

# What's Special About Me at this Age?



## Character Building

- My character is mostly formed. At this age, I need you to build my natural strengths and help me work with my weaknesses.
- I need to correct any bad habits now so that I will be successful in life. At this age, I need you to pay special attention to teaching me proper attitudes.
- I can help the community. Encourage me to find a way to contribute, using my talents and interests. I will feel good when others value me and notice that I am working for the common good.



## Communication

- I can express my thoughts honestly and respectfully. I can ask questions to get information that I need. I can stand up for myself respectfully.
- Today, Inuit rely on written language. At this age, I need good writing skills. I need to be able to use syllabics well.



## Skill Building

- I have developed strong skills in several areas. I am confident about these skills. I can use these skills to do projects independently.
- Encourage me to develop more skills. I need to become highly skilled in many areas. Encourage me to always increase my capability, now and throughout my life.

# Applying Inuit Values

## Resourcefulness



### Definition

Resourcefulness is using creativity, innovation, and deep thinking (isumaksaqsiuttiarniq) to resolve issues. Resourcefulness enables us to face challenges using the resources we have. The world is changing quickly so we need to be adaptive and creative. We need to be resourceful to plan for the future.

### Process

Isumaksaqsiuttiarniq is deep thinking that helps us improve a situation in innovative ways. We learn how to think this way through skilled perseverance (upalurniq). It is a life long process. Eventually, we reach a high level of wisdom that supports the whole group (silaturniq). We often see this wisdom in older people, but sometimes also in younger people. As a group, we can nurture and develop this wisdom. We consider those who think deeply and have wisdom to be leaders.

## Reminders

- ✓ At this age, children are going through puberty. To develop properly, they need a healthy diet. They also need an active lifestyle, with fresh air and exercise.

# Inunnguiniq

## Childrearing Advice from Inuit Elders

12 Years



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## About this Age

At this age, your child is a very capable person. She knows herself. She knows her strengths, weaknesses, personal traits, and interests. She is becoming better at controlling her emotions and behavior. She takes on many responsibilities. She is a big help to the family.

Twelve-year olds are proud to have responsibilities. Your child wants to complete tasks without help or supervision. He wants to be independent and capable. He can solve small challenges. He thinks about possible problems and plans ahead to avoid them.

When you have a task to do, involve your child at this age. Consult her when you have to plan a trip or do a sewing project.

At this age, encourage your child to think about his future. He should have some ideas about what he wants to do, such as what kind of work he wants to do.

Be aware that children are easily influenced by others at this age! They could develop bad habits and lose their way. This can happen if you have not taught them their role in the family or if you have not encouraged their abilities. This can also happen if you discipline them too harshly or neglect them. There is a negative love that involves being lazy about discipline and ignoring the child's learning needs. Real love involves proper discipline, careful attention to skills development, and teaching the child their role in the family. This love protects them from negative influences.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Be very supportive.** Your child needs lots of encouragement at this age.
- **Talk about the future.** Tell your child what you envision for them based on his strengths and interests. Encourage him to think about the future.
- **Encourage new experiences.** Provide opportunities for your child to learn new skills and experience new activities.
- **Give helpful criticism.** Talk with your child about her weaknesses. Give her ideas about how she can work on them. Be loving and encouraging.
- **Balance family and friends.** Allow your child time for friends and interests. But, have clear expectations for his participation in family activities.
- **Talk, talk, talk!** Your child has many questions and she may be too shy to ask. If you communicate openly, your child will be comfortable to talk with you when she has concerns.
- **Use discipline.** At this age, your child still needs clear rules. He should expect consequences for not following the rules. To discipline a child this age, talk seriously with them about responsibility and behaving like a capable adult. Teach him that if he behaves like a child, he will lose privileges.
- **Support personal and cultural identity.** Talk with your child about namesakes, kinship relationships, and family heritage. Make a family tree together.
- **Support decision-making skills.** Help your child think through consequences to actions. This will help her learn to make good decisions.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Include your child in land activities and on trips. Teach them place names. Teach them directions and landmarks to help find direction.
- Help your child develop thinking skills by asking him questions. Ask him about what he sees and what he experiences. Encourage him to notice cause and effect. Encourage him to think about how things work.
- Observe your child's interests. Get involved and help her develop her skills.
- Give your child tasks that will help him build his skills. Encourage him to observe others to learn how to complete the task independently. For example, you could challenge your child to build a small sled or cut and sew a garment independently.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ If you don't have the skills your child wants to learn, ask an expert in the community to teach your child.
- ✓ Balancing family time and free time for your child is difficult for everyone at this age. Pay close attention if your child changes their behavior suddenly or if he becomes rebellious, withdrawn, irritable, or secretive. He could be having problems with peers, such as bullying or using drugs or alcohol. Talk with him and seek help from others who have a good relationship with him.