

What's Special About Me at this Age?



Character Building

- I show respect to people and the environment. Encourage this. Expect this from me.
- I am learning resilience. If I cry about small things, ignore my crying.
- I observe what chores need to be done. I do them without being told. Encourage this. Expect this from me.



Communication

- My language skills are becoming stronger. You can talk with me about complex ideas.
- I learn from correction. If I mispronounce words, correct me. Encourage me to say things properly.
- I can remember instructions from small hints. When you give me a hint, I remember the whole instruction.
- I want to listen to adult conversations and watch adult TV programs. But, I need you to protect me because that might harm me.



Skill Building

- I understand detailed instructions, with specific terminology (not only general terms).
- I think through issues on my own.
- I have good dexterity. I use small objects and tools.

Applying Inuit Values

Significance



Description

We always saw the consequences for disobeying good instructions. For example, there was a boy who mistreated a siksik. He had been instructed to never mistreat animals. He tried to break a siksik's eardrums by making loud noises. In the end, he hurt himself. The boy learned his lesson only after becoming deaf.

We wonder if our beliefs are not understood today. Why are people doing the opposite of our beliefs? Our beliefs are important. Inuit always say that if you do something with bad intent, you will be hurt in the end. That happened to the boy. Beliefs are grounded in truth. They have significance. We need to pay attention to what matters and obey them.

Process

Tell children the beliefs and rules about respect. These are still important today. Children must be taught expectations. Teach them the consequences when they disobey.

Reminders

- ✓ At this age, children think they can do anything and they are very curious. Supervise them from a distance to protect them from accidents and dangers.
- ✓ Make sure your adventurous seven-year old is dressed properly for the weather.

Inunnguiniq

Childrearing Advice from Inuit Elders

7 Years



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About this Age

Seven-year olds sense that they are becoming “able.” They are eager to try things beyond their ability. Sometimes, they think they know more than they really do.

They are always trying to understand what is going on around them. They listen to everything. They understand most of what they hear. They ask many questions.

Seven-year olds want to know how they are related to extended family members. They use proper names for relations and others.

Expect seven-year olds to show respect. Teach your child to always consider how their choices impact others. Teach your child rules to avoid causing others to worry, such as telling someone that she is leaving the house.

At this age, children should respond immediately when you ask them to do something. Expect them to do small chores without being told.

They are learning to be patient and considerate. But, sometimes they try to get what they want by nagging.

Seven-year olds have strong memory skills. They can recite stories and songs. They remember instructions, such as warnings about danger. They also remember experiences and learn from them.

Seven-year olds have strong visualization skills. When listening to someone describe something, they can picture it in their mind.

What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage friendships.** Teach your child how to nurture friendships.
- **Encourage your child’s interests.** Help her explore her interests by providing information and activities related to them.
- **Teach how to cope with disappointment.** We all experience disappointment sometimes. Teach your child to cope with disappointment, such as when you are busy and he can’t get what he wants. Don’t rush to fix things for him.
- **Teach your child to learn from mistakes.** Allow your child to make mistakes. Talk with her about his mistakes so she learns from them.
- **Encourage perseverance.** Don’t intervene when your child struggles. Encourage him to try again.
- **Teach proper kinship names.** Show your child how to respect family and friends.
- **Assign chores.** Expect your child to do chores regularly and to respond immediately when asked to do a chore. Teach her to notice and do chores that need to be done. Praise her for this.
- **Don’t let your child see violence.** This will traumatize him and hurt his ability to learn.
- **Don’t let your child listen to adult issues.** Send her out if you need to talk about something children should not hear.
- **Set TV watching guidelines.** Pay attention to what your child watches on TV. Set guidelines about which programs are allowed and for how long they are allowed to watch.

Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Support your child to be an independent learner. Encourage her to try activities independently, to struggle, and to learn from her experiences.
- Strengthen your child’s thinking skills. Play problem-solving games. Encourage him to think of solutions. Do not answer questions immediately. Ask him questions to encourage him to think of answers independently.
- To strengthen your child’s language development, insist on description. Ask for more details when she uses simple or general words. Encourage her to be more specific.
- Teach sounds and symbols in words. Play word games to notice patterns. For example, think of words that rhyme, words have the same sounds, and words that start in the same way. Notice pieces of words that are the same and what they mean (for example, “er” teacher and painter).

Tips for Parents

- ✓ At this age, your child takes responsibility for his learning. He transitions from being a little child to being more independent. Encourage him to do things independently, but always watch him from a distance to keep him safe.
- ✓ Your child may fear new experiences. Always encourage her to try new things. Support her through this time of transition. Encourage her. Show her that you have confidence in her.