

THE HEART OF CHILDHOOD
PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT
OF 10-11 YEAR OLDS

Notes on the theme by Patti Connolly

Physical Development

- Growth spurt in mass of trunk; chest expands
- Speech strengthens
- Lungs, then kidneys, heart and lastly liver finally mature during this time
- Active and energetic; may constantly wiggle and move
- Skill and stamina improve; ready for gross motor activities such as biking, skating, and team sports
- Personality traits may be revealed by posture and movement habits
- Girls grow taller in limbs; face loses roundness; may show signs of approaching puberty

Emotional Development

- Feels more independent and self-conscious but this may create loneliness, sadness, fear of separation, death, criticism of others, intolerance, acute awareness of 'ugly' of life, indecision and mood swings
- 'Good' children can turn sneaky
- Can be vibrant, impulsive and too strong in emotions at 10 years
- Can mellow in 11th year as the physical balance is achieved
- Looks for beauty in the world (especially nature) and can be more artistic and philosophical
- Character changes, can become more harmonious in 5th grade
- Is fascinated with how the body works and may enjoy bathroom humor

Social Development

- Feels close to parents, siblings and extended family
- Happy to spend time with family in activities and outings
- May have frequent squabbles with siblings
- May have a few best friends and mutual friendships of the same sex
- Likes to talk and share ideas
- Puts great importance on fairness
- Hero-worship thus needs healthy loving authority figures; wants to be led by these people
- Needs help getting things done, behaving appropriately

Intellectual Development

- More imaginative, dreamy state dissolving

- Capable of looking at details
- Still memorizes and recites without thinking deeply about the subject
- Wants to be challenged
- Developing a conscience but not yet consistently able to tell right from wrong; relies upon an adult to help
- Aware of time, but needs help to plan time in a practical way
- Still certain that own beliefs are correct but is just beginning to realize that they are not universally shared by others
- Has many interests of short duration
- May love to read

Reflections of this development in Waldorf curriculum

- 4th grade study of fractions, parts of speech, verb tenses, and Norse myths demonstrate separateness, distinctions that child is experiencing on the physical and emotional planes. Norse myths separate soul archetypes, differentiated into virtues that are pictured as gods (example: Tyr-courage, self-sacrifice).
- 4th grade study of local and state history and geography reflects child's expanding capacity to envision her place in the world, a more independent and inter-connected place.
- Introduction of long multiplication and division in 4th grade reflects the child's ability to hold numerous steps in his consciousness.
- 5th grade study of Greek myths pictures the virtues as gods as well and then move to inner gestures in the philosophers.
- Myth moves to history in 5th grade, reflecting the child's ever-expanding place in the world. Passive and active voice in grammar is introduced since the child can now move back and forth in the rhythm.
- The role of Greek art in 5th grade studies reflects the harmony achieved in the blood pulse-breaths ratio.
- Geometry, ratio, pentathlon allow the 5th graders to immerse themselves in this newly recognized beauty.
- Adults must refrain from cynicism and sarcasm so that the students' new relationship with the world is nurtured.