

Skills for Good Parenting: Elementary Ages - Introduction

Good parenting is all about parenting the child that you have. This means that you have to alter your approach as your child passes through the various developmental stages on his way to adulthood. The social and emotional stage of your child determines how he feels, thinks and interacts with others. As a parent, it is important to calibrate your words and actions based on the appropriate developmental stage. And don't forget that social and emotional development don't always synch up with intellectual development.

Since an approach that might work for a toddler would be totally ineffective when dealing with a child in elementary school, we have taken the skills covered by COPE's Skills for Good Parenting parent workshop and broken them down based on four developmental levels. **Skills for Good Parenting: Elementary Ages** is a look at parent skills that we hope will help you deal effectively with your child between the ages of 6 and 11. There are similar Skills for Good Parenting sequences for Early Childhood (ages 2-5), Middle School (ages 12-14), and High School (ages 15 and up). We hope that this series will help you provide a happy and stable environment for your child to develop as an independent and resilient individual.

This is when children reach an understanding of the physical dimensions of the world and develop an accurate perception of events; they are capable of rational, logical thinking and are able to understand right and wrong, but they will say and do things to avoid punishment. They have developed more effective coping skills for themselves and have an increasing ability to recognize and consider others' viewpoints, as well as to understand how their behavior affects others. Their self-esteem is based on their own ability to perform and produce. As they mature their thinking about rules evolves from believing rules can be changed, to following rules to the letter, and, finally thinking that rules can be negotiated.

*There is a worksheet that accompanies this series of articles, as well as a resource guide with links to further reading and additional material. You may want to print out the worksheet before reading further, so you can pause, reflect and take notes. The worksheet and resource guide are listed with the other "chapters" in the **Skills for Good Parenting: Elementary Ages** list of topics.*

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