my growing up!



### WHAT I AM LEARNING

I am learning a lot in school, and even more on the playground! I am learning about being included and left out. I might leave someone out, or get made fun of. That is part of learning how to be in relationships. I am also learning about morals and values. I am learning to balance what I need and want with what other people want. It isn't easy!



### WHAT I NEED FROM YOU

Be patient with me and talk a lot to me about how to have healthy relationships with other people. Don't judge me or my friendships, but listen to me and try to understand. This is where your recovery can really help. You are learning about honesty, values, and boundaries. Teach me what you are learning. Show me what it means to be honest and kind, and to apologize when you're wrong. You don't have to be perfect in order to teach me about morals. We can learn together.



## WHAT THIS TIME MIGHT BE LIKE FOR YOU

This time might be challenging for you as your schedule may change to meet the needs of school. You may feel even more overwhelmed, bringing your child to and from school, appointments, and activities. You may have a lot of feelings as you communicate more with your child about friends and peer pressure. You might also feel judged, or nervous about your child measuring up in school. You might get frustrated if you don't think the school is paying attention to your child's needs. This is an important time to learn how to advocate for your child in a way that doesn't start fights or burn bridges. If you need help learning how to get your child's needs met, ask their pediatrician or counselor for help.

***"It was really hard for me to set boundaries and limits for my kids because I was just learning about my own."***

***"When my little girl got bullied at school, I got so mad I wanted to go to the school and yell at someone. I ended up sending her teacher an email telling her and I was surprised it worked. It made me feel like a proud good mom."***



## HOW YOU CAN TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF RIGHT NOW

This is a very busy time for all parents, but try to save special parts of the day for self-care and one-on-one connection with your child. Maybe you have a special bedtime routine where you each take some deep breaths and share one positive thing from the day. It's important to focus on food and sleep, especially when things get busy. How can you prepare for your week so that you have enough healthy food on hand? It's a good idea to have a few people who can help with babysitting, because kids this age are sometimes too old to join you at recovery meetings.

