

Approximate Age (Grade)	Developmental Stage	Developmental Characteristics			Relatedness to Body Awareness/Image
		Cognitive	Social	Physical	
11-14 (Grades 6-8)	Puberty makes gender differences even more pronounced. Children become aware of what is "normal" pubertal development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cognitive development becomes uneven and is affected by emotionality.<sup>i</sup></li> <li>• Language abilities become refined.<sup>ii</sup></li> <li>• Able to discuss and report alternative ideas.<sup>iii</sup></li> <li>• Thought becomes more objective.<sup>iv</sup></li> <li>• Develop ability to reason about things without experiencing them.<sup>v</sup></li> <li>• Thinking no longer based on the observable or factual; can reason logically about hypothetical situations and events that are not based in reality.<sup>vi</sup></li> <li>• Can accurately interpret and understand others' view points.<sup>vii</sup></li> <li>• Develop schemas and improve strategies for memory; memory continues to improve.<sup>viii</sup></li> <li>• Begin to understand metaphors and double-meanings.<sup>ix</sup></li> <li>• Ability to reflect on ideas and decisions and re-think to come to solutions.<sup>x</sup></li> <li>• Capable of introspection and self-analysis.<sup>xi</sup></li> <li>• Understand possibilities and consequences, and alter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become skeptical of adults, may become confrontational with criticism and accusation.<sup>xv</sup></li> <li>• Interests are predominantly social: social goal is to be just like peers; may foster gang-like behaviour; form cliques.<sup>xvi</sup></li> <li>• Self-concept begins to reflect personal values and ideologies.<sup>xvii</sup></li> <li>• Seek identity and may experiment with different roles; test limits and may become rebellious.<sup>xviii</sup></li> <li>• Express need to be independent from adults.<sup>xix</sup></li> <li>• Hormonal changes mean emotions are dynamic and fluctuating (i.e., children become moody, often depressed).<sup>xx</sup></li> <li>• Group acceptance is paramount, and the quality of one's friendships is now one of the strongest determinants of self-esteem.<sup>xxi</sup></li> <li>• Increased interest in opposite sex; games often involve sexually relevant acts, such as truth or dare, strip poker, etc.<sup>xxii</sup></li> <li>• Prejudicial attitudes may</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dramatic increases in weight and height.<sup>xxv</sup></li> <li>• Sexual characteristics appear, often drawing increased attention and harassment from peers.<sup>xxvi</sup></li> <li>• Body type becomes evident.<sup>xxvii</sup></li> <li>• Many adolescent girls show decline in physical performance (athletics), which may be attributable to gender-role socialization.<sup>xxviii</sup></li> <li>• While puberty is a memorable experience for girls, boys only vaguely aware of the changes to their bodies.<sup>xxix</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Increasingly self-conscious about physical appearance.<sup>xxx</sup></li> <li>B. Natural size increases associated with puberty and peer pressure to diet can trigger body image concerns and unhealthy dieting for girls.<sup>xxx1</sup></li> <li>C. Boys are more likely to try building up their body after puberty than before puberty.<sup>xxxii</sup></li> <li>D. Boys who mature late tend to be more eager, anxious, and attention-seeking, less confident, and are also rated by others as less-masculine and less attractive.<sup>xxxiii</sup></li> <li>E. Body image dissatisfaction among girls and boys increases throughout puberty.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Pubertal development in early adolescent girls is linked to feelings of shame in those who believe their bodies do not match cultural 'ideals'.<sup>xxxv</sup></li> <li>F. Parents can play an important protective role in the development of adolescents' acceptance of their bodies.<sup>xxxvi</sup></li> <li>G. Because self-esteem at age 11-12 is predictive of disordered eating later, self-esteem programs for girls of this age are encouraged.<sup>xxxvii</sup> Helping girls place less importance on physical appearance and promoting other areas of competence may be helpful to discourage disordered eating.<sup>xxxviii</sup></li> <li>H. Magazines may be more influential than television on girls' internalization of the thin ideal.<sup>xxxix</sup></li> </ul>

		<p>behaviour accordingly.<sup>xii</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to think abstractly about cause and effect.<sup>xiii</sup></li> <li>• Refined use of various strategies.<sup>xiv</sup></li> </ul>	<p>weaken or strengthen, depending on peer influences.<sup>xxiii</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendships are based on loyalty, trust, and sharing of intimacies.<sup>xxiv</sup></li> </ul>		<p>Studies suggest that unrealistic beauty ideals in media are “an important source of social comparison, and a possible cause of body dissatisfaction among certain girls and boys.”<sup>xi</sup></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Internalization of media stereotypes and body size acceptance are predictive of weight loss behaviours for both boys and girls.<sup>xii</sup> Media hyper-sexualization of females and hyper-masculization of males reinforce each other and contribute to sexist attitudes and beliefs.<sup>xiii</sup></li> <li>J. Girls focus more on losing weight and staying thin, while boys strive for weight gain and muscle tone.<sup>xiiii</sup></li> <li>K. Sexual harassment leads to increased body self-consciousness; girls constantly feel objectified.<sup>xiv</sup></li> <li>L. Use of food supplements for boys and weight management measures for girls increased with age.<sup>xlv</sup></li> <li>M. Boys increasingly are developing eating disorders and body dysmorphia as well as increased use of steroids.<sup>xlvi</sup></li> <li>N. In addition to peer and family pressure, school culture contributes to perfection codes for girls. A school culture that emphasises perfection, regulation, and surveillance can promote an unrealistic ideal body.<sup>xlvii</sup></li> <li>O. Objectification of girls' bodies becomes common, leading to increased self-esteem issues, especially when their bodies are not perceived as "ideal" to peers and parents.<sup>xlviii</sup></li> </ol>
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