

Section Three: Natural Phases of Development

Phase/Age Range	Working Skills	How to Support
<p>0-2 Infancy/Toddler</p>	<p>Led by mostly physical stages of development such as sitting up, crawling, walking, climbing, etc.</p> <p>Lots of gross motor exploration through things like stacking objects, putting/placing, pouring, dumping, etc.</p> <p>Sensory exploration is big in this stage as well.</p>	<p>Support through offering various physical levels of exploration and opportunities to play with a variety of objects and loose parts that give them the chance to work in their phase of development.</p> <p>Offer safe sensory opportunities for exploration.</p>
<p>3-5 Preschool/Early Years</p>	<p>Beginning to develop interests that can be harnessed for learning experiences, while still being driven by gross and fine motor phases, such as lining things up, stacking, sorting, dumping, etc.</p> <p>Literacy awareness begins to shift as they become aware of symbols in their environment having meaning.</p>	<p>Support through a mostly play-based, child-led learning environment. Provide opportunities for short interest-focused learning with lots of flexibility.</p> <p>This is a prime time to be reading aloud, offering more book selection, writing practice opportunities, etc. And plenty of discussion-based learning in real life situations!</p>
<p>7-10 Elementary Years/Pre-Teen</p>	<p>This is the average age of reading and writing independence, and a lot of brain power is spent on developing these skills.</p> <p>Emotional and social growth is huge here as well, as children make sense of who they are as individuals in the big world around. Interests drive most meaningful learning experiences.</p>	<p>These are your biggest years as a “guide” in the learning journey. Focus on building foundational learning skills that will allow your child to take charge of their learning journey. Follow their interests and learn alongside them. Continue to provide opportunities in the environment for self-exploration and literacy growth.</p> <p>Give ample opportunity for discussions about emotional and social growth and situations to help your child develop a healthy growth mindset.</p>
<p>11+ Teenage Years/Early Adulthood</p>	<p>Inter-personal skills, friendships, and social learning is a big motivator for our older children. Most meaningful learning is self-directed and independent. A lot depends on the foundations that have been laid in prior years.</p>	<p>Continue to provide support and resources for your self-directed learner, while guiding and supporting them towards the steps that they need to take as they blossom into high years/adulthood. Intrinsic motivation to achieve their goals will continue to play a huge factor.</p> <p>If natural learning hasn’t been a focus until now, there may be some work that needs to be done to build a new foundation of trusting themselves and being able to identify their true interests and ideas.</p>