



4-H VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SERIES

Nebraska 4-H Youth Development

How Kids Develop - Ages 5-8, Early Childhood

Understanding and Working with Youth: What are they like?

<u>Characteristics of Age Group</u>	<u>Implications and Applications</u>
Are at a period of slow, steady growth.	Use active learning experiences.
Learn best if physically active.	Provide activities that encourage physical activity: running, moving, playing games, cutting with scissors, painting, pasting, brushing, and assembling.
Are learning how to use their bodies by mastering physical skills.	Use small and large muscles activities.
Are more interested in process than product. Interested in doing activities other than creating a specific product or "doing well" in the activity.	It's okay for 5 to 8 year-olds to only work on a project rather than complete it.
Are wrapped up in self.	Make-believe activities allow youth to imagine clearly what other people think and feel.
Are learning how to be friends. May have several "best friends."	Provide a balance of activities, which can be done alone or in small groups that allow for individual attention.
Boys and girls may enjoy playing together.	Involve both sexes in activities.
Thinking is concrete.	Use the senses to help children experience things.
Are easily motivated and eager to try something new.	Plan a wide variety of activities. Plan activities that take a short time to complete, with each experience building on previous activities. Provide a variety of short and specific learning activities involving concrete concepts.
Deal with here and now. Interest span short.	Free time should be planned and encouraged. Move from one activity to another. Alternate high and moderate activity with low. Be very specific and clear with instructions.
Are naturally curious and want to make sense of their world.	Allow for exploration and spontaneity in activities.
Sensitive to criticism. Don't accept failure well.	Provide positive encouragement and assistance. Plan many concrete learning activities in which success can be experienced. Set up situations that foster cooperation and teamwork rather than competition.
Have strong desire for affection and attention of adults. Are moving from dependence on parents to dependence on another adult.	Plan for small group activities with an adult for each three to four youths.
Seek adult approval because not confident enough yet to set their own standards.	Offer support to the young people.

Query, S. How kids develop. Iowa 4-H volunteer. Revised: Levings, J. 2006. Iowa State University Extension. <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4H/Documents/V1950902FAgesStages.PDF>



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.