

Volunteer Research, Knowledge, Competency (VRKC)

Taxonomy for 4-H Youth Development

4-H National Headquarters
Volunteers for the Next Generation



Positive Youth Development:
Understanding Ages & Stages
of Youth Development

Developmental Stages of Youth

- Universal predictable sequences of growth and change in young people
- Includes physical, social, emotional and cognitive development
- Every child is unique and special
- Each young person will differ in the rate at which they progress.



Stages

- Early Childhood: Ages 5-8; Grades K-2
- Middle Childhood: Ages 9-11; Grades 3-5
- Early Adolescence: Ages 12-14; Grades 6-8
- Middle Adolescence: Ages 15-18; Grades 9-12



Basic Principles to Remember

1. Age is not a perfect predictor of maturity.
 - Most youth will go through stages in a predictable order, but the age they do this can vary greatly.
 - Providing choices of activities or multiple levels of difficulty with an activity will help meet individual needs.
2. Growth may proceed at different rates in various developmental areas within an individual young person.
 - One youth who excels physically may still be average in emotional or social growth.
 - To reach their full potential, a young person needs to have a variety of experiences.



Understanding the developmental stages of youth equips 4-H volunteers with the knowledge and tools to provide the best learning environments for youth.



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Thank You

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VRKC:
Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy



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