



Child Development

UNDESTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

The toddler playing with the remote control buttons after you explicitly and numerously told him to stop. The preschooler refusing to share their toy. The pre-adolescence rejecting your rule to complete their homework because they want to go to their friends. The adolescence choosing the wrong fork in the road. If any of these scenarios sound familiar, you might benefit from reading on and learning more about child development.

The key to fostering a better relationship with a child is understanding child development. When the parent understands child development, then the parent is able to foster a better relationship with their child through improved communication, direct and realistic discipline, and creating moments of joy for both parent and child. Child development is the process in which the child develops into an adult. From infancy, the child will grow through many stages including, toddler, preschooler, child, pre-adolescence, and adolescence. Each stage is as unique as each child and comes with new challenges and new joys to be discovered.

AGES AND STAGES

Ages and Stages is the term that broadly applies to each stage in the human development timeline. During each age, there are genetically predetermined and “normal” milestones that each child experiences. They can be broken down into physical, intellectual, language, social/emotional achievements. The goal is to help parents understand what is taking place in their child’s brain and body during each period so that they can better care, encourage, and nurture each child the best way the child understands.



**WILLIAMS COUNTY
PARENT RESOURCE
CENTER**

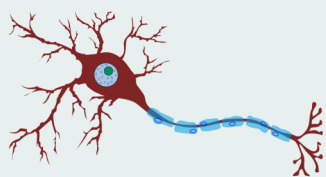
Kendra Loomis: Parent
Education Coordinator
kendral@co.williams.nd.us

Parent Resource Center
Head Start Building
409 7th Avenue E
Williston, ND, 58801

[http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/
pen/region-1](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pen/region-1)

BUILDING THE BRAIN FROM THE BOTTOM UP

- Brainstem- controls basic life activities such as blood pressure and body temperature
- Midbrain-controls motor activity, appetite and sleep
- Cerebellum-coordinates movement and balance
- Limbic System-controls emotions, attachment, and memory
- Cortex-controls decision making, thinking, and reasoning



Pictured above is a **NEURON**. This neuron is the basic block of the brain's wiring and the miracle that is the human experience. The neuron is one-hundredth the size of this period at the end of this sentence. There are 1,000 trillion of these neurons in the brain and they connect to as many as 15,000 other cells in a process that transmits information.

BRAIN SCIENCE

- Experiences of the five senses help build the connections that guide brain development. Experiences have a decisive impact on the architecture of the brain.
- We are born with 100 billion brain cells, that's 10 times the number of stars in the Milky Way.
- By 3 years old, a child's brain has formed 1,000 trillion connections, twice as many as adults have.
- By age 11, the brain starts

weeding out or pruning the weakest connections

- The brain grows in a sequential fashion, bottom to top, or least complex (the brainstem) to most complex (the cortex).



INFANCY -TODDLER (0 MONTHS-2 YEARS)

Milestones

- Responds to the sound of your voice
- Uses their hands and mouth to learn
- Tries to talk back to you
- Can be soothed/calmed down
- Notices and reacts to other children
- May try to bite people
- Loves to pull toys

How to assist child development

- Make sure you designate a safe place for your child to play
- Provide toys designed for the child's age
- Don't inhibit the child's natural curiosity
- Set realistic rules for your child to follow, but don't expect them to be followed all the time

TODDLER-PRESCHOOLER (AGES 2-5)

Milestones

- Does not like to share
- Uses the word "no" a lot
- Can sing a song
- Asks "why" a lot
- Will play by themselves and in groups
- Can begin to copy big letters
- Draws a picture that resembles the real life object
- Can tell you where they live
- Tells stories but gets confused

How to assist child development

- Encourage fine motor skills
- Provide interactive games
- Play games that test memory skills
- Give children opportunities for rest
- Play together in activities that interest them
- Be responsive if children becomes upset
- Help facilitate problem resolution

CHILDREN (AGES 6-12)

Milestones

- Able to perform classification tasks
- Capable of concrete problem solving
- Should handle opposites easily ex: boy/girl short/long
- Uses complex sentences
- Follows complex directions
- Level of attention increases

How to assist child development

- Challenge them with puzzles and other strategy games
- Create imaginative activities ex: microscope, making jewelry
- Be mindful of any passions the child might exhibit and encourage it
- Help children process and work through emotions in a healthy way



“There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One of these is roots, the other, wings” -Hodding Carter

PRE-ADOLESCENCE– ADOLESCENCE (AGES 13-18)

Milestones

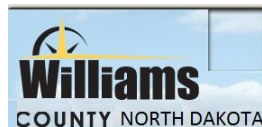
- Can understand abstract principles
- Develops more intimate friendships
- Grasps the perspective of others
- Greater emotional regulation
- A lot of time spent on personal interests or group friend interests
- Play will become increasingly sophisticated
- Puberty

How to assist child development

- Encourage independent thought
- Listen and respect their emotions
- Designate responsibilities that align with their skill level
- Follow through on promises
- Give them personal time and space
- Rationally communicate principles, traditions, and beliefs



Informational materials provided by: NDSU Extension Service and the Child Development Institute



Resources

• PRC Lending Library

Offers books, CD, and DVD available for checkout on all parenting topics.

• Topic Bags

Bright red bags that contain materials for adults and kids. Topics are: Autism Spectrum ADD/ADHD, Anger in Children, Divorce, Long Distance Parenting, Parenting Solutions, Sex Education and Body Safety, Sleep Issues (Infant-Teen) and Toilet Training.

Parent Resource Center
Head Start Building
409 7th Avenue E
Williston, ND, 58801

Parent Education Workshops

- Parents Forever (1 Session) Meets ND Requirement for Divorcing Couples. Taught Every 2nd Saturday of the Month.
- Pre-Registration is required for **ALL** workshops!!

Save the Date!!!

We are offering **Common Sense Parenting** every Wednesday
March 25th-April 29
7pm-9pm



UNIQUE CHILDREN

It is important to remember that these milestones are just generalizations. Each child will grow and develop at an individual pace. Most children will be “behind” in some aspects and “ahead” in others. Educators, including parents, use these tools to better understand the natural progression of children. If you are concerned and or want to research more about a child’s development please contact one of the resources below.

- Parent Education Coordinator- Kendra Loomis (701-713-0663)
- Parent Education Network: <http://www.ag.ndsu.pen/region-1/williams-county-parent-resource-center>
- Your local pediatrician or family physician.

Letter from the new Parent Education Coordinator

Dear readers,

I just wanted to take the opportunity to introduce myself. While I was a student of Eastern Washington University, I desired to make a positive impact on my community. Though my experience in the legal field, working for a District Court Judge, I discovered that parents are the heart of the community. They are their children’s first teachers and as such lay the foundation for our future. This makes me excited for my new position, as the Parent Education Coordinator, because I get to personally help the parents of this community. Please feel welcome to stop by the Parent Resource Center located in the Head Start building, 409 7th Ave E, to speak with me about any struggles or triumphs you are experiencing as a parent as I would love to help with the struggles and share in the triumphs. I will also notify you of any parenting workshops when they become available.

I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Kendra Loomis
Parent Education Coordinator
701-713-0663

kendral@co.williams.nd.us

<https://www.facebook.com/WillistonNDParentResourceCenter>

Please share this newsletter with others. The PRC offers educational opportunities for parents and caregivers of all ages and stages of children. Most classes are free. If you have more information about a program that will benefit parents and families and would like it included in this publication, please send it to Region 1 PRC.

Newsletter and programming funding for the Parent Resource Center is provided by *Williams County* ND Department of Human Services-Children & Family Services Division *Child Protection, presented by NDSU Extension Service and the ND Parent Education