

What's Special About Me at this Age?



Character Building

- I am strengthening relationships with others. I am learning my new role as an adult in my family and community.
- I am finding my way in the world. I am meeting other families and groups more. I am learning to build new relationships on my own.



Communication

- I am learning to maintain good communication with parents and Elders.
- I am finding my own "voice." I am learning to contribute to adult conversations. I am building my reputation in the adult world.



Skill Building

- I am learning the value of planning, organization and preparation. I am learning that this makes life more predictable. Remind me that these skills are essential for success.
- I am learning to build a network of support, especially to help me develop skills I still need to learn. Encourage me to identify Elders and other experts I can learn from.
- I am learning how to use my skills to help others. Encourage me to find ways to contribute to others' wellbeing.

Applying Inuit Values

Interconnectedness



Definition

Interconnectedness is being in relationship with everything in the natural world. We are all interconnected. We are not alone. We rely on each other and the natural world for survival. To live in balance, we must respect others and reciprocate their support.

Commentary

Interconnectedness means that when someone needs help, they can get help. We must always encourage and support each other. Stories and legends make us reflect on this. So, we must keep sharing stories and legends with youth as much as we can. I heard a story about a family that was traveling without anything. Another family gave them some matches and a plate of food. That was not much, but it was enough to encourage the family and keep them moving forward. It helped them because it was an act of love. We need to remember that everyone needs love and care. When we receive love and care, we feel happy and we can keep going and try harder. We need this from each other.

Reminders

- ✓ Parenting never ends. When children are young, we tend to focus on physical health. As they age, we need to focus on mental health. Young adults experience stress and need our support.

Inunnguiniq

Childrearing Advice from Inuit Elders

18 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 have most of the responsibilities and capabilities of adults. They should be able to get what they need to live on and help others get what they need. They are skilled and independent. They are fully capable and have found their role in the community. The youth's role will change over time, but by this age she has a reputation and status.

At this age, good organization and planning skills are important. Eighteen-year olds should be able to care for their own equipment, clothing, and supplies.

Encourage and expect eighteen-year olds to be self-reliant and to face life's challenges. At this age, they are independent and make decisions. Include them in all adult conversations. Seek their input in any serious family or community issues.

Adults can always seek advice from others, as our development continues throughout life. But, we don't tell individuals what to do at this age. At this age, each individual decides whether they take advice or not. We hope they will use the advice their parents and elders have given them up until this age.

What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage and praise!** Encourage and praise young people as they become take on their role as adults.
- **Stay close.** Stay in your youth's life. Contact her often even if she lives far away.
- **Treat them like adults.** Recognize your youth's new status as an adult. Include him in adult conversations and activities. Encourage and expect him to contribute as an equal.
- **Expect self-reliance.** Don't rescue your youth from challenges. When she experiences a challenge, support her to find a solution. When you offer support, encourage and expect her to repay it. She could repay you by using her skills to help you or another person in the family.
- **Give advice by explaining consequences.** For example, explain to your youth that if he drives too fast, he will damage his equipment. If he cuts a pattern poorly, the clothing will not fit well. If he communicates well, people will understand. By giving advice this way, your youth will not feel personally criticized.
- **Teach reciprocity.** Teach youth the importance of reciprocity so they do not depend on others and become a burden. Reciprocity means giving back. For example, if a person receives advice or support from an Elder, they reciprocate by doing something small to make life easier for that Elder.
- **Let them make decisions.** Give your youth space and independence, even if they live in your house. Encourage and expect them to contribute in whatever way they can to the family's wellbeing. They could provide food or help out with household chores.

Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- At this age, your child is becoming an adult. She is capable and self-reliant. But, she still needs her parents. She needs her parents to be aware of how she is and to give advice as she finds her way in life. She needs encourage and praise for her accomplishments. She might also need help with planning and preparing for her future. Remind her of values and wisdom that will help her succeed.
- Although your youth is very capable at this age, he is still learning. He will experience many new things, such as living on his own, working at a job, marriage, and parenthood. Keep your relationship strong so that he talks with you when he has concerns.

Tips for Parents

- ✓ We need to teach young people to build strong relationships and to be good parents. This is the time to prepare for the next stage of life. Help your youth prepare to have a good relationship and be a parent.
- ✓ Today, many relationships end quickly. Elders worry about this. Many young people don't understand how to have a strong partnership. They need to learn how to give and take in a balanced way for a good marriage.
- ✓ In the past, young couples were taught about babies. They would learn about the stages of development so they were prepared to raise a child. They were also taught about delivery so that they would be able to deliver the baby if they were alone or traveling when the baby came.