

Development from 6 to 12 years old

Understanding some of the development of children from 6 to 12 years old can help you make a better parenting plan and custody schedule for your child.

Between the ages of 6 and 12, children develop peer and community relationships. Their friendships become very important to them and they are mostly friends with members of the same sex.

Children this age gain self esteem as they accomplish things in school and learn new skills. Parents should encourage their children to try many activities like sports, clubs, music and scouts. There should be a balance between activities and free time because children of this age still need time to just play. Parents should have close communication with teachers, school employees, and parents of your children's friends. This will help you know what is going on in your child's life and learn about problems quickly.

Children have many physical developments from 6 to 12 years old.

Parents should help children understand what is going on with their bodies and provide appropriate information. From 6 to 12 years, children will be exposed to many issues through television, other media, and friends. Parents must discuss issues like violence, sexuality, and substance abuse with their children. Parents should encourage their child to talk openly about concerns and express themselves without fear of punishment.

School age children are able to participate in family chores and can help around the house. Parents should communicate their expectations to their children and help them learn responsibility and work.

Children in this age group shouldn't watch more than 2 hours of television a day.

Here are some things you need to know about 6 to 12 year old children to make your parenting plan more effective.

- School age children are more comfortable with separations from parents because of school, spending time with friends, participating in extra activities, etc. Your child will be able to handle longer separations from each parent.
- School age children understand concepts of time and routine. You can give your child a calendar that shows the parenting time and other activities the child is involved with.
- School age children are more independent and can be comfortable having two homes. Your child should be okay spending time in both parents' homes.
- School age children adjust well to different parenting styles.
- School age children are very flexible in their development and can adapt to a creative parenting plan. You have a lot of options for choosing a schedule that works for your situation.
- School age children should be encouraged to try a lot of different activities and to be involved outside of the home. Your parenting plan should allow your child to participate in activities and both parents should be supportive.
- School age children should be given the opportunity to talk on the phone to the other parent in private. You may want to include a provision about this in your plan.
- School age children do better in school when both parents are involved in schooling. Your plan should allow both

parents to help your child with homework, go to parent-teacher meetings, attend school activities, etc.

An older child may have opinions about the parenting plan and the custody schedule. Children should be allowed to express their feelings and you may consider their views but the parents must make the final decisions about the parenting plan.

Making a custody schedule for a 6 to 12 year old

Your [custody schedule](#) should give your child as much contact with both parents as possible. As you make your schedule you should consider the involvement of each parent with the child before the separation, the geographical distance between the parents' homes, the parents' work schedules and commitments, and the parents' level of conflict.

For school age children, you should maintain a consistent schedule and limit the number of transitions between households. Some children will need a schedule that provides a home base while others will do well alternating between households. You should also give your child's social activities and commitments priority whenever possible.