

# What's Special About Me at this Age?



## Character Building

- My character is mostly developed, but I can still be corrected. Help me to see how I can improve and what changes I need to make. Encourage me to persevere. Celebrate my successes.



## Communication

- I am developing essential communication skills for employment and for my identity as an Inuk. Encourage me to develop my Inuktitut skills, including correct grammar, spelling, and typing.
- Remember that I may receive less Inuktitut instruction at school as this age. So, I need more encouragement at home to maintain my skills.



## Skill Building

- I have developed many skills. Now, I am learning how to use my skills in different situations. Encourage me to notice how my skills in one area can be used in other areas.
- Inuit are always encouraged to think about the connections between our experiences, our knowledge, and our skills. Now, I need encouragement to think about options for my future, based on what I know and can do well.

# Applying Inuit Values

## Perseverance



### Definition

To persevere means to always try to learn and improve, even when we face difficulties. It means never giving up.

### Commentary

"Today, I hear people asking for food and other things on the radio. They are not self-sufficient. And, they don't give anything back to the people who help them. For example, they could offer to clear snow from the doorway or help in other ways. My wife and I are quite old, but we still go out on the land and bring food back to the community. It is difficult for us, but we are not giving up. We do what we can do. Some young people today seem to expect others to provide for them. They don't even get out of bed. We were always taught to feed others, but also to help them learn to survive independently. Today, some people don't want to learn for themselves. We need to emphasize Inuit teachings more, such as perseverance, self-sufficiency, and never harming others, including your wife and children. "

## Reminders

- ✓ You and your children will be healthier if you spend time on the land. We are not encouraging our minds and bodies to be healthy if we lie around the house and depend on others to provide for us.

# Inunnguiniq

Childrearing Advice  
from Inuit Elders

15 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, a youth should be very capable and independent. He should be able to do tasks well, using the correct tools and techniques. He should be using his skills to help others and contribute to the family.

If a youth is not able to help others and contribute to the family, she might have low self-esteem. Low self-esteem can make learning more difficult. If she has not been taught how to live properly and to be independent, she might believe that she is unable to learn. She might not want to try to learn any more. At this age, youth are at risk of giving up on themselves.

By this age, youth should be able to plan ahead. They should know how to plan for each season. They should also be prepared to plan for their future. Without a clear plan in life, a youth feels insecure and might feel afraid of the future.

A youth who is fearful and does not have a clear direction in life might become disruptive. He might challenge authority and break laws. He might take risks, doing dangerous things to hide his fear. He might also bully others or be controlling in relationships. This behavior will hurt others and will also hurt the youth.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Keep teaching expectations.** Your child needs to know what is expected of him in the family, in the community, and in his life. He needs rules and clear instructions. He needs you to continue teaching him throughout his life, preparing him for each stage.
- **Never give up!** Never give up on teaching your child, even if she wants to give up on herself. If you stop trying to teach her, she will become a burden to the community and will not be able to teach her own children later in life. We must continue to confront such youth and support them. A youth who still needs to learn core skills should find caring and qualified adults who can teach her. She can offer help in exchange for their teaching.
- **Teach preparation and organization.** Explain to youth that Inuit survived in the past by being prepared and organized. They could not have survived without these skills. Teach your youth that he will be successful if he thinks ahead, always prepares, and keeps his life organized. Life will be much easier this way.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Today, some parents spoil their children and protect them too much. They see only the good in their children. They don't want to discipline their children or correct their children's mistakes. They think this is love. But, this is not real love. It is laziness and neglect. Their children will not be prepared for life and will suffer. In the past, Elders would have corrected such parents.
- Parents' most important responsibility is discipline. Discipline is hard work. It takes a lot of energy and patience. When we discipline our children, we are helping prepare them for a good life. Good parenting prepares future generations to be strong and to survive. Proper discipline gives children a strong foundation. Discipline should not be cruel, but should involve re-direction, showing appropriate behaviours, and correcting children's mistakes.
- Without a strong foundation, children will become frustrated in life. They may be unable to cope with hardships and may even become suicidal.



## Tips for Parents

- ✓ Show healthy love. This includes high expectations, discipline, personal attention, and time together.
- ✓ Remember that becoming a capable human being takes a lifetime. Your role as a parent doesn't end when your child becomes a teenager or adult.