

What's Special About Me at this Age?



Character Building

- I am learning to deal with adversity. Teach me to accept situations that I cannot change. Teach me to persevere when I face difficulties. This will help me succeed in life.
- I am learning to always have a good attitude. Teach me that a positive attitude will help me think clearly and find solutions to my problems. Teach me that negative attitudes make it difficult to think clearly.



Communication

- I am learning to explain my ideas and be persuasive. To do this, I have to think about all the options available in a situation and the "big picture." I am learning that when I share ideas that I've thought about carefully, I help the whole group reach consensus.



Skill Building

- I am very skilled, but I know I can always learn more and improve. Encourage me to always observe others' techniques so I can learn more.
- I am learning to apply my skills and knowledge in different situations. Teach me to be observant and adaptive. When I use my skills and knowledge in new ways, I show innovation (iqqaqqaukkaringniq) and wisdom (isuma). I need encouragement when I do this.

Applying Inuit Values

Moving Forward



Definition

"Moving forward" is way to face life's challenges. First, we must accept where we are at any moment. Then, we can identify where we want to go and make a plan to get there. Moving forward requires patience and persistence.

Commentary

Sometimes, people who don't have strong skills are teased and put down. But, we must always move forward and never give up. We have many traditional stories that teach us to persist. Some young people do not have someone to help them. But, they can still make a plan to learn what they want to learn. Our message for young people is that they must be patient and persist. This is a time to plan and prepare for the future. Find a way to learn what you need to learn. There is always a way forward. Consider all the options available in your community.

Reminders

- ✓ Sometimes, youth need someone to talk to, such as a counselor or an adult to talk to confidentially. Encourage youth to find people who can support them this way.

Inunnguiniq

Childrearing Advice
from Inuit Elders

17 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 should notice what others need and try to help them. They should be quick to offer help to their family and friends.

At seventeen years old, youth need to prepare for the future. They should be planning their next steps in life. Planning is an important skill. They should be able to think through options and make good decisions.

Communication skills are also very important. At this age, youth should be able to communicate their ideas. They should be able to support their ideas with good evidence and clear thinking.

Youth who have been trained well by their parents are ready for the transition to adulthood. They feel comfortable and prepared. They are confident in their knowledge and skills.

Other youth may not feel confident and prepared. They may not have the skills and knowledge they need yet. They need more time and support to learn. They should find mentors and ask for support. They can learn from skilled peers and adults in the community.

Today, many young people are raised by only one parent. They may have missed out on learning the skills and knowledge that two parents can offer. These youth need to advocate for themselves and find ways to learn the skills they want.

What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage good decision-making.** Support your youth to plan ahead. Encourage him to think carefully about actions and consequences.
- **Talk about core life skills.** Talk about the core skills and knowledge your youth will need to live independently.
- **Identify learning goals.** Help your youth recognize his strengths and what he still needs to learn.
- **Support more independence.** Support your youth to try being more independent in safe ways. For example, allow her to go on group trips or activities supported by other adults.
- **Encourage perseverance.** Encourage your youth to accept situations that cannot be changed and to persevere through difficulties. Teach him to make the best of any situation and to learn from challenges. Teach him that how we react to situations makes them better or worse.
- **Reach out to youth!** Sometimes, youth are afraid to ask for help when they need it. Be aware of youth who need help. Reach out to them with love and respect. Involve them in activities so they become more capable.
- **Take responsibility.** Today we are not self-reliant like we were in the past. We expect others to help us and intervene in our lives. We must take responsibility for our own lives. For example, we must prepare for challenges. And, we must heal from past hurts. Teach your youth this.

Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- We must teach youth to take responsibility for their choices and plan for the future. This is how we show to respect others and ourselves. Talk with your youth about being prepared for parenthood.
- Youth are having children too early, without spouses and before they are ready. This forces youth to grow up and become independent too quickly. Without spouses, young parents miss out on the important support that everyone needs in the early days of parenthood.
- Teach your youth to consider how their life will be changed by having a baby. Teach them to consider how it will affect their family, too. For example, the family will be in a lifelong relationship with the other parent.
- Young mothers need support. They should not be expected to cope with parenthood alone. Young men must take responsibility for parenting. We should expect and encourage young men to provide support for the mother and child.

Tips for Parents

- ✓ Try to talk with your youth before they have a problem. Teach them that planning has always been important to Inuit. Life matters were not left to chance. For example, people arranged marriages because marriages affect the two individuals and their families for the rest of their lives. In the past, people did not get married until they were ready. Men had to be able to build a proper iglu. This was a sign of being ready to look after a family. Talk with your youth about the responsibilities of having a family today.