

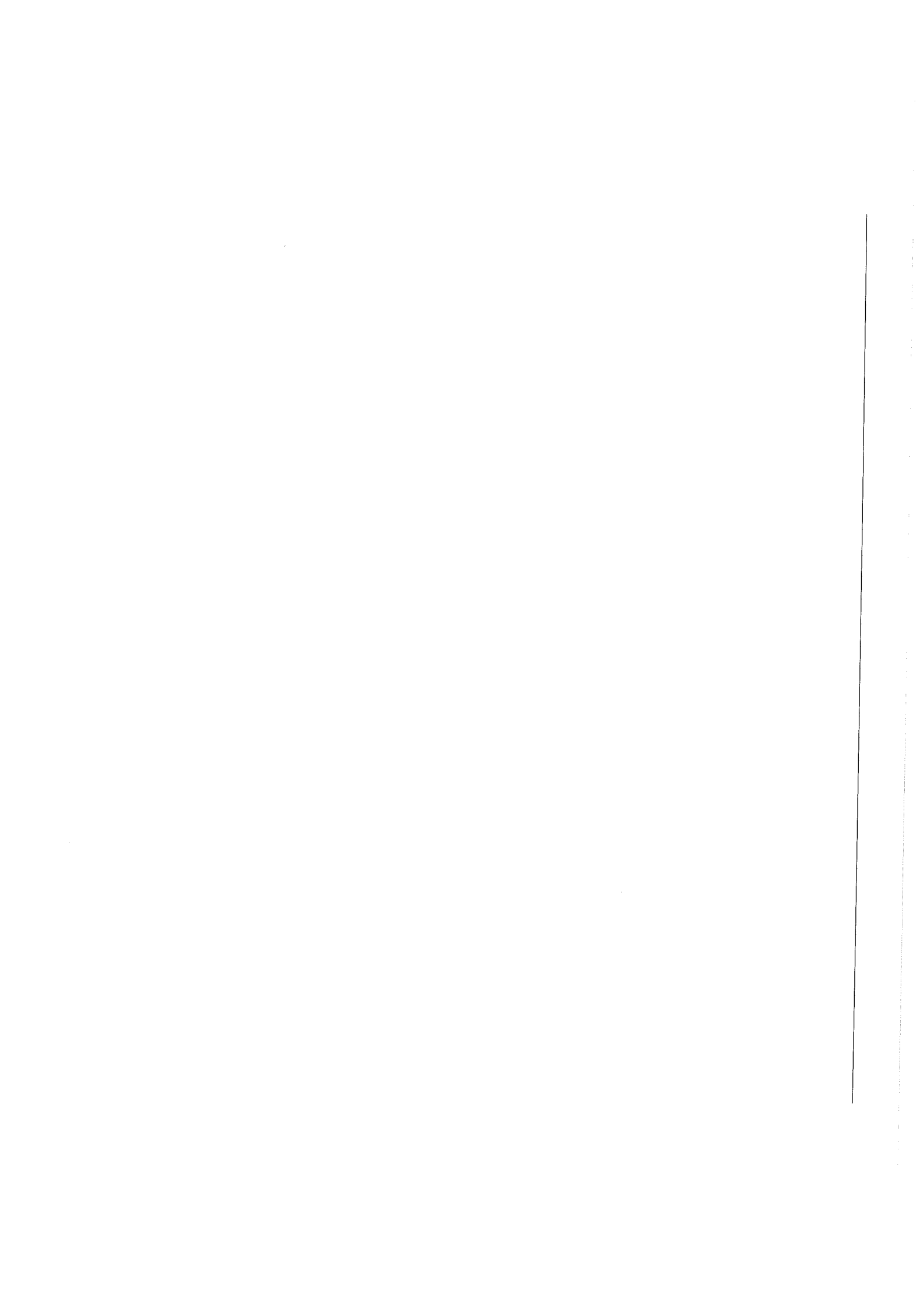
Child & Adolescent Developmental Traits by Age Chart

Better understand your students' development with this chart of common physical, linguistic, cognitive, social, and emotional traits from ages 4 through 14. This information is based on Chip Wood's *Yardsticks: Child and Adolescent Development Ages 4-14*, the preeminent guide for understanding and addressing child development through the elementary and middle school years.

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Age	Physical	Language/Cognitive	Social/Emotional
4	<p>Energetic and active, but often clumsy</p> <p>Learning to switch between near and far focus for visual activities</p> <p>Fine motor skills are not yet well-developed</p>	<p>Short attention spans</p> <p>Learn best through hands-on exploration</p> <p>Love imaginative play and take delight in words (including bathroom talk!)</p>	<p>Friendly and talkative, but sometimes fearful or worried</p> <p>Love being with friends and learning to work together</p> <p>Need adult help to find words to express needs instead of reacting physically</p>
5	<p>Still awkward with tasks requiring small movements</p> <p>Visual focus is on objects close at hand</p> <p>Need lots of physical activity</p>	<p>See one way to do things</p> <p>Imagination can be vivid, which can lead to believing toys are alive</p> <p>Interpret words in their literal sense—"We're late, we've got to fly" means "We've got to fly like birds."</p> <p>Express themselves in few words</p> <p>Think out loud before acting</p>	<p>Younger fives want adult approval; they like to be "good"</p> <p>Older fives may challenge adult authority and seem oppositional at times</p> <p>Need consistent routines, rules, and discipline</p>
6	<p>Love to be active</p> <p>Noisy, sloppy, and in a hurry</p> <p>Tire easily</p>	<p>Very curious; love new ideas and asking questions</p> <p>Ambitious; may choose projects that are too hard</p> <p>Better understanding of past and present; can begin to understand real history markers</p>	<p>Enthusiastic, eager, competitive</p> <p>Rush to be first or dawdle to be last</p> <p>Care a great deal about friends</p> <p>Extremely sensitive; severe criticism can truly be traumatic</p> <p>Challenge boundaries and authority</p> <p>Enjoy working in groups</p>
7	<p>Often keep eyes focused on small, close area</p> <p>Writing is very small</p> <p>Improved coordination for both gross and fine motor skills</p> <p>Can be sensitive to physical and psychosomatic hurts</p>	<p>Need support for sustained, quiet work periods</p> <p>Like to collect, sort, and classify</p> <p>Rapidly develop their vocabularies</p> <p>Listen well and speak precisely</p> <p>Bothered by mistakes and try hard to make their work perfect</p> <p>Enjoy hands-on exploration</p>	<p>Need security, structure, and stability</p> <p>Sometimes moody or pouty</p> <p>Often have a best friend, although their best friend might change frequently</p> <p>Rely on adults for help and reassurance</p> <p>Prefer working and playing alone or with one friend</p> <p>Dislike taking risks or making mistakes</p>



Age	Physical	Language/Cognitive	Social/Emotional
8	<p>Increase in small motor coordination</p> <p>Restless; play hard and tire quickly</p> <p>Eyes focus well on objects near and far</p> <p>Growth spurts lead to some awkwardness</p>	<p>Industrious, impatient, full of ideas; like to talk and explain ideas</p> <p>Often take on more than they can handle</p> <p>Generally able to pay attention, but don't always remember what they've heard or are supposed to do</p> <p>Can handle increasingly complex tasks but tire easily</p>	<p>Love to share humor</p> <p>Adjust well to change; bounce back from disappointments</p> <p>Love group activities</p> <p>May prefer working and playing with some classmates more than others</p> <p>Growing awareness of fairness issues</p>
9	<p>Improved coordination</p> <p>Like to push physical limits, but tire easily</p> <p>Restless; can't sit still for long</p> <p>Often report aches and pains</p>	<p>Industrious and curious; beginning to be aware of a bigger world of ideas</p> <p>Worry about global issues</p> <p>Take pride in attention to detail and finished work, but may jump quickly between interests</p> <p>Look hard for explanations of facts; how things work; and why things happen as they do</p> <p>Difficulty with abstractions such as large numbers</p> <p>Love descriptive language and wordplay</p>	<p>Competitive; may form cliques</p> <p>Critical of self and others; need adult lightheartedness and humor</p> <p>Like to work with a partner of their choice; can work in groups but with lots of arguing</p> <p>Often feel worried or anxious</p> <p>Can be sullen, moody, aloof, one minute and goofy and fun-loving the next</p>
10	<p>Large muscles needed for big movements are developing quickly</p> <p>Need lots of outdoor play and physical challenges</p> <p>Enjoy precision tasks</p> <p>Benefit from frequent snacks and rest periods</p>	<p>Listen well and enjoy talking and explaining; can appreciate others' perspectives</p> <p>Hardworking; take pride in schoolwork</p> <p>Increasingly able to think abstractly</p> <p>Enjoy categorizing and classifying; like rules and logic</p> <p>Good at memorizing</p> <p>Can concentrate on reading and thinking for long periods</p> <p>Enjoy choral reading, poetry, plays, singing</p>	<p>Eager to reach out to others</p> <p>Quick to anger and to forgive</p> <p>Open to learning meditation or problem-solving skills</p> <p>Developing a more mature sense of right and wrong</p> <p>Appreciate their efforts noticed</p> <p>Cooperative and flexible; do well with group activities and cooperative learning</p>
	Restless and very energetic	Like "adult" tasks, such as	The common age for cliques

<p>11</p>	<p>Need lots of food, physical activity, and sleep Have growth spurts</p>	<p>conducting internet research Enjoy brain teasers and puzzles Would rather learn new skills than refine old ones Challenge assumptions—their own and those of adults More adept at abstract thinking</p>	<p>Need a reasonable amount of time to talk with peers Moody; self-absorbed Sensitive about changing bodies Like to challenge rules, argue, and test limits</p>
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Age	Physical	Language/Cognitive	Social/Emotional
12	<p>Very energetic</p> <p>Need lots of food, physical activity, and sleep</p> <p>Have growth spurts</p> <p>Stay up late and want to sleep late</p>	<p>May begin to excel at a subject or skill</p> <p>More able to think abstractly about complex issues</p> <p>Increasingly able to plan, organize thoughts and work, and set short-term goals</p> <p>Able to see both sides of an issue but like to argue one point of view</p>	<p>Care more about peers' opinions than those of adults</p> <p>Enjoy conversation with adults</p> <p>Capable of self-awareness, insight, and empathy</p> <p>Enthusiastic and spontaneous</p> <p>May reach out to classmates they have not been friends with</p>
13	<p>Lots of physical energy</p> <p>Most boys showing first signs of puberty; most girls are menstruating and have reached almost full physical development</p> <p>Skin problems are common; hygiene becomes more important</p> <p>Health and sex education classes can embarrass them and lead to silly or rude behavior</p>	<p>Often tentative, worried, and unwilling to take risks</p> <p>Abstract reasoning skills continue to grow</p> <p>May have strong opinions about likes and dislikes</p> <p>Often highly judgmental of the adults in their lives</p> <p>Often complain about fairness and tend to argue when working in groups</p>	<p>May experience a bumpy transition to increasing independence</p> <p>Can be moody and sensitive, may isolate themselves</p> <p>Acts of meanness may come from insecurity</p> <p>Increasingly sarcastic</p> <p>Feel and exert a lot of peer pressure</p> <p>May use social media extensively</p> <p>Personal appearance is a top concern, but neatness of their room is not</p>
14	<p>Energetic, loud, rambunctious</p> <p>Need lots of snacks, sleep, and exercise</p> <p>Girls are almost fully developed; boys have growth spurts and upper body strength begins to develop</p> <p>More interested in sex at this age</p>	<p>Respond well to academic challenges</p> <p>Like learning how things work</p> <p>Small cooperative learning groups are appealing to them</p> <p>Take pleasure in developing individual skills</p> <p>May say "I'm bored" when they mean "I don't understand" to save face</p>	<p>Tend to feel that they "know it all"</p> <p>Dislike and respond poorly to adult lectures</p> <p>May express contempt with facial expressions or body language as they try to distance themselves from adults</p> <p>Still depend on adults for empathy and boundaries</p>

More willing to make mistakes and learn from them
Enjoy tackling big ideas

Get the Full Comprehensive Guide

Help your students learn and grow by better understanding their developmental needs with *Yardsticks: Child and Adolescent Development Ages 4-14*, by Chip Wood. In this easy-to-read guide, you'll get age-by-age research, narratives, tips, and strategies to help your students thrive.

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