

7 Years Old:



Social and Emotional Development

- Is cooperative and affectionate towards adults and less frequently annoyed with them; sees humour in everyday happenings and is more outgoing.
- Likes to be the "teacher's helper"; is eager for teacher's attention and approval but less obvious about seeking it.
- Seeks out friendships; friends are important but can find plenty to do if no one is available.
- Quarrels less often, although squabbles and tattling continue to occur in both one-on-one and group play.
- Complains that family decisions are unjust; that a particular sibling may get to do more or is given more.
- Blames others for own mistakes; makes up alibis for personal shortcomings: "I could have made a better one, but my teacher didn't give me enough time".
- Prefers same-gender playmates; more likely to play in groups.
- Worries about not being liked; feelings easily hurt; might cry, be embarrassed, or state adamantly, "I will never play with you again" when criticized.
- Takes responsibilities seriously; can be trusted to carry out directions and commitments; worries about being late for school or not getting work done.
- Begins to form opinions about moral values and attitudes; declares things either right or wrong.
- Plays with two or three "best" friends, most often of the same age and gender; also enjoys spending some time alone.
- Seems less critical of own performance but is easily frustrated and upset when unable to complete a task or when the product does not meet expectations.
- Participates in team games and activities; group membership and peer acceptance are important.
- Continues to blame others or makes up alibis to explain his or her own shortcomings or mistakes.
- Enjoys talking on the telephone with family or friends.
- Understands and respects the fact that some children are more talented in certain areas such as drawing, sports, reading, art or music.
- Desires adult attention and recognition; enjoys performing for adults and challenging them in games.





Growth and Physical Characteristics

- Weight increase tends to be relatively small; a gain of 6 pounds per year is typical. Seven-year-olds weight approximately 50-55 pounds.
- Height increases an average of 2.5 inches per year. Girls are approximately 44-44.5 inches tall; boys are approximately 46-49.5 inches tall.
- Muscle mass is fairly equal for boys and girls.
- Physical growth continues slowly and steadily; some girls may overtake some boys in height.
- Posture is more erect; arms and legs continue to lengthen, giving children a longer, leaner appearance.
- Energy level comes and goes, fluctuating between spurts of high energy and intervals of temporary fatigue.
- Still experiences a number of colds and other minor illness; however, these occur less frequently than at age six.
- Eyeballs continue to change shape and size; children's eyes should be checked periodically to ensure good vision.
- Hair often grows darker in color.
- Permanent teeth continue to replace baby teeth.



Motor Development

- Exhibits large and fine motor control that is more precisely tuned: balances on either foot; runs up and down stairs with alternative feet; throws and catches smaller balls; practices batting balls; manipulates a computer mouse, knitting needles, or paintbrush with greater accuracy.
- Approaches more challenging physical activities, such as climbing up or jumping down from high places, with caution.
- Practices a new motor skill over and over until mastered and then drops it to work on something else.
- Finds floor more comfortable than furniture when reading, playing games, or watching television; legs are often in constant motion.
- Uses knife and fork appropriately but inconsistently.
- Holds pencil in a tight grasp near the tip; rests head on forearm, lowers head almost to the tabletop when doing pencil-and-paper tasks.
- Produces letters and numbers in a deliberate and confident fashion (characters are increasingly uniform in size and shape; might run out of room on line or page when writing).





Speech and Language Development

- Engages in storytelling; likes to write short stories and tell imaginative tales.
- Uses adult-like sentence structure and language in conversation; patterns reflect cultural and geographical differences.
- Becomes more precise and elaborate in use of language; greater use of descriptive adjectives and adverbs.
- Uses gestures to illustrate conversations.
- Criticizes own performance: "I didn't draw that right," "Her picture is better than mine."
- Verbal exaggeration commonplace: "I ate ten hot dogs at the picnic."
- Offers explanations of events in terms of own preferences or needs: "It didn't rain yesterday because I was going on a picnic."
- Describes personal experiences in great detail: "First we parked the car, then we hiked up this long trail, then we sat down on a broken tree near a lake and ate..."
- Understands and carries out multiple-step instructions (up to five steps); may need to have directions repeated because of not listening to entire request the first time.
- Enjoys writing email messages and simple notes to friends.



Perceptual-Cognitive Development

- Understands concepts of space and time in ways that are both logical and more practical (a year is "a long time"; a hundred miles is "far away").
- Begins to grasp Piaget's concepts of conservation; for example, the shape of a container does not necessarily reflect the quantity it can hold.
- Gains a better understanding of cause and effect: "If I'm late for school again, I'll be in big trouble"; "Ice cubes will melt if they get too warm."
- Tells time by the clock and understands calendar time (*days, months, years, and seasons*).
- Plans ahead: "I'm saving this cookie for later tonight."
- Shows marked fascination with magic tricks; enjoys putting on shows for family and friends.
- Finds reading easier; many seven-year-olds read for their own enjoyment and delight in retelling story details.
- Has better reading than spelling skills.
- Enjoys counting and saving money.
- Continues to reverse some letters and substitute sounds on occasion; this is typical development and does not indicate a reading or learning disability.

References:

Marotz, L. & Allen K. (2013) *Developmental profiles: Pre-birth through adolescence* (Instructor's Edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.