



1st Grade Developmental Guide

1st graders are stepping into their “Big Kid” years. There can be some insecurity for children during this transition. This year, kids are spending a good deal of their time away from you, which can be a little scary for everyone involved. However, they are developmentally ready for this shift toward independence.

Physical

- Tend to be in perpetual motion, squirm, gesture while talking, etc.
- Will test muscle strength by skipping, running, throwing, catching
- May be sloppy because they tend to do things in a hurry
- Can tire easily because of the fast pace at which they do things
- Engage in lots of chasing games, specifically boy/girl chasing on playground

Emotional

- Can distinguish reality from fantasy
- Play becomes more dramatic
- Still can't fully process a consequence before they execute an action
- Tend to be overly sensitive
- Have a tendency to still be egocentric
- Moody
- Increased move toward independence, spending a good deal of time apart from family
- More aware of their own emotions and the emotions of others
- See things as black and white with no middle ground

Relational

- Tattling becomes very real at this age
- Need rules and rituals
- Opportunities for unmonitored social interactions
- Care what others think about them
- Will begin asking for privacy
- Focuses on friendships with peers and interacts with other adults such as a friend's parent
- Plays with friends of the same gender
- Has a few close friends they play with more than others

Spiritual

- Begins to ask questions, some of which we may not know the answer. It's a good time to begin telling our children that we don't know the answer if we don't. Be ready for tough questions, even ones that make you squirm (where do babies come from)
- Developing a moral sense. Will see things as right or wrong through the lens of parents and teachers. Tend to have a strong conviction of this right and wrong.
- Because kids still see themselves as the center of the universe and will be proud of their accomplishments, we can help them see the difference in confidence and boasting.
- Children are just beginning to think of others.