



4th Grade Developmental Guide

The biggest change in development for fourth graders is the change in friendships. All of a sudden, they care what others think of them and want to fit in. Your child probably has at least one very close friend this year that they enjoy spending time with.

Here are some of the developmental changes they are experiencing right now.

Physical

- Are ready for competitive and cooperative games
- Are physically maturing (Girls physically mature faster than boys.)
- May engage in habitual movements like nail biting, hair twisting, etc.

Emotional

- Attempt to resolve conflict before involving adults; understand that not everyone views things the way they do
- Are no longer egocentric
- Have a high level of emotional intensity
- Can be self-critical
- May worry

Relational

- Gravitate toward certain friends
- Need encouragement
- Begin to care about social issues
- See adults as fallible, realizing their inconsistencies
- Have a strong desire to fit in
- May begin to show interest in opposite sex
- May become deeply attached to a best friend

Spiritual

- Are concerned about being right or wrong and being fair
- Have a strong tension between being a child and pushing toward independence
- Benefit from some freedom to exercise their growing independence
- View fairness and justice as big themes in their lives

