Characteristics of 12-14 year olds

Physical
• Exhibit a wide range of sexual maturity and growth patterns between genders.
• Experience rapid changes in physical appearance.

Social
• Are interested in activities involving the opposite sex.
• Are looking more to peers than parents.
• Seek acceptance and trust.
• Tend to reject ready-made solutions from adults in favor of their own.
• Questions authority and family values.

Emotional
• Compare themselves to others.
• See themselves as always on center stage.
• Body changes can set up situations of great embarrassment.
• Are concerned about social graces and grooming.
• Abandon view of parents as all powerful.
• Strive for independence, yet want and need parents help.

Intellectual
• Think abstractly and hypothetically.
• Are developing skills in the use of logic (cause and effect).
• Can solve problems that have more than one variable.
• Can imagine consequences.
• Challenge assumptions.
• Want to explore the world beyond their own community.

Characteristics of 15-18 year olds

Physical
• Are concerned about body image.
• Exhibit smaller range in size and maturity among peers.

Social
• Tend to romanticize sexuality.
• Search for intimacy.
• Make commitments.
• Can commit to follow through with service.
• Desire respect.
• Are apt to reject goals set by others.

Emotional
• Are beginning to accept and enjoy their own uniqueness.
• Look for confidence of others in their decisions.
• Develop their own set of values and beliefs.
• Are introspective.
• Can initiate and carry out their own tasks without the supervision of others.
• Search for career possibilities.

Intellectual
• Are mastering abstract thinking.
• Enjoy demonstrating acquired knowledge.
• Can consider many perspectives of a given issue.
• Develop theories to explain how things happen.
• Will lose patience with meaningless activity.
Characteristics of 6-8 year olds

**Physical**
- Are mastering physical skills. Better control of large muscles than small muscles.

**Social**
- Are learning how to be friends and may have several best friends at a time.
- Are becoming more aware of peers and their opinions.
- Are still family oriented.

**Emotional**
- See fairness as being nice to others so they will be nice in return.
- Seek parental approval.
- Behave in ways to avoid punishment.

**Intellectual**
- Generalize from own experience.
- More interested in the process than product.
- Learning to sort things into categories.
- Are beginning to develop sense of cause and effect.
- Handle only one mental operation at a time.
- Can distinguish between reality and fantasy.

Characteristics of 9-11 year olds

**Physical**
- Experience steady increases in large muscle development, balance and coordination.
- Very active with boundless energy.
- Maturing at differing rates between sexes. Girls will be maturing faster than boys.
- Increasing in small muscle coordination.

**Social**
- Generally see adults as authority.
- Believe punishment should be a direct consequence of misdeeds.
- Feel loyalty to a group (code language and passwords).
- Identify with same sex group.

**Emotional**
- View right behavior as “obeying” rules.
- Accept parent/family beliefs.
- Admire and imitate older boys and girls.
- Need involvement with a caring adult.
- Are developing decision-making skills.

**Intellectual**
- Vary greatly in academic abilities, interest and reasoning skills.
- Have increased attention span.
- Are beginning to think logically and symbolically.
- Have interests in collections and hobbies.
- Want to use their skills to explore the world.