

# What's Special About Me at this Age?



## Character Building

- I take on chores and other responsibilities.
- I am aware my reputation. I want others to notice my good behavior and abilities.
- I am beginning to understand teachings and expectations for my behavior.



## Communication

- I am learning to communicate openly and respectfully. Expect me to show respect to others.
- I ask many questions! Teach me to ask the right questions to learn what I want to learn.
- I am self-conscious about my speech. I want to pronounce words correctly and the correct terms.

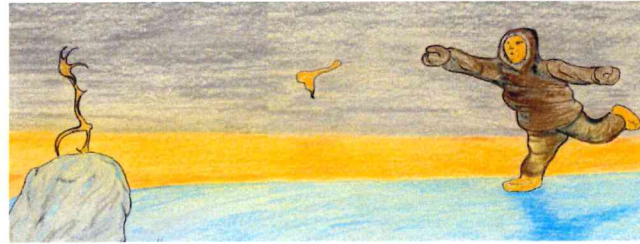


## Skill Building

- I have personal interests. I want to learn more about them and become skilled.
- I notice that I am becoming able. I want to do well and be known for my abilities.
- I have lots to learn, so I need to practice! Encourage me to practice and persevere so that I become capable.
- Teach me the expectation to never give up. This is not easy to follow. I need encouragement.

# Applying Inuit Values

## Practice



## Definition

Practice is essential for learning. We begin to learn a skill by observing and then doing. We become able by practicing the skill with persistence. Practicing is a core part of pilimmaksarniq.

The picture shows a child playing a skill-building game of hitting antlers off a rock. In the past, practice and skills development were built into games and daily activities.

## Process

The pilimmaksarniq learning process is to observe, try, practice, and keep improving. We learn by trial and error. Children need real-life opportunities to test their skills and strengthen them by experience. For this reason, some Elders are critical of education that takes place only in classrooms, using only abstract ideas, paper, and pencil. They believe that learning is most effective in real life contexts. The learner is active and can see the immediate results of his learning.

## Reminders

- ✓ Eight-year olds are busy! Make sure your child gets enough rest, good food, and clear instructions to be safe and healthy.
- ✓ Children need to be active for good health. Inactivity causes health problems. Support your child to find activities they like, get outside, and stay active.

# Inunnguiniq

Childrearing Advice  
from Inuit Elders

8 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, your child is becoming “able.” This is a time of rich learning. This is a time to pass on teachings about how to live a good life.

At this age, your child is very observant and eager to learn. He asks many questions. He wants to understand “why.” He persists to get clear answers.

Give your child more freedom to explore at this age. She wants to try things independently. She loves to play outside with friends. She may be difficult to control because she has her own interests and can entertain herself without help from you.

Support your eight-year old to take on more responsibilities and expectations. In the past, boys were taught about weapons and how to handle them safely and skillfully. Girls took on sewing projects independently and were expected to care for children and help with cooking, cleaning, and other chores.

Teach your eight-year old to look after himself, his belongings, and his environment. He can help with chores, such as dishes and shoveling. Teach him to clean snow off his clothing when he comes inside. Expect him to put things away and be careful with everything he uses, especially if it belongs to someone else.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage your child’s interests** Provide materials and tools he can use for practice.
- **Be an active teacher.** Spend time with your child and teach her what you know. This is a time of rich learning. She can remember many instructions now.
- **Encourage your child to be active.** Tell him to go outside and run around.
- **Teach safety.** Teach your child when and where she can play safely.
- **Encourage thinking.** Your child will ask many questions at this age. Encourage him to think of the answers for himself. When you answer, explain your answer.
- **Teach how to be a good friend.** Teach your child to treat others how she wants to be treated.
- **Give clear instructions to children.**
- **Set high expectations for behaviour.** Teach the Inuit rules and principles for living a good life.
- **Assign chores and responsibilities.** Give your child chores that he can do independently. Expect him to do the chores. Praise and encourage him when he does.
- **Set bed times.** Your child is very active and needs good rest. She may not notice when she’s tired.
- **Provide time with Elders.** Make sure your child has time with grandparents or other Elders. Teach him to help Elders and do chores for them.
- **Teach ethics.** Encourage your child to do the right thing, even when others may not bother. Teach her child the value of building a good reputation.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Encourage your child to practice, practice, practice to become skilled.
- Games that support skills development are very important for eight-year olds. Encourage your child to play games that strengthen the body, mind, and spirit. Examples: juggling, hitting targets, playing with balls, string games, memory games, and cooperative learning games.
- Encourage your child to play with other children so they learn to cooperate and build relationships. Teach him to play hard but not competitively. Teach him to encourage others to do well, too.
- Support your child to use reason to solve problems. Give her examples of challenging situations. Ask her to think of solutions. For example, ask her what she would do if the roof blew off, if she were floating away on the ice, or if she were lost on the land.

## Tips for Parents

- ✓ This is a critical year for your child’s character development. She is learning to take responsibility and have a good reputation. Be your child’s teacher. Take time to teach values and beliefs. If you don’t teach your child at this age, she will learn from someone else.
- ✓ This is also a time when children develop critical thinking skills. Teach your child that we always have many choices in life. We must always think carefully to make the best choices.