

Approximate Age (Grade)	Developmental Stage	Developmental Characteristics			Relatedness to Body Awareness/Image
		Cognitive	Social	Physical	
4-7 (Kindergarten - Grade 2)	<p>Children’s physical self-concept begins to form.</p> <p>Race and other physical characteristics become more salient.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language exponentially develops in usage and structure, despite some articulation issues.<sup>i</sup></li> <li>• Speech becomes more social, less egocentric.<sup>ii</sup></li> <li>• Vivid imaginations; some have difficulty separating fantasy from reality.<sup>iii</sup></li> <li>• Memory is accurate, but easily swayed.<sup>iv</sup></li> <li>• Very curious.<sup>v</sup></li> <li>• Begin to show classification as well as re-classification skills (e.g., calling all animals dogs).<sup>vi</sup></li> <li>• Able to control emotions to some degree; fewer emotional outbursts.<sup>vii</sup></li> <li>• Have only one point of view (one's own) and are unable to put themselves "in another's shoes" (until later in this stage).<sup>viii</sup></li> <li>• Toward end of stage, begin to seek meaning through various materials, developing their own strategies.<sup>ix</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very basic sense of self.<sup>x</sup></li> <li>• Want to please adults.<sup>xi</sup></li> <li>• Limited sense of privacy.<sup>xii</sup></li> <li>• Prefer same-sex friends and even behave more negatively toward opposite sex playmates than same-sex playmates.<sup>xiii</sup></li> <li>• Stereotypic beliefs for gender roles.<sup>xiv</sup></li> <li>• Gender segregation intensifies.<sup>xv</sup></li> <li>• Egocentricity leads children to rigidly categorize by skin colour, even as young as 4.<sup>xvi</sup> With age, views become more flexible and their stereotypes/prejudices become diffused.<sup>xvii</sup></li> <li>• Use social comparison information to interpret differences between themselves and others in performance domains.<sup>xviii</sup></li> <li>• Children apply social prejudices to themselves and those around them, judging belongingness to peer groups, family, and community.<sup>xix</sup></li> <li>• Increasingly aware of others' feelings and moods, but may misinterpret emotional cues.<sup>xx</sup></li> <li>• Friendships based on shared activities.<sup>xxi</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the beginning of this stage, a period of rapid physical growth; girls tend to be more physically advanced than boys.<sup>xxii</sup></li> <li>• Fine motor skills developed as well as eye-hand coordination.<sup>xxiii</sup></li> <li>• Children are enthusiastic, high energy, easily fatigued, and easily distracted; however, toward end of stage, they begin to use less physical energy.<sup>xxiv</sup></li> <li>• Body proportions are changing (i.e., head, torso, and limbs become larger/lengthened).<sup>xxv</sup></li> <li>• Rate of physical growth is different across individuals as well as across cultures; Asian and African-American children tend to mature faster than European-American and European children.<sup>xxvi</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Girls as young as 5 to 6 years old state that their ideal size is smaller than their real size.<sup>xxvii</sup></li> <li>B. Children at 5 and 6 years old identify smaller body size with positive characteristics e.g. nice and friendly.<sup>xxviii</sup></li> <li>C. Preschool aged boys can experience body dissatisfaction and express concerns around muscularity.<sup>xxix</sup></li> <li>D. Family modelling of diet and exercise can influence girls’ notions of anti-fat and body dissatisfaction.<sup>xxx</sup></li> <li>E. Parental restrictions on eating may lead to children's secretive eating and/or overeating; such restrictions are linked with children’s ability to self-regulate.<sup>xxxi</sup></li> <li>F. Begin to form negative attitudes toward those who are different, such as those who have unusual appearances or are obese.<sup>xxxii</sup></li> <li>G. Begin to associate being overweight with negative characteristics such as laziness, stupidity, and ugliness.<sup>xxxiii</sup></li> <li>H. Self-esteem is based on opinions of significant others.<sup>xxxiv</sup></li> <li>I. Children’s notions of gender are established by ages 4-5.<sup>xxxv</sup></li> <li>J. Negative comments from parents regarding child's physical characteristics (e.g., weight) and/or mental capabilities (e.g., disability) are internalized.<sup>xxxvi</sup></li> <li>K. Weight and appearance can dictate who children want to have as</li> </ul>

					<p>friends.<sup>xxxvii</sup></p> <p>L. Media exposure predicts increases in negative body image and disordered eating.<sup>xxxviii</sup></p> <p>M. Parents, teachers, and even doctors, have been found to stigmatize obese children; such stigmatization can lead to serious psychological and social effects.<sup>xxxix</sup></p> <p>N. Overweight children are just as likely to internalize and endorse stigmas pertaining to overweight and obese individuals; this may be due to media exposure, and also the belief that weight is solely an issue of individual responsibility (i.e., “they should eat less”).<sup>xl</sup></p>
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