

What's Special About Me at this Age?



Character Building

- I am learning the importance of contributing to the community. Encourage me to value the knowledge I gain by helping others. Teach me to help others without expecting to be paid. I am learning the maligait of working for the common good.
- I need you to notice my skills and my ability to think of solutions. Encourage me!



Communication

- I have a strong memory. I can remember songs and stories.
- I am also starting to understand the significance of songs and stories more. I can understand symbols, deeper meanings, and older terminology.



Skill Building

- I need to build my skills now as I prepare for independence. Encourage me to develop specialized knowledge.
- Encourage me to learn by helping others with tasks. This helps me build new skills.
- I am learning to value doing tasks well, not just to get the job done. Encourage me to become proficient at each skill. For example, when I make a fishing hole, I should learn to make precise cuts and use my strength efficiently. This conserves energy.

Applying Inuit Values

Survival



Definition

We will survive if we are skilled and able. To survive, we must be observant, thoughtful, and quick. We must apply our skills and learning from past experiences. We must be well prepared to face difficulties.

Inuit talk about continually planning and preparing for the future because nothing is ever certain. Learning is a lifelong process. It starts early in life and is perfected in youth. Lifelong learning is essential for survival.

These strengths are essential for survival:

- Becoming highly skilled
- Being able to operate independently
- Seeking solutions
- Thinking deeply
- Respecting and caring for the environment and people

Reminders

- ✓ Youth are going through puberty at this age. They experience many physical and emotional changes. Make sure that your child has a full physical examination.
- ✓ Youth need calcium. Calcium is in milk, cheese, yoghurt, caribou broth, and soft bones.

Inunnguiniq

Childrearing Advice
from Inuit Elders

13 Years



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CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

Children and Adolescents with Special Needs

About this Age

At this age, youth begin the transition to adulthood. They help the family a lot. They have many skills. Sometimes, they get excited and try new things without thinking through the consequences, but parents do not need to worry about them most of the time.

This is a happy age for many youth. They are glad they can do tasks independently. They like to test their skills and show their capacity for independence. They are excited about their new freedom and they want to show who they are as individuals.

If youth have not developed good skills and do not feel confident, this can be an unhappy age. They feel insecure and fearful. They struggle to find a place where they belong. This makes them vulnerable to negative choices, such as using drugs or alcohol or developing unhealthy relationships based on dependence.

The most dangerous condition for a youth is sammuktuq. Sammuktuq means giving up on wanting to learn and do things. This happens if a youth has been discouraged or put down so much that she is scared to try anymore. In this condition, the youth's spirit could be crushed. Or, with love and encouragement, she could be enabled for life.

At this age, all youth need encouragement and acceptance by adults. If they don't get it in positive ways, they will try to get it in negative ways.

What Parents Can Do

- **Support independence.** As children grow, we give them harder tasks that match their skills. At this age, support your child to take full responsibility for completing household tasks. Your job is to prepare your child to be able to live independently one day.
- **Have high expectations.** Encourage your child to complete tasks quickly and without wasting resources. Expect her to clean equipment and return it to put it back when she is finished.
- **Explain the purpose of your teachings.** If your child complains about your high expectations, explain that your purpose is to prepare him to be independent. This is training for life and will cause others to treat him as an adult.
- **Keep talking.** Keep talking with your child, even if she seems distant. Never stop communicating. Make sure the teachings are understood.

More Comments from Elders

Youth who have not learned to take responsibility are not able to be independent. They have not matured. They rely on their parents for everything. Parents worry when this happens. We worry about such youth when they go out on the land because their skills are not strong enough. This burdens the family and the community.

Another burden is supporting for young people who have children before they are prepared to raise them properly. At this age, teach your child to think carefully about consequences and to prepare. You are responsible for teaching this from an early age. Reinforce this teaching now.

Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Many youth this age find it hard to talk about their thoughts and feelings. They may be shy about sharing their concerns or opinions. Find ways to spend time with your child. Talk openly with them. Talk about life, becoming an adult, what to expect, and how to live a good life.
- Share the teachings. The teachings will help them throughout life. Repeat them often so your child remembers them. The teachings will be easier for your child to accept if you teach them a little bit at a time, continuously. Connect the information with daily activities.



Tips for Parents

- ✓ Many things in our lives are changing, but some things will always remain the same. We need to hunt to supply food to our families. We need to know the weather and the water. We need to raise children well so they become capable human beings. The basic principles of good parenting have not changed over thousands of years. We can rely on these teachings today. We must maintain IQ so the next generations can rely on the teachings, too.
- ✓ Do not be afraid to actively instruct your child even as he becomes an adult.