

Ages and Life Stages

Fathers do not exasperate your children;
instead, bring them up in the training (by act)
and instruction (by word) of the Lord.

(Ephesians 6:4)

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Ages and Life Stages

	Director (Ages 0-6) Beginning to trust • Imitates adult religious behavior • Asks questions • Senses love and uses faith words, desires a safe and loving place • I belong and am welcome.	Trainer (Ages 7-12) Beginning to identify with "my" church • Learns stories/songs of the faith, understands God concretely • Engages in church service/discipleship • See church as a place to see friends, contribute, and lead	Coach (Ages 13-18) Moves toward God in abstract terms • Asking deeper questions • May see God as distant • Beginning to own his/her faith • Influenced by other's faith • Sees God as companion • May question faith • Looking for relevance • Looking for a safe place to serve and lead • Beginning to form relationships with respected adults • Utilizes gifts in serving and leading	Consultant (Ages 19+) May leave and/or return to the church seeking spiritual experience • Some want answers • Some want to ask and search • Want to be accompanied as they search for answers.
Faith, Spiritual & Church				
Physical, Brain & Intellectual	Rapid growth & development • Talks, walks, runs, climbs, and sings • Learns best from concrete examples • Begins to differentiate between real vs. imaginary • Stores events and learns from them.	Physical growth slows • Wider gender differences • Finer coordination • Thinking part of brain development • Concrete in thinking • Able to memorize • Learns by many modes.	Rapid growth • Huge gender differences • Learning to live in an adult body • Need for movement • Self-conscious • Judgement center of brain not developed, Intense raw emotions • Increased abstract thinking • Short attention span • Asks complex questions • Not always able to understand the answers • Understands symbols, possibilities, and consider consequences • Wants to apply insights to daily living • Aware of things outside of his/her life.	Physical growth slows • Reach physical peak • Learning preferences established • Care of body important • Brain does not reach full potential until mid-20's • Time is valuable, Learns best stress free • Life application important • Prefers problem centered learning
Relational & Sexual	Self-centered • Parents are the primary relationship • Parallel to relational play • Increasing empathy • Beginning to name the emotions • See big people as good, Body Awareness • Curiosity • Gender Awareness.	Increasing empathy and loyalty, • Same gender cliques • Peers important but still want to please adults • Belonging to the group important • Curiosity about sex • Exploring gender traits • Sexual exploration starts • Questions about same sex attraction at least as a topic begins.	Seeks and is influenced by peers • First love • Self-conscious • Needs significant adult relationships, Same gender friends important • Moving toward opposite gender friendships, Establishes personal identity • Moving toward intimacy in relationships • Can express who "I" am, Physical changes • Wondering "Am I normal?" • Opposite sex friendships and encounters • Exploration of emotional, physical, commitment, and intimacy issues in relationships.	Making decisions about marriage and family • Seeking long-term personal commitment • Seeking small friend group to substitute for family • Responsible management of sexuality • Forming belief system re: sex issues i.e. STD's, pornography • birth control, infertility, same sex attraction.
Moral	Adults decide what is right/wrong • Obeys to avoid punishment • Begins to understand intentions • Begins to connect choices with consequences.	Reciprocal sense of justice • Strong belief in rules • Beginning to see consequences of actions • Understands intent.	Wants to save the world and those who suffer • Difficulty distinguishing group from personal values • Affective responses to ideas and social realities • Concern for democratic process and human rights • Begins to act based on values • Begins to tell the difference between group and personal values.	May be critical in reflection of unexamined values and act on newly committed values.