

Behaviors that are Typical from Infancy to Age 12

Just as with all areas of development, there are certain behaviors that are typical as children progress through developmental stages. These behaviors often challenge adults, but they are to be expected. The table below provides examples of the types of behaviors staff members may encounter with each age group. Share this information with staff members to help them prepare for work with children.

Age Group	Behaviors that are developmentally appropriate (or expected) but may challenge adults
Pre-mobile infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crying
Mobile infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking toys from others' hands • Mouthing toys • Climbing or crawling on others • Knocking things down (block structures, etc.) • Stranger anxiety or refusing to go to unfamiliar adults
Toddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biting • Saying "No" • High levels of activity; rarely sit still • Insisting on doing things independently ("I can do it by myself") • Whining or crying
Preschoolers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fears and vivid imaginations (fear of the dark, fear of monsters, etc.) • Excluding others from play • Telling others what to do • "Tattling" or telling on others
Young School-Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very concerned with fairness • May use sex differences as the basis for play decisions or excluding others from play ("No boys allowed") • Lying or stretching the truth • "Tattling" or telling on others • "Cheating" at games or getting upset and not wanting to play
Older School-Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoiding adults & preferring peers • Talking back • Experimenting with swear words and "adult" behaviors • Wanting to appear "cool" to peers