

# Inunnguiniq

Childrearing Advice from Inuit Elders



CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

Children and Adolescents with Special Needs



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# Pregnancy, Delivery, and Breastfeeding



## Reminders for Partners

- ✓ Be very supportive of the new mother. Watch her emotions. Help her cope with all the changes happening in her body.
- ✓ Pay extra attention to older children who need care. Remember that older children will become fussy when there is a new baby.
- ✓ A new mother needs foods that are rich in iron and calcium. Provide her with organ meats, clams, bone marrow, and rich broth.
- ✓ Spend time comforting the baby. This will help you bond with the baby. This also supports your partner and helps her get enough rest.
- ✓ Build a real partnership and talk to each other about how to support one another.

## Advice For New Parents

**Move the baby into different positions.** A baby should not lie on one side too long. This could disfigure her head. Never keep a newborn baby on her stomach. **Always** put a baby on their back to sleep.

**Don't leave a baby to cry too much.** This causes the baby to feel insecure and become demanding. Often, a crying baby just needs a little attention or stimulation.

**Take care of your relationship.** A baby's health is affected by his parents' relationship. Talk to your spouse or partner about your feelings and you can support each other. It is a very exciting time to welcome a new baby into the family.

**You don't need to carry the baby all the time.** She will start to expect to be held all the time. This will make it difficult for you to get anything done!

**Wrap or swaddle infants.** This makes them feel secure. Do not swaddle infants at bedtime.

**Aqqaq the baby as soon as he wakes.** This tells him that he is cared for and helps him feel secure.

**Observe the difference between a real cry and a false cry.** Pay close attention during the first year.

**Take care of yourselves.** Remember to make time to eat well, to bathe, and to rest. A baby needs parents who are taking care of themselves.

**Reach out for support!** A first-time mother needs a lot of support. Spend time with your mother, mother-in-law, grandparents, friends, or others who can help or provide advice. If you feel very strong emotions or feel depressed, please talk to someone at the health centre or hospital.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Taking the Long View and Preparing

Begin preparing for pregnancy from the moment of conception. Your child's health depends on your health! Think carefully about your well-being and personal health. This experience will bring many changes. You will need the support of your loved ones.



## Advice About Pregnancy

**A pregnant woman's health and well-being affect the baby.** Elders advise that women need special care when pregnancy begins. She should be active and eat well. Doing all of this will make her pregnancy and labour easier. Everyone should support her and try to remove stress from her life.

**Have your stomach rubbed and your muscles gently massaged.**

**Babies are born with a personality!** Elders advise us to observe how the baby is developing during pregnancy to get to know them.

**Reflect on your baby's name during pregnancy.** It is an important part of their identity. Names usually stay within extended families. But, you can also use the name of someone who has helped you in life and who you are grateful to.

**Try not to go backwards through doorways.** Elders have said that pregnant women should not go backwards through doorways, because it is said to lead to difficulty in labour.

## Tips for Labour and Delivery

**Try not to yell a lot.** This wastes energy, causes tension, and makes the delivery harder. Yelling will slow the delivery.

**Have a calm and natural environment.** People assisting at the delivery should speak normally and support the woman to relax.

**Let the baby come out naturally.** Inuit believe that the woman should never try to stop the baby from emerging or try to slow the delivery process.

**Drink warm water if you are bleeding.** This helps to replenish the blood that is lost during delivery.

**Don't do anything strenuous afterward.** Don't lift anything for the next few days after the delivery.

**Be aware of post-partum depression.** Sometimes, women can become very emotional during and after pregnancy. This is called post-partum depression. In the past, a new mother stayed in a separate iglu to rest for a month after delivery. She was given all the support and special attention she needed. This helped her rest and feel secure. This also gave time for her hips to heal, to get the bones back into place and become strong again.

## Advice About Breastfeeding

**Breastfeeding is best for mother and baby!** Don't use bottles unless you have to. Using bottles can cause infections and tooth decay.

**Put the baby to the breast right away after delivery.** This will make your milk start flowing sooner. This is especially important with your firstborn.

**Keep the baby sucking even if there is no flow.** Your milk may take a few days to start flowing.

**Release the milk from your breast.** If you leave milk in your breast, your breast will harden and you will make less milk. Encourage the baby to keep sucking by rubbing the head or cheek. If you have too much milk, wake up the baby to empty the breasts.

**Wake the baby up to be fed.** When the baby gains weight, she will sleep more.

**Feed regularly, but not constantly.** It is important to feed your baby when he needs to eat and also to make time to do other things.

**Alternate breasts.** Give the baby equal time at each breast.

**Sit up and stay alert.** Don't lie down when feeding newborns.

**Try to sleep when the baby sleeps.** This way, you will have enough energy to get up with the baby and hear her cries.

**Eat a lot!** Eat even when you aren't hungry to make sure you produce enough milk.

**Eat country foods.** To produce more milk, drink caribou broth. If the baby has soft stool, eat caribou fat. A baby with soft stool can get a rash quickly. To prevent constipation, eat meat with blubber.

## Tips for Pregnant Women

- ✓ Never smoke. Avoid all alcohol and drugs.
- ✓ Eat well. Eat iron rich foods, such as liver, heart, goose, mussels, green leafy vegetables, kidney or soy beans, and nuts.
- ✓ Stay active and get fresh air every day.

## 0 to 6 Months



### Reminders for Partners

- ✓ Early visits to the Health Centre are important. Show your child that it is exciting and not scary.
- ✓ Don't miss your child's immunizations. Afterward, watch your child carefully. Provide medication to reduce a fever if needed.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

Personality shows very early. Parents should pay attention to this so they can support their baby's development. Examples:

- A baby that is scared easily or engages slowly will need encouragement.
- Babies will also show you if they are very determined and persistent about things.
- Some babies require a lot of stimulation. They want to try new things all the time.



### Communication

- Babies copy facial expressions. They are learning to use them to show emotions.
- Babies cry to tell us that they need something.
- When babies make sounds, they are practicing. They are trying to imitate what they hear.



### Skill Building

- Babies explore their environment. Even very young babies can put things into their mouths, so you have to be constantly watchful!
- Babies try to pull themselves up by grabbing onto things.
- Babies are learning to roll over, kick, and push themselves along.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Inunnguiniq and Miksirkarniq



*Inunnguiniq* is raising a child to become a capable human being. *Miksirkarniq* is giving proper direction so that the child will develop well and have a strong foundation. This is a key part of *inunnguiniq*.

Some children are made into capable human beings, with proper direction, and others are not. A child who is made into a capable human being will not hurt in their heart when they face life's hardships. A child who is not made into a capable human being will not be able to face hardships well.

*When I learned inunnguiniq from my grandparents, the knowledge could be traced back through many generations. It does not change over time, because the knowledge and directions are foundational. Sound teachings last. They are useful today and will be useful in the future. We need to understand inunnguiniq and consider it a gift from our culture and past. We need to keep this precious gift alive. All of the instructions we give to children become alive in them and continue on through them—good or bad. ~ Quote from Elders Advisory Committee*

## About this Age

From 0 to 6 months old, babies are becoming aware of their bodies, other people, and their environment.

They notice new things and try to touch everything. They suck their fingers as they become more mobile. Sometimes, they scare themselves by their own movements!

They develop food preferences and may gag on unpleasant tastes. They may notice changes in the taste of breastmilk if the mother eats different foods.

Drinking broth made from caribou, seal or other country foods may help contribute to a good supply of breast milk and is very good for the mother and baby.

They teethe. When their gums swell, they may be less interested in eating or tasting new foods. They may want to breastfeed more.

They start to recognize smells, sounds, voices and repetitive chants. They learn words such as hot and cold. They learn about being in an amautiq, such as when to stick their head out.

They begin to copy what others do. They copy siblings' moods, such as laughing or becoming excited.

They recognize people and their touch, especially close people. They may stare at specific people, often related to their namesake.

During this time, they are shy with strangers. They might let a stranger pick them up, but only to be handed over to their mother. Later, they will be more social.

By 3 to 4 months, they know their environment. For example, they will notice if they fall asleep in a strange place. Their sleeping patterns will change. They may panic until they see or hear a familiar person.

## What Parents Can Do

- Make sure the baby is comfortable.
- Do not put on too many clothes or let the baby over heat in the *amautiq*. Use soft, loose clothing (not baby jeans).
- When outside, always have them wear a hat that covers the ears.
- Never face them into the wind. It will take their breath away.
- Hug and caress the baby often. Sing or chant softly whenever you are near them.
- Do not hold the baby all the time. Put them on their tummy for short periods of time. Always watch them.
- Give them things to chew on when teething (long seal flipper bones or dry meat). This

soothes their gums. The bones and meat provide calcium for strong teeth.

- Watch out for choking hazards. Don't let them put small things into their mouths.
- *Aqqaq* them. They will respond to *aqqaq* and may respond to different *aqqaq* in different ways. They will recognize their name and respond.
- Keep them close and in a snug environment. Bundling the baby is good when they are not in their own beds.
- Change diapers often to avoid infections and rashes. Wash the bottom every time.
- Introduce new foods slowly, in small amounts. Start at 6 months.
- Give them things to hold, to improve grip.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

As a parent, you can do a lot to help your baby develop at this age. You can:

- Speak to them continuously.
- Sing, chant, and play word games.
- Make eye contact, *aqqaq*, and caress the child a lot.
- Respond to their demands so they feel secure.
- Make faces and encourage them to copy.
- Massage the child all over. Gently stretch out their limbs to strengthen them.
- With each diaper change, use the term to signify this (*Haahaapii?*) to teach them instructions.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ When breastfeeding one child, another child might wake up. Soothe the second child with your voice and by rubbing their back or head.
- ✓ Bathe babies regularly. Clean their heads every day. Clean between folds of skin.
- ✓ Talk to your baby all the time. Encourage the baby to watch what you are doing so they will be entertained, become observant, and learn.



## 6 to 12 Months



### Reminders!

- ✓ Make sure the environment is safe. Children learn very quickly at this age. They are very curious and move around a lot.
- ✓ Watch for colds and ear infections. Get treatment right away. Clear the nose and nasal passages.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I remember things. I want to repeat activities I have enjoyed before. I stay interested in events, toys, and other things.
- I begin to interact with others. I play with other children.
- I laugh at things.
- I seek attention. I want to connect socially. I am learning to use relationship names for people.



### Communication

- I form words. I copy your words, especially names for objects.
- I have my own vocabulary. Accept my words as I make new sounds. Don't try to correct me.
- I recognize instructions, such as *iittaaq*, *kuumik*, and *haahaa*. I learn to respond to questions you ask me, such as *imirulirangumik*.
- I remember what you tell me. You can ask me to pass an object to you. You can point at something and ask me to say its name.
- I express my needs, such as *amaq*, *iittaaq*, *amaama*, *haahaa*, and *nanganaa*.



### Skill Building

- My arms are strong! I grab and climb. I am mobile. I reach things you don't expect me to reach.
- I love to jump. This is making my legs strong.
- I copy actions. I like to play patty cake, *abuu*, and *putujaa*. I like to wave bye-bye.
- I am learning terms for my body parts.
- I can be potty-trained. Boys will pee more often than girls. If I pee often, I will be a good hunter.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Relationship Building and Helping



**Building relationships** involves many skills, such as being good to others, sharing, learning to apologize and make amends, showing love, and building strong ties, especially through kinship names.

Teach children to apologize and make amends. We all rely on each other, so children need to learn the importance of always being fair and responsible. Give children many hugs and kisses to teach them to show love.

Teach them about kinship names. Encourage them to build strong relationships through names. Children were taught to be shy with strangers, but to get used to new people with their parent by their side encouraging them.

**Helping** is an essential part of building life-long, reciprocal relationships. It is important to be good to others so that they will help you when you are in need.

Interaction with siblings helps young children develop this skill. Teach them that their role is to always help each other.

Strongly encourage young children to share everything they are given. Sharing secures relationships and prepares children to be providers.

## About this Age

At this age, babies are learning about communication, movement, and their safety and security in the world. Relationships are very important now. Babies start to make friends and play with others.

Body contact is very important. At this age, babies like to *tutik* (sleep with their parents). They like to be held a lot. They learn the smells of parents and other close adults. They learn to feel secure around them.

At this age, babies begin to crawl and walk. They have many spills and bumps as they explore movement. Babies learn to walk earlier today than in the past because they get to practice more.

Babies use their body to communicate. For example, a baby might grab your *amauti* to show wanting to go outside. Or, a baby might pull you toward the door. Respond to babies' communications so they learn to trust adults.

This is a critical time in babies' growth and they need good food. Food security and good nutrition now will provide life long health. Babies who don't have food security now will learn to be stressed about food and to hoard or whine.

At this age, babies shouldn't have too many toys and distractions, such as TV. Having too many toys desensitizes children. They could become less observant of unfamiliar experiences and less cautious. Parents should limit TV time, so the TV doesn't become the baby's teacher.

- **Have only a few special toys.** Encourage the baby to appreciate them, play with them creatively, and take care of them.
- **Encourage accountability.** Don't be too protective of them. Teach them to resolve conflict with others.
- **Encourage perseverance.** Don't coddle them or show too much concern when they stumble so they learn to persevere and try again.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Very young children envy what older siblings can do. When you notice this, tell them they will become capable when they are big. This creates positive expectations. The child will be encouraged and motivated.
- You can help your child develop language skills by speaking to them all the time. You should also repeat the sounds and words they make.
- Encourage them to play with what is around them. Encourage them to explore safe household objects.
- Observe your baby's behavior and preferences. Reflect them back to the baby through nicknames, such as by calling them "the one who likes to climb" or "the one who makes noise."
- Talk about the tastes of new foods. Encourage your baby to try new foods, especially country foods (a very important source of nutrition).

## What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage the baby's unique interests.** Observe and encourage what they notice and want.
- **Introduce many country foods.** They will develop a taste for all kinds of nutritious food.
- **Do not introduce junk foods.** This includes candy, sugar juices and pop. They are bad for baby teeth.
- **Remember, babies need physical closeness.** They will develop a deeper connection with you. Distant parents are less approachable. Don't leave your child in swings or play pens too often.
- **Encourage interaction with close adults.** They will become important in the child's life. Parents, grandparents and other close adults are the baby's first teachers.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ **Tip #1: Don't overdress the baby.** They should feel very close or skin-to-skin contact when in the *amauti*. Babies are not comfortable when they are *iipiliq*.
- ✓ **Tip #2: Sing and chant.** This calms babies. They feel secure. Sing songs or family *aqqaq* or *piisiit* or chants. Sing *Maksaujau*, a sleeping song, when you want them to go to sleep.

## 12 to 18 Months



### Reminders!

- ✓ Children are more social and more mobile now. Teach them to wash their hands before they eat and after playing, visiting, and using the washroom.
- ✓ Protect young children's teeth. Brush children's teeth at least 2 times each day, with a soft brush. Add water to juice. Give the diluted juice in a cup, not a bottle.



### Communication

- I speak in short sentences. I ask questions. I tell stories.
- Sometimes I babble, mixing in a few real words. My vocabulary is developing.
- I am learning the names for my clothes. I am learning the words for things I like to do.
- I don't always use finals well or pronounce words correctly. But, don't correct me at this age. Keep encouraging me to talk.



### Skill Building

- I dress myself. I try to put on my outdoor clothes when I want to go out.
- I try to solve my own challenges without asking for help, such as trying to go somewhere I want to go.
- Girls like to look inside things, such as containers with lids. Boys are developing gross motor skills, such as by playing with hockey sticks, big tools that are safe to play with, or equipment, like sleds.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- My individual character is starting to show. I need you to observe me and nurture my unique interests and talents.
- I am beginning to assert myself by refusing to do what I am asked. I am also learning that I am not the boss! I am learning about authority and to consider others' needs.
- I am learning many rules and guidelines for life, which will be a foundation for me. I am learning what is dangerous and what is expected of me.
- I am becoming capable of new things all the time, such as putting toys away. Ask me to do these things as soon as you notice I am able. Praise me when I do helpful things without being asked.
- I am learning about sharing. If I take something from another child, don't make me give it back. Instead, talk with me about sharing and remind me of the importance of setting aside my own wants for the sake of others. When I share, praise me for giving something; I wanted to help someone else.

## Applying Inuit Values

### *Pilimmaksarniq* (Becoming Skilled)



### Description

*Pilimmaksarniq* means to become skilled. It is also about using our skills for the common good. If you use your skills only to serve yourself, you will not be satisfied or earn respect in life. *Pilimmaksarniq* teaches us that skills are useless without the right attitude of using them to serve others.

### Process

Becoming skilled takes time and practice. Teach your child to always practice to improve their skills. Encourage your child to keep trying and not give up easily. Celebrate improvements, even small ones. This will motivate your child to keep trying. Encouragement, motivation and practice are essential for *pilimmaksarniq*.

## About this Age

Children at this age are quite demanding. They want to do things, but can't do them independently yet. They are very active. They want to do things on their own, especially outside the home. They get frustrated easily and tend to whine. They can be very persistent to get what they want.

At this age, some children are very possessive. They want to say "mine!" They become upset if someone takes what is theirs. Teach the child to share with others.

Teach children of this age to help with small tasks, such as preparing meals and serving others. This teaches the child what is expected of them. Give the child many opportunities to practice small tasks. Encourage the child's efforts with lots of praise and appreciation. Giving direction is important at this age. This is when the *miksirniq* is established.

Children at this age are ready to learn more kinship terms, especially for everyone they have a close relationship with. They are also ready to learn special responsibilities connected with each relationship. For example, teach them to get slippers for their grandmother or to get their father's glasses for him.

At this age, children tend to have a big appetite, especially children who move around a lot. Some children will want big amounts of *mattaq*, butter, and fat. Be cautious not to give them too much or they might become sick.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Set rules and stick to them.**
- **Allow only a small amount of TV.** Don't let TV become a teacher for the child.
- **Encourage walking.** Don't pick the child up all the time. Let them walk and go slowly for them.
- **Do not spoil the child.**
- **Encourage eating healthy foods.** Set a good example by eating healthy foods and encourage the child to eat what you are eating. Increase country foods. Limit store-bought processed foods.
- **Watch for possessiveness,** especially in an only child. Encourage sharing.
- **Encourage trying new things.** Support them when they show interest in trying a new activity, food, or task.
- **Encourage resilience.** Don't give too much attention to crying or whining. Children who learn to resort to crying will give up easily and not learn as fast.

- **Talk, talk, talk.** Use a lot of language all the time. The child is absorbing everything they hear.
- **Set positive goals and expectations.** When a young child envies what an older child can do, tell the young child that they will be capable, too, when they are older. Teach the child to develop positive expectations. This motivates them to keep trying. Give them small tasks that are at their skill level.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Learn to communicate your expectations clearly. Develop your ability to impose consequences. For example, teach the child that if they fight over a toy, you will take the toy away for a while.
- Play with your toddler! Play dress up. Play outside as much as possible. Talk about and have them observe the natural world. Play games with rules. Teach them to follow the rules.
- At this age, children need to learn how to act around animals. Teach your child about dogs especially.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ If a child fights with another child, don't ask "Who did this to you?," because this would teach them to get you to intervene. Just soothe the child while they get their tears out.
- ✓ When a child doesn't get their way, they will often keep trying, such as by asking another adult. With children this age, use distraction to help a child move on from not getting their way.
- ✓ Speak truthfully about dangers and explain the safety rules you set. This will help the child understand and remember the rule.
- ✓ If a child gets hurt and cries, don't try to comfort them. Wait until they stop crying. Then, explain to them why they got hurt.
- ✓ Be firm. Young children will test adults, such as by reaching for something you've told them they can't have. Set rules and stick to them.

# 18 Months to 2 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ If a child has a stuffy nose, have them run around or exercise. This will make their nose run. Get them to blow into a tissue often. Throw the tissue in the garbage.
- ✓ Allow children to snack when hungry, but only on healthy foods. Don't give children foods that are high in salt or sugar.
- ✓ Children should drink water throughout the day.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am learning to respect ownership of property. I am learning not to take or damage what isn't mine. I need you to teach me consequences for stealing and what others will think of me if I do. Teach me to imagine how the other person would feel.
- I am learning about telling the truth. I need you to teach me not to lie. I am learning that others will not trust me if I lie. I also need you to teach me not to gossip or tell untrue stories about others.



### Communication

- I understand many words. My vocabulary is growing quickly.
- I am starting to use longer and more complex sentences.
- I like to listen to stories. I like to learn chants and songs. I like finger plays, and action games.



### Skill Building

- I want to copy everything you do. I want to use tools and machines that might not be safe. I need you to appreciate my efforts, but make sure I am safe. Give me safe things to play with.
- I can move quickly! I am learning how to be safe, such as staying away from ice. I need a safe play area with boundaries.
- I am learning to observe. Ask me questions. Encourage me to think!

## Applying Inuit Values

### Respect

#### Description

If we show respect for all living things, we will be respected. Everything around us deserves respect. Every living thing has a protector who watches over it. Any disrespectful actions will always come back to us in negative ways.

#### Process

Teach your children to be respectful at this age. If you don't, you might lose control of them later in life. Consider that your children's disrespect will affect the whole family, including parents, grandparents and others.

In the past, Inuit scolded children immediately for any disrespectful behaviour. Such behavior was never ignored or laughed at. The child would be taught to apologize.



## About this Age

Two-year olds learn quickly. They observe everything you say and do. They will talk how you talk and react to situations how you do.

Two-year olds are also persistent. If the child has a question or interest, they will not be satisfied until they get an answer.

At this age, children like to be outside and they like to play with real things. Provide them with real activities outside that are safe. For example, they can care for puppies and do small jobs.

Boys and girls are showing more differences at this age. Listen to what the child is trying to communicate because each child has different needs and interests.

Boys begin to identify as males at this age. They want to tease and provoke others. They want to practice throwing rocks and chasing things. Teach young boys how to treat dogs and small animals with kindness. Give them their own small tools. Show them where to keep them and how to look after them.

Teach girls in similar ways with their dolls and small uluit and skins.

At this age, children should eat whenever they are hungry, but only if it is healthy food. Feed them *quaq*. Encourage them to try all country foods. But, never force them to eat foods they don't like.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Be a good role model.** Two-year olds remember and repeat everything! Be mindful of what you say and do. For example, don't gossip around the child or they might develop the same habit.
- **Don't argue or fight in front of the child.**
- **Always watch over them.** Two-year olds get into mischief quickly because they want to try everything. Watch for dangers, such as water. They should never be left alone.
- **Teach them what to avoid,** such as hot things, cold things, and sharp things.
- **Teach at their level.** Use words they understand. Don't give them more information than they are ready for.
- **Limit treats!** Give only a small amount of treats. If the child asks for more, just say, "It's all gone." They will stop looking for it. Also, be sure to give treats equally to children.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Play outside with children at this age. Teach them to dress properly for the weather. Teach them the names of animals and birds.
- Tell stories. Read to them. Sing songs together. Encourage children to listen carefully for details.
- Establish a bedtime routine. Teach your child that rest is important for growing strong and being healthy. Sometimes, children do not want to sleep when others are still awake. Lie down with your child. Read or talk softly to them. This will make them feel secure and they will fall asleep.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Do not give into a child's demands. Gently teach them to accept "no" for an answer and other challenges in life.
- ✓ Do not lie to children. If they find out about a lie, they will become mistrustful. They will also learn to tell lies.
- ✓ Teach young children about safety. Teach them to stay away from dogs. Even good dogs might play too aggressively, so teach children to always be careful with dogs. Teach children to stay away from ice and water. Explain that strange beings, such as *qallupiluk*, might grab them.
- ✓ Always keep young children in close sight.



## 2 to 2½ Years



### Reminders

- ✓ Encourage healthy eating. Active young children need protein from fresh meat and calcium from soft bones and milk.
- ✓ Clean small cuts and bandage them. If there is any pus, soak the cut in warm salted water. If you are worried, go to the health centre.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am learning how to be respectful and caring. My behavior reflects our family. I need you to teach me good life habits. Teach me not to bully small animals or other children. Teach me that there is a protector who sees my actions.
- I am learning about the environment. I am learning that the environment will take care of us if we treat the land well. Teach me to pick up garbage if I see any.



### Communication

- I am learning to use specific words to describe details. I can name parts of things. I am learning specific terms for weather and directions.
- I ask many questions! Support my thinking skills by encouraging me to think of answers on my own.



### Skill Building

- My muscles are growing. I need to be busy and active. Help me grow strong by having me carry things for you. Ask me to move heavier objects when I am able.
- I am ready to learn small motor skills. I like to do tasks with my hands, such as pile up small rocks or move bones around to make a miniature camp.

- I am developing observation skills. Ask me to describe the weather each morning. Ask me to describe experiences from memory.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Avatitiniq Kamattiarniq

(Being Aware of Our Environment)



### Description

We must look after the environment and the people and animals in it. If we do not take care of our environment, it will not sustain us. Learning to be in tune with our environment should begin at an early age. If we are knowledgeable about our environment, we are able to observe changes and respond.

### Example

A young couple was cleaning fish and leaving the guts for seagulls. The father-in-law began to collect the guts to bury them. "Why don't you let the seagulls do the work"? The couple asked him. "Seagulls are a sign of a dirty camp and a lazy hunter," he said. We should leave the land as we find it. For example, we are taught to mop up the blood after butchering a caribou so there was no evidence of the hunt left. This awareness and care is *avatitiniq kamattiarniq*.

## About this Age

At this age, children are very impressionable. They learn by mimicking others' behavior. They copy what they see and hear. They may try to do adult activities, such as cutting meat or other dangerous activities. They like to play independently. They like to pretend. They also like to mimic real life situations in their play.

Little girls tend to mimic their mothers and little boys tend to mimic their fathers. As boys copy their fathers, they often become protective of their mother. They can also learn bad habits. For example, if they see their father constantly playing cards or video games, they will want to do the same.

Boys also tend to get into trouble more than girls. They may try to blame someone else to avoid trouble.

At this age, children want to dress themselves. As they dress themselves, they learn right and left, and the right and wrong ways to put things on. They may love to borrow clothing and play dress-up. If you try to take the clothing away, you may find yourself chasing after the child, as she tries to keep the clothing.

Grandparents often have close relationships with a child at this age, because they have more patience, authority, and tell stories that teach the child standards for his life. At this age, the child may have a special trust for his grandparents, because grandparents can often spend more time with the child than busy parents can.

At this age, children tend to be picky about food. They have favourite foods. They may refuse to eat certain foods.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Teach proper behaviour.** For example, teach not to hit or punch, not to go into another's cupboard or fridge, and not to take another's things.
- **Discipline firmly but calmly.** Your style of discipline now influences the child's life. If you slap a child in anger, she learns to slap others in anger. If you show kindness, she will show kindness.
- **Agree on parenting methods.** Discuss parenting issues with your partner in private. Be in agreement with each other when you are with the child.
- **Encourage creative play and fun.** At this age, children always want to be busy and active. Give them small things to play with and activities to try, especially when it's too cold or buggy to go outside.
- **Encourage their curiosity and interests.** But, always watch them closely and keep them from danger.
- **Visit grandparents.** Have your child spend lots of time with grandparents. Encourage grandparents to tell stories and teach Inuit sayings (*inutsiaqpagutit*).
- **Know that fathers are needed.** Fathers, take on a bigger role with children this age. Boys and girls both need their father's attention.
- **Talk with your child.** Ask her what she's thinking about. Get to know her personality.

- **Observe your child's personality and support his strengths.** Is your child a quick learner, a helper, or a natural leader?
- **Provide healthy foods!** Make sure they are eating country foods and healthy store-bought foods.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Support children at this age to make choices. For example, invite them to choose which socks they want to wear or what activity they want to do.
- Teach children this age to observe and concentrate. Have them select the biggest or smallest object from a group, or objects that are the same or different from each other. Teach words that give specific directions or that describe details of objects.
- Take children this age to new places. For example, take them to the library or the radio station.
- Encourage creative play. Have good play materials available. For example, empty boxes can be used to make cars, playhouses, sleds, and anything else your child dreams up.
- Lead group games when there are other children around. For example, teach children to play Simon Says or Follow the Leader.
- Support children to develop physical coordination, such as by playing with a ball. Children this age can learn to roll, push, trap and bounce the ball and even hit targets.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Discuss parenting issues away from the child. Don't disagree in front of them. This will confuse the child. It could make them feel insecure and lose trust.
- ✓ Respect your child's development as an individual. Encourage their unique strengths. Notice their weaknesses and correct bad behavior. Have clear expectations so your child will learn to get along well with others.



## 2½ to 3 Years



### Reminders

- ✓ Expose children to a wide variety of healthy foods. They will prefer some foods over others.
- ✓ Keep them active to help them develop strong muscles. They should aninguaq.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am developing habits, good and bad. I need you to notice my habits, such as being lazy or slow to respond, and correct them. I can be expected to respond to your corrections. I know that I will get in trouble if I don't listen.



### Communication

- I know many words. I know what I want and I can express myself well.
- I am starting to draw. I may draw images to communicate ideas or feelings.
- I am becoming more social. I want to engage with other children in groups.
- I like to repeat short songs and chants. I also like to play rhythmic games, such as juggling, skipping, and hop-sotch.
- I have questions about everything. Encourage me to answer my own questions by thinking carefully.



### Skill Building

- My long-term memory is stronger now. I can tell stories about experiences and memories. I especially remember unusual events and may talk about them often.
- I am more independent. I can go to the bathroom on my own. I can choose activities. I can organize my toys. I can clean up.
- I like to carry puppies. I like to help look after babies and younger children.
- I can be responsible for small tasks and complete them on my own.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Survival



#### Description

Survival involves *ilirkusiniq*, always maintaining good habits. In the past, we based our good habits on the rules and procedures of *inunnguiniq*, which were developed over centuries by our ancestors. We would have been lost without them.

#### Discussion

In the past, we had rules for proper eating, sleeping, physical activity, and attitudes. We had procedures for becoming skilled, respecting others, and working for the good of others. What guidelines are there for parents today? How do parents know what to do? Who can help and advise us? We have so many conveniences today, but our children are not all becoming able human beings. We all need a plan to follow. Without such guidance, parents experience a lot of stress. To survive today, we still need the principles and values of *inunnguiniq*.

## About this Age

This is an important transition time. At this age, children are becoming able to learn the principles and values of *inunnguiniq*.

At this age, children begin to nurture relationships. They learn how to address different people and how to show respect. They appreciate special events with people.

For example, they look forward to a parent coming home, visits from relatives, and new babies.

They also begin to understand their emotions. They are learning to talk about their emotions and what causes them. Parents should talk about emotions with their child and support them to use proper words to explain their feelings.

Children this age begin to notice what they are capable of on their own and what they need help with. They feel good about accomplishing small tasks and completing projects.

They begin to notice what needs to be done and do it without being asked. They can do special jobs, such as gathering wood or moss, putting things away properly, and doing dishes. They can take responsibility for small tasks.

They begin to pay more attention to details. For example, they can learn small motor tasks, such as using a small nail to split the leg bone for marrow. Children this age love to spend time with older siblings. They like to follow others.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Talk about beliefs and values.** Begin to teach about expectations and what truly matters in life.
- **Teach about preparation.** Do this by creating ways for the child to help out when you plan and prepare for things. Talk about what you are doing.
- **Support learning by observation.** Create opportunities for the child to observe you do a task and then try it on their own.
- **Encourage perseverance.** Give children small tasks that challenge them. Don't help right away if they have trouble. Praise small successes, offer hints, and encourage them to try again.
- **Teach proper names.** Insist that children use proper kinship names. Explain how to show respect to others.
- **Praise sharing and helping.** Notice when your child helps others or shares. Praise them for small things, such as passing a toy to another child.
- **Support social skills development.** Create opportunities for your child to socialize often, with and without parents.

- **Talk about emotions.** Discuss emotions openly and use proper words to teach the child how to talk about their emotions. Teach the child which emotions to express openly and which emotions to control, such as anger and jealousy. Help the child learn to control these feelings.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Involve your child in work around the house. Find small tasks that the child can do to help you.
- Encourage your child to learn by copying the tasks you do, such as sewing or fixing things. Give them their own set of small tools and encourage them to play with tools while you work on the real items.
- Cook with your child. Give them opportunities to stir ingredients or measure and mix. Help them notice the process that creates the end result, such as the steps involved in making bannock or soup.
- Help your child talk about emotions. You can do this by making faces and asking your child to name what you are expressing. Ask them what they think made you feel that way.
- Ask questions! Pose questions that will encourage the child to think of solutions to various challenges.
- Keep your child active, with lots of time outside. Take them to playgrounds or out for walks. Encourage them to run, bike, slide, and skate.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Children at this age are developing independence. Encourage this independence, while still keeping your child safe. Teach them to be safe and not cause others to worry about them. Set safety rules, such as not leaving the house without telling someone, holding hands when walking outside or near a road, and not touching certain things without asking. Set clear limits, such as for bedtime. Teach them the sayings (inusipagutit) to guide them in life.

4 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ Make sure your child's immunizations are up to date before they go to school or pre-school.
- ✓ Before school starts, have your child's vision and hearing tested. Have their development screened.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am learning to be responsible and not lazy. Teach me to respond instantly to requests. Teach me that it is not okay for me to give someone else a chore that I have been asked to do.
- I am also learning to take responsibility for mistakes, such as breaking something.

*In the past, children were taught consequences for being lazy. Girls were told they would have difficulty giving birth. Boys were told that game would take a long time to come to them. Elders remember being told, "the seal will go to the next hole if you are lazy."*



### Communication

- I am using speaking skills. I may be slower than others or have trouble with pronunciation. Don't pressure me. Support me with patience and practice. We all develop language skills differently.
- I am learning to talk about important things in my life. Support me by having open conversations with me.



### Skill Building

- I am learning to develop good habits and values. I need you to teach me to have a routine, including eating with others and going to sleep regularly. Teach me to get up early and to take responsibility for chores.

- I am developing my individual strengths. Encourage me and give me time to practice.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Pijitsirniq (Serving)



### Description

Serving others means contributing to their wellbeing. Elders remember being taught the importance of serving others when they were young. They remember eagerly wanting to find ways to contribute and work hard as soon as they were big enough.

### Discussion

Structure children's play so that it prepares them for contributions they can make when they are older. Teach young children that you expect them to respond to requests right away. As they can do more, give them more responsibilities. Encourage them to do their chores without being asked. Encourage them to notice what needs to be done and to do it without being asked. When you notice that a job has been done, give praise without naming the child. This will teach them to serve others without seeking praise.

## About this Age

At this age, children are ready to learn core beliefs and values. Teach them rules for life, such as not to lie, not to steal, to put things back after you use them, to be very careful with others' belongings, and to take care of one's own belongings. Teach them relationship skills, such as how to treat siblings and how to develop good friendships.

Four-year olds need lots of independent play. Girls often develop interests in school and playing house. Boys often develop interests in hunting and machines. Keep in mind that every child is different and we must support their own unique interests.

At this age, children can play outside more independently and like to go on small adventures with family members and older siblings. Through playing, children learn about the natural world. As they want to explore more, go with them and teach them to respect the environment. Elders say they were taught that each rock belongs to the creator and must be cared for. They were taught that we are in a relationship with all the things on the land.

In the past, Inuit began to teach children at this age the names of important places and their characteristics. They began to teach them to hunt birds with rocks. They would also teach how to find eggs and bring them home to share, instilling the value of sharing with family and friends.

Four-year olds like to spend time with grandparents. This is a good time for grandparents to talk with young children about values and what is expected of them throughout life. This is also a good time to notice the child's unique personality and strengths.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Be an active teacher.** Your whole family will benefit from your child's development. Every moment offers new learning opportunities for your child. Take every opportunity to help your child develop skills and values.
- **Help your child prepare to start school.** Talk with your child about being with a large group of children. Tell them what you expect from them when they are at school.
- **Teach your child to observe the natural world.** Teach your child to observe the weather and seasons. Ask your child to describe in detail what they observe.
- **Teach proper harvesting values.** Teach your child to leave some eggs for the mother bird and never take them all. Teach them to share everything they harvest. Always tell them to think of the needs of others, so that it becomes a habit.
- **Teach about special places and place names.** Show places to your child. Explain the place names. Tell them about any special rituals that go with the place.
- **Encourage your child to seek peace with others.** Teach your child not to seek revenge, even if they are mistreated. Teach them to resolve conflict and seek peace.

- **Teach children to never steal.** Tell children that stealing is hurtful to the victim. Teach them that any hardship they cause to others will always come back to them.
- **Limit time on the TV.** Don't allow the TV to be their teacher.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- At this age, focus on supporting your child to develop core values. Talk with them about situations they might encounter. You could ask, "What would you do if someone hit you for no reason?" "What would you do if you were alone in the store and you couldn't find me?" "What would you do if you saw someone hurting a baby bird?" Teach the child ethical responses to each situation. For every idea the child offers, present one of your own, too. Talk about what some of the consequences of each response might be.
- Encourage your child not to hold grudges or make enemies. Teach them that such habits will cause them hardship in life.
- Find ways to be helpful to others and have your child participate. For example, make a meal for someone who is sick.
- Notice your child's development as she faces small challenges in her life today. Her experiences now will help her face greater challenges later in life.
- Support your child's language development at this age by playing word games to name specific items. Help your child recognize and properly name items such as different birds, plants, or tools.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Four-year olds need lots of instruction. They are forming life habits. Be selective about what your child watches on TV or pays attention to.
- ✓ Support four-year olds to be more independent, but always watch them so you can correct or teach them at important learning moments.

# 5 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ Children should have health assessments before they start school, including development, vision, and hearing. Check with the Health Centre.
- ✓ It is also time for immunizations. Make sure your child is up-to-date.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- My character and interests are obvious now. I need encouragement to practice and become skilled in my interests. This is when *pilimmaqsarniq* really begins.
- I am learning to treat my siblings well. I need encouragement not to bother them or tell on them. Remind me that my siblings and I will need each other's support in the future.

*In the past, girls were told that one day they would need their brothers to provide food for them. Boys were told that they would need their sisters to provide warm mittens.*



### Communication

- My memory is developing. Teach me to remember chants and songs. When you tell me a story, stop sometimes and ask me to tell you what will happen next.
- I can start to read now. You can help me by putting labels on things in our house that I already know the names of. Challenge me by mixing up two labels and asking me to find the mistake.



### Skill Building

- I am very interested in new things. Always encourage me to try!

*In the past, children were encouraged to try any skill they showed interest in. Boys who showed interest in sewing were encouraged. If a child wanted to go hunting even though it was very cold, we allowed them to go.*

## Applying Inuit Values

### Family – Putting the Needs of Others First



### Commentary

When we were young, we did not feel pressure because we knew that our parents would make sure our needs were met, such as having warm clothing and good shelter. If my hands got cold, my father would stop the trip to warm my mitts inside his parka. We knew we were well cared for. This gave us a sense of being very secure. Our parents were efficient and paid close attention to us, so we had great respect for them and confidence in whatever they did or said.

Today, parents and children do not have the same relationship. Today, parents have to find ways to rebuild relationships of confidence and respect. They can do this by spending time with their children, by paying close attention to the child's needs, and not just doing what they want to do. ~ Elder Advisory Committee

## About this Age

Children become very independent at this age. Always monitor the child's activity, but don't interrupt unless she is doing something wrong or dangerous. If the child is doing something wrong or dangerous, correct her immediately so she learns.

Five-year olds are very curious about their environment. This is a good time to teach them about the land, what can be used, and what can be eaten. For example, they will be excited to learn what plants can be eaten or used for tea. They will also be interested

in small animals and insects. Teach them the names and characteristics of each one. Encourage them to observe details and changes in nature. This is a good time to teach your child that we live in relationship with everything in the world.

Five-year olds like imaginary play. Imaginary play is important because it causes children to think about challenges in life and seek solutions. Support imaginary play by encouraging children to play with what is in their environment. Don't give them too many toys.

At this age, children want to spend more time with their peers. Talk with them about how to make friends. Teach them that they will be treated well if they treat others well.

At this age, the child can tell you when he is hungry or doesn't like a food. Let him help himself to what he wants as long as it is healthy and nutritious.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage your child to resolve conflict on his own.** When a child complains about other children, encourage them to work things out together. Don't try to fix it for them right away.
- **Teach relationship skills.** Teach your child to share and be a good friend. Show them how to do this.
- **Teach respect for property.** Teach your child to respect other children's toys and playgrounds. Many playgrounds have lasted for many years because we respect them.
- **Teach respectful talking.** Be a good role model when you talk around children. Don't gossip or tease others, because this never helps and always leads to trouble. If you hear children talking about issues they should not talk about, correct them right away. Explain why.
- **Encourage quick action and helpfulness.** Encourage children when they respond quickly to your requests for help. Show appreciation when they are eager to help.
- **Encourage them to pick up garbage on the land.** Teach them to recognize what doesn't belong on the land. Encourage them to bring it back to town and throw it in a garbage can.
- **Teach respect for nature.** Teach children to only harvest what is needed and never more.

- **Teach respect for plants.** Show them how to pick leaves and berries so that the plant is not destroyed. We must always respect the plant and make sure it can keep growing.
- **Teach respect for animals.** Children should never torment small animals or cause suffering, such as when they look for eggs or hunt mice. Show children that all parts of an animal must be used and never wasted, even if it is only for dog food.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Strengthen your child's **observation skills.** Here are some ways you can do this.
- Play observation games while doing everyday activities. For example, put your sewing tools on a table. Add an object that doesn't belong. Ask your child which item doesn't belong. Then, have your child place an object that does belong for you to find.
- Play the cup game. Have three cups. Hide a small object under one cup. Mix up the cups. Ask your child which cup the small object is under. Take turns mixing up the cups and guessing.
- Pretend to be animals. Have your child pretend to be an animal. Challenge them to move, sound, eat, and play like that animal would.
- Collect items from the land together. Talk about everything you know about each item. Encourage the child to share what she knows with others who visit.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Encourage children to resolve problems with other children in friendly ways, rather than by telling on others. Give helpful suggestions if your child comes to you with a problem. Explain to your child that being kind when others are mean will make her a stronger person.
- ✓ Teach children to be disciplined. Teach them to be obedient, to never talk back, to listen to their teachers, and to persevere and always do their best.

## 6 Years



### Reminders

- ✓ To prevent sickness, teach children to blow their noses gently and often.
- ✓ Teach good hygiene routines, such as hand washing, coughing into the arm, and brushing and flossing teeth. Teach six-year olds to be responsible for their own hygiene.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am starting to think about how I want to live and what I want to be known for.
- I am aware of fairness. I am also aware of differences between my friends and me.
- I need you to teach me about being a good person and living a good life. I am developing my core values.
- I look up to my heroes.



### Communication

- I am learning to use relationship terms. I am learning about how I am connected with others.

*We never used names, even for our friends, but we used relationship terms to show that we valued and respected others as friends. Children should use these terms and know how they are connected to others*

*Ungatinguaq is a term for “playing house” as a child. Encourage six-year olds to pretend. It helps them envision what they can become in later life.*



### Skill Building

- I remember everything. I am very impressionable. I need you to protect me from bad experiences that will create bad memories, like mean or abusive people or dangerous situations.
- My special talents are starting to show. You can see what I might be good at in the future. I need you to notice this and encourage me.
- I need clear instructions about what the expectations are. I know you have my best interests in mind, so I trust everything you tell me.

## Applying Inuit Values



### Love — *Inunnguiniq* is the Way to Show Love

#### Commentary

We love our children, so we care about their future. Our role is to prepare them to live a good life and be successful. To do this, we must care for them from birth, always putting their needs first. We must set clear expectations and teach them discipline to meet the expectations.

In the past, we were disciplined more than kids are today. Our parents set firm boundaries. They would give us a chance to correct our behaviour with a firm warning.

Never hit a child or try to hurt them as punishment. Never yell angrily because the child will feel humiliated. Discipline children with a quiet, stern voice and explain consequences of their actions. Explain that you always love them.

## About this Age

Six-year olds are very aware of their peers. They like to socialize with other kids, not just relatives. This is a time to teach social skills, such as being a good sport and having compassion.

At this age, kids like to tease each other. Some boys at this age will experiment with being assertive. They might fight rather than back down.



Six-year olds tend to want to compete with others. They want to slide the fastest, run the farthest, and go off the jump the highest. Teach them to admire winners and not to show disappointment. This is a time to teach children to be “good sports” and celebrate the successes of others.

Six-year olds really notice differences, so this is a time to teach compassion. All children need good treatment, good food, and proper clothes. Teach your child to have compassion and help meet the needs of other children. This will prevent bullying and teasing. Teach six-year olds that we have a responsibility to care for others, even as children. Teach this now and at every age.

At this age, children can contribute to the family. When they contribute, tell their name-sake about it and make a big fuss. Encourage the child all the time. Recognize their growing role as a capable human being. This will motivate the child to keep developing their skills. Their development is a blessing for the whole group.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Prevent negative peer influence.** Be aware of your child's friends. Prevent your child from being influenced. Teach him to stand up for his values. Remind your child about expectations, beliefs, and the importance of family reputation.
- **Build your child's self-esteem.** Your child will remember positive or negative messages she gets now. This will influence her whole life. Protect your child from negative words about her and counter any that come to her. If you say negative things in anger, always apologize. But, it is better to avoid saying negative things to your child in the first place.
- **Teach responsibility.** Give your child chores that he is able to do. Support him to take ownership of the task. For example, in the past children were each assigned puppies to look after. They would feed them, develop a relationship, and be told about their progress on the dog team over the years.

### More advice from elders to share with your six-year old:

“I was always told if someone was mean to me, to just move away and avoid the confrontation. Go find someone else to be with. When that person notices that you always leave when they are mean, they will know that it doesn't get to you.”

“We were told not to judge others because their circumstances were different from ours. We were also told to always be aware that you are part of a family, so don't participate in something your family would not do.”

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

Support your six-year old by trying these parenting activities.

- Ask your child about his friends and how they are. Suggest ways he can be a better friend. Encourage your child to notice what is happening in his friends' lives. Help him find ways to care for friends who are in need.
- Encourage your child to tell stories to the family. Give her your full attention.
- Encourage your child to practice writing the names of friends and relatives. Practice with him.
- Play games that develop physical skills. Play tag, bat and ball, and soccer.
- Play memory games, such as “concentration.” Show a set of objects and then cover them. Ask your child to see how many she can remember.
- Get your child to help with everyday tasks, such as cooking, cleaning, serving others, and helping grandparents.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ The most important thing to a six-year old is to spend time with you. Spend time on the land with them. Introduce them to what they need to learn in life to be successful. Notice what they are good at and enjoy doing. Encourage them.
- ✓ Teach six-year olds about weather. Get them to experience all types of weather. Teach them to dress properly for the weather.
- ✓ Have your six-year old spend lots of time with grandparents and other elders. Help them build these important relationships.



# 7 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ At this age, children think they can do anything and they are very curious. Supervise them from a distance to protect them from accidents and dangers.
- ✓ Make sure your adventurous seven-year old is dressed properly for the weather.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I show respect to people and the environment. Encourage this. Expect this from me.
- I am learning resilience. If I cry about small things, ignore my crying.
- I observe what chores need to be done. I do them without being told. Encourage this. Expect this from me.



### Communication

- My language skills are becoming stronger. You can talk with me about complex ideas.
- I learn from correction. If I mispronounce words, correct me. Encourage me to say things properly.
- I can remember instructions from small hints. When you give me a hint, I remember the whole instruction.
- I want to listen to adult conversations and watch adult TV programs. But, I need you to protect me because that might harm me.



### Skill Building

- I understand detailed instructions, with specific terminology (not only general terms).
- I think through issues on my own.
- I have good dexterity. I use small objects and tools.
- I am creative and am capable of solving problems.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Significance



### Description

We always saw the consequences for disobeying good instructions. For example, there was a boy who mistreated a siksik. He had been instructed to never mistreat animals. He tried to break a siksik's eardrums by making loud noises. In the end, he hurt himself. The boy learned his lesson only after becoming deaf.

We wonder if our beliefs are not understood today. Why are people doing the opposite of our beliefs? Our beliefs are important. Inuit always say that if you do something with bad intent, you will be hurt in the end. That happened to the boy. Beliefs are grounded in truth. They have significance. We need to pay attention to what matters and obey them.

### Process

Tell children the beliefs and rules about respect. These are still important today. Children must be taught expectations. Teach them the consequences when they disobey.

## About this Age

Seven-year olds sense that they are becoming "able." They are eager to try things beyond their ability. Sometimes, they think they know more than they really do.

They are always trying to understand what is going on around them. They listen to everything. They understand most of what they hear. They ask many questions.

Seven-year olds want to know how they are related to extended family members. They use proper names for relations and others.

Expect seven-year olds to show respect. Teach your child to always consider how their choices impact others. Teach your child rules to avoid causing others to worry, such as telling someone that she is leaving the house.

At this age, children should respond immediately when you ask them to do something. Expect them to do small chores without being told.

They are learning to be patient and considerate. But, sometimes they try to get what they want by nagging.

Seven-year olds have strong memory skills. They can recite stories and songs. They remember instructions, such as warnings about danger. They also remember experiences and learn from them.

Seven-year olds have strong visualization skills. When listening to someone describe something, they can picture it in their mind.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage friendships.** Teach your child how to nurture friendships.
- **Encourage your child's interests.** Help her explore her interests by providing information and activities related to them.
- **Teach how to cope with disappointment.** We all experience disappointment sometimes. Teach your child to cope with disappointment, such as when you are busy and he can't get what he wants. Don't rush to fix things for him.
- **Teach your child to learn from mistakes.** Allow your child to make mistakes. Talk with her about her mistakes so she learns from them.
- **Encourage perseverance.** Don't intervene when your child struggles. Encourage him to try again.
- **Teach proper kinship names.** Show your child how to respect family and friends.
- **Assign chores.** Expect your child to do chores regularly and to respond immediately when asked to do a chore. Teach her to notice and do chores that need to be done. Praise her for this.
- **Don't let your child see violence.** This will traumatize him and hurt his ability to learn.
- Encourage your child to go to school everyday and try their best.
- **Don't let your child listen to adult issues.** Send her out if you need to talk about something children should not hear.
- **Set TV watching guidelines.** Pay attention to what your child watches on TV. Set guidelines about which programs are allowed and for how long they are allowed to watch.
- **Support them as they learn to read in English and Inuktitut.** This is important for their future.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Support your child to be an independent learner. Encourage her to try activities independently, to struggle, and to learn from her experiences.
- Strengthen your child's thinking skills. Play problem-solving games. Encourage him to think of solutions. Do not answer questions immediately. Ask him questions to encourage him to think of answers independently.
- To strengthen your child's language development, insist on description. Ask for more details when she uses simple or general words. Encourage her to be more specific.
- Teach sounds and symbols in words. Play word games to notice patterns. For example, think of words that rhyme, words have the same sounds, and words that start in the same way. Notice pieces of words that are the same and what they mean (for example, "er" teacher and painter).
- Help them explore their creativity by having them draw, paint, or sketch things they see.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ At this age, your child takes responsibility for his learning. He transitions from being a little child to being more independent. Encourage him to do things independently, but always watch him from a distance to keep him safe.
- ✓ Your child may fear new experiences. Always encourage her to try new things. Support her through this time of transition. Encourage her. Show her that you have confidence in her.

# 8 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ Eight-year olds are busy! Make sure your child gets enough rest, good food, and clear instructions to be safe and healthy.
- ✓ Children need to be active for good health. Inactivity causes health problems. Support your child to find activities they like, get outside, and stay active.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I take on chores and other responsibilities.
- I am aware of my reputation. I want others to notice my good behavior and abilities.
- I am beginning to understand teachings and expectations for my behavior.
- I show love openly to the family members who are close to me.



### Communication

- I am learning to communicate openly and respectfully. Expect me to show respect to others.
- I ask many questions! Teach me to ask the right questions to learn what I want to learn.
- I am self-conscious about my speech. I want to pronounce words correctly and the correct terms.



### Skill Building

- I have personal interests. I want to learn more about them and become skilled.
- I notice that I am becoming able. I want to do well and be known for my abilities.
- I have lots to learn, so I need to practice! Encourage me to practice and persevere so that I become capable.
- Teach me the expectation to never give up. This is not easy to follow. I need encouragement.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Practice



### Definition

Practice is essential for learning. We begin to learn a skill by observing and then doing. We become able by practicing the skill with persistence. Practicing is a core part of pilimmaksarniq.

The picture shows a child playing a skill-building game of hitting antlers off a rock. In the past, practice and skills development were built into games and daily activities.

### Process

The pilimmaksarniq learning process is to observe, try, practice, and keep improving. We learn by trial and error. Children need real-life opportunities to test their skills and strengthen them by experience. For this reason, some Elders are critical of education that takes place only in classrooms, using only abstract ideas, paper, and pencil. They believe that learning is most effective in real life contexts. The learner is active and can see the immediate results of his learning.

## About this Age

At this age, your child is becoming "able." This is a time of rich learning. This is a time to pass on teachings about how to live a good life.

At this age, your child is very observant and eager to learn. He asks many questions. He wants to understand "why." He persists to get clear answers.

Give your child more freedom to explore at this age. She wants to try things independently. She loves to play outside with friends. She may be difficult to control because she has her own interests and can entertain herself without help from you.

Support your eight-year old to take on more responsibilities and expectations. In the past, boys were taught about weapons and how to handle them safely and skillfully. Girls took on sewing projects independently and were expected to care for children and help with cooking, cleaning, and other chores.

Teach your eight-year old to look after himself, his belongings, and his environment. He can help with chores, such as dishes and shoveling. Teach her to clean snow off her clothing when she comes inside. Expect him to put things away and be careful with everything he uses, especially if it belongs to someone else.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage your child's interests** Provide materials and tools he can use for practice.
- **Be an active teacher.** Spend time with your child and teach her what you know. This is a time of rich learning. She can remember many instructions now.
- **Encourage your child to be active.** Tell him to go outside and run around.
- **Teach safety.** Teach your child when and where she can play safely.
- **Encourage thinking.** Your child will ask many questions at this age. Encourage him to think of the answers for himself. When you answer, explain your answer.
- **Teach how to be a good friend.** Teach your child to treat others how she wants to be treated.
- **Give clear instructions to children.**
- **Set high expectations for behaviour.** Teach the Inuit rules and principles for living a good life.
- **Assign chores and responsibilities.** Give your child chores that he can do independently. Expect him to do the chores. Praise and encourage him when he does.
- **Set bed times.** Your child is very active and needs good rest. She may not notice when she's tired.
- **Provide time with Elders.** Make sure your child has time with grandparents or other

Elders. Teach him to help Elders and do chores for them.

- **Teach ethics.** Encourage your child to do the right thing, even when others may not bother. Teach the child the value of building a good reputation.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Encourage your child to practice, practice, practice to become skilled.
- Games that support skill development are very important for eight-year olds. Encourage your child to play games that strengthen the body, mind, and spirit. Examples: juggling, hitting targets, playing with balls, string games, memory games, and cooperative learning games.
- Encourage your child to play with other children so they learn to cooperate and build relationships. Teach him to play hard but not competitively. Teach him to encourage others to do well, too.
- Support your child to use reason to solve problems. Give her examples of challenging situations. Ask her to think of solutions. For example, ask her what she would do if the roof blew off, if she were floating away on the ice, or if she were lost on the land.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ This is a critical year for your child's character development. She is learning to take responsibility and have a good reputation. Be your child's teacher. Take time to teach values and beliefs. If you don't teach your child at this age, she will learn from someone else.
- ✓ This is also a time when children develop critical thinking skills. Teach your child that we always have many choices in life. We must always think carefully to make the best choices.

# 9 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ As children become more social, they visit other homes and are exposed to germs. Remind them to wash their hands often.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am learning to always do my best and to never give up, even when something is hard.
- I need encouragement to practice what I like and am good at. I also need encouragement to try new things.
- Set high expectations for me! Expect good behavior and skills development. Support me to meet your expectations.



### Communication

- I am starting to understand what my parents and others have taught me about values and expectations. I am applying the principles you've taught me so far. I see how they connect with my life.
- I am learning to cooperate. I am learning to seek solutions with others. I need to communicate well so I can do this.



### Skill Building

- I am very energetic. I need to be active! Being active helps me develop my skills.
- I need time to practice my skills. I need lots of encouragement to do this.
- I am learning to be a team member. Encourage me to cooperate and get consensus in a group.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Observation

#### Definition

Observation is the core of Inuit learning and success. In the picture, the owl represents the power of clear sight, observation, and focus. Owls watch prey intensely. They grasp prey with their sharp talons and do not let go. We develop skills through keen observation. To observe well, we need to analyze and evaluate what we see. This leads us to new ways of thinking and gives us insight into situations.

#### Process

At around nine-years old, children are expected to be keen observers. Give children tasks such as watching the cooking pot. This is an opportunity to observe how much wood is needed to feed the fire without wasting any and how long it takes the water to boil. Such tasks help the family and they provide many learning opportunities for children.



## About this Age

At this age, children are concerned about their identity, their namesake, and their reputation. They are aware of their accomplishments. They want you to notice their abilities. This is a time to celebrate first hunts and other successes with the larger community and with namesakes.

At this age, children are very observant. They listen to everything, even talk that is beyond their understanding. They ask many questions. They also make comments about what they see and hear. Their comments might embarrass you, they are trying to understand the world and people around them.

Nine-year olds know the difference between truths and lies. But sometimes they want to do things without asking for permission. They might sneak around to get their way.

Nine-year olds also want to explore everything. They often try activities they are not ready for. They are independent and like to choose their own activities.

They are influenced by their peers. They spend more time with friends.

They tend to choose friends of the same gender. They tend to choose activities that are gender-specific.

At this age, children take good care of their belongings. They tend to have special places for their belongings to keep them away from younger siblings.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Set reasonable limits on your child's freedom.** Make sure you always know where she is and who she is with.
- **Set clear expectations for helping.** Encourage and praise your child when he responds well.
- **Set firm boundaries for your child.** You may need to be more stern with her at this age. Be serious about rules and expectations.
- **Support your child's transition from child to "tween."** Sometimes he still wants to be a baby and other times he wants to be seen as capable and mature. Communicate openly with him to help him through this transition.
- **Involve your child in more adult activities.** Allow her to observe so that she begins to learn for later in life. She needs opportunities to observe activities before she tries them.

- **Encourage good relationship values.** Encourage your child to share, respect, avoid conflict, help, be a good friend, and be honest. Teach him to keep promises.
- **Teach teamwork.** Expect your child to cooperate with others. Teach her to earn others' trust by being reliable.
- **Encourage your child to develop a good reputation.** Talk with him about what kind of person he wants to be known as and how to develop a good reputation. Teach him that his reputation affects his parents and whole family.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Support your child to cooperate with others. Cooperation takes practice! Create opportunities for him to be part of a team, working with others to reach a goal. Expect him to help with all family activities.
- Support your child to develop her unique interests and talents. Help her choose activities that she enjoys and is naturally good at. Encourage her to be committed and to practice.
- Encourage your child to observe his experiences and to learn from them. Give detailed instructions. Have him repeat the instructions back to you. Have him tell you about tasks when he's finished, including what happened and what he learned. Ask for details, such as how long the water took to boil or whether he had to hit the wood a lot before it split.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Your child might be defiant at this age. She needs to respect you and your authority. Set clear rules and consequences for your child when she doesn't follow them.
- ✓ Discipline should be fair and fit the situation. Be firm, but don't be too stern. Be calm and speak seriously so your child sees that you are in control. Never yell at the child, even if you are angry. If you are too angry to be calm, send your child to another room. Then, deal with the issue when you are calm.

# 10 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ Teach safety and set limits. Ten-year olds are very active and independent. They need to know proper handling of tools, weapons, and vehicles. They need to know fire safety.
- ✓ They need proper instruction before they are allowed to ride skidoos or ATVs on the land. They should always wear a helmet. They should be with an adult and stay within sight of others.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I take responsibility for chores. I do them without being asked. Encourage me by showing appreciation for my attitude and ability.
- I need you to set clear expectations and enforce clear consequences. This helps me become responsible and capable.
- I am becoming capable. I show this by being respectful, helping others, doing things independently, and building strong relationships.



### Communication

- I need to communicate openly and ask questions to understand life. Encourage me to do this.
- I can observe details. I use specific and accurate words.
- I might want to exaggerate. Discourage this. Encourage me to speak accurately.



### Skill Building

- I am learning to think deeply. Encourage me to observe the world and make connections. This is very important.
- I discover new interests and talents. Encourage me to pursue them and become skilled at them.
- Teach me to always practice, do my best, and never stop trying. This should be my motto!

## Applying Inuit Values

### Pijitsirniq (Respecting and Helping Others)



#### Definition

*Pijitsirniq* means working for the common good. We do this by respecting and helping others. This is a sign of maturity in a child.

#### Process

Teach your child to notice what needs to be done and do it without being asked. This shows the *pijitsirniq* attitude.

In the past, children would help elders and other families who did not have children to help them. These people were always very grateful and would say, "May you live a longer life now." These simple acts were greatly appreciated and showed the character of the child. Teach your child that she will gain a sense of accomplishment, belonging, and purpose by helping others.

## About this Age

Ten-year olds experience many changes in their minds and their bodies. They want independence and might be less obedient. They are developing more muscle and may be starting to go through puberty.

They want more opportunities to do things independently and use their abilities. They are very curious and want to explore new things. They ask many questions. They want to be with peers and follow older youth.



They might be less enthusiastic about family activities. They might stay up later and be lazier about chores. Encourage your ten-year old to communicate openly about their feelings. Encourage listening and obedience.

Children this age respond well to being treated with respect. Speak to them directly. Teach them about “living a good life.” This will influence them now because they want to be mature. They don’t want to be treated like a child anymore.

Ten-year olds understand the importance of reputation. They are deciding what kind of person they want to be, what they want to be known for, and what skills they want to develop.

Children this age like to have their own things. They like to collect possessions and protect them.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Closely observe your child.** He is going through many changes. He needs more support, guidance, and open communication at this age.
- **Assign full responsibility for chores.** Your child can take full responsibility for her chores. For example, if her chore is to do the dishes after supper, she should do them promptly and without being asked.
- **Encourage your child to finish what he starts.** Teach your child to always finish tasks or projects before starting something else and before going out with friends.
- **Encourage maturity.** Set clear expectations for behaviour. Explain to your child that she will earn respect and be treated like an adult if she follows the expectations.
- **Encourage observation.** Teach your child to keep his ears and eyes open. Tell him that he will become skillful by learning from what others do.
- **Encourage time with Elders.** Support your child to spend time with grandparents and other Elders. Encourage her to help Elders.
- **Answer questions in detail.** This is an important learning time. Teach your child that he is expected to remember your answers and to use the information. Remind him of this often and encourage him. Show appreciation when you see him use the information.
- **Encourage deep thinking.** Help your child make connections. Encourage her to think deeply about everything she notices. Talk with her about her thoughts.
- **Have fun!** Show your child that learning and doing tasks is fun.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Expect and encourage development in your child’s abilities at this age. Explain to your child that she is becoming capable. Tell her that you will be teaching her many new things and expecting more from her. Make the work fun and encourage her, help her notice her progress.
- Support your child’s observation skills. Observation is an essential skill and takes practice. In the past, children were asked to observe the weather every morning. When your child talks with you, ask for details. Ask: What did it smell like? What changed? What did it feel like?
- Support your child’s thinking skills. Encourage them to reason and notice connections. Ask: Why do you think that happened? How can you tell? What happened before that? Why do you think the animal/person reacted that way?

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ This is a difficult age because your child may want to push the family away and spend more time with peers. But, your child still needs family time. He needs good instructions and preparation for life.
- ✓ Respect your child’s need for peer time by having him include a friend in family activities. Talk with your child about the importance of being a good friend and being a good family member. Help him be both.
- ✓ Encourage independent thinking that serves the common purpose. Discourage thinking that is selfish or harms others.



# 11 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ Be aware of your child's development. At this age, children are starting puberty. They will experience physical and mental changes. They need information about these changes.
- ✓ If your child is experiencing difficulties or if he is feeling overwhelmed by emotion, anxiety or stress, you could get support at the Health Centre.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am learning to be mature. I am learning to control my emotions in difficult situations. If I show frustration or anger, discourage me by ignoring this. Telling me that I am not behaving well. Encourage me to be patient and respectful.
- I am learning to accept helpful criticism. Teach me that helpful criticism is part of being loved. Teach me to use criticism to make positive changes in my behavior.



### Communication

- I can use specific terms for things.
- Encourage me to speak Inuktitut.
- I am learning to express my ideas clearly so that people easily understand me. I will develop this important skill over time.



### Skill Building

- I have strong skills in several areas. I can use these skills independently. Now, I need you to encourage me to develop the skills I am not good at yet.
- I can take responsibility for chores and tasks. This shows my development.
- I learn a lot at school, but I need to learn important life skills from my family. I need to learn from my parents, extended family, and elders.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Teamwork

#### Definition

Teamwork involves combining our skills, knowledge and energy. Through teamwork, we achieve better results. Teamwork requires good communication and building consensus.

#### Process

Encourage teamwork. Make sure your child has a strong sense of belonging to the group. Teach her that her contributions are needed.

You can do this by giving her small tasks that help with something bigger the group needs to do. This teaches her that she has a role in the group. Each time, give her a bigger task that you think she is able to do. Provide help if needed. Show lots of appreciation for her effort!

## About this Age

At 11-years old, your child is in transition from childhood to becoming capable. Your child is vulnerable at this age and needs very clear direction. Her experiences and learning now



will determine her future path. Make sure she is prepared for the future and can make good decisions.

At this age, your child is learning about right and wrong. He is also preparing to meet adult expectations. Talk with him about how to treat others and how to raise children. Use strong words to make sure he understands the importance of adult expectations.

Significant experiences stay with us for our whole life. If your child experienced hurt in earlier years, talk with him now about how to make changes in his life and move forward. At this age, real understanding begins, so this is an important time for healing.

We all need proper guidance throughout life, but especially at this age. If you have a strong relationship and open communication with your child, you will be able to protect her and her future. It takes time to build a strong relationship. If your relationship was broken at some time, take steps to strengthen it. Also, support grandparents, other elders, or another adult to step in and provide more guidance.

Help build positive experiences by doing activities together like art, music, going on the land, collecting water, or playing sports.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Teach Inuit values.** Many different things influence children, especially in our bigger communities. Keep Inuit values strong by practicing them and teaching them to your children. Be a strong advocate for the value of inunnguiniq today.
- **Be persistent in your teachings.** Don't expect to say things only once! Gently remind your child many times about how to live a good life. When your child doesn't follow the teachings, explain the consequences to him.
- **Teach respect, our core value.** We teach children respect throughout their lives. At this age, your child should understand the importance of this value. She should respect the land, sila, water, ice, and weather. She should understand that we revere these things that we cannot control. Your child's deep sense of respect provides a foundation for her whole life.
- **Teach obedience to the maligait.** Inuit society breaks down when we don't show care for each other and ourselves. We must think about how our actions affect others and follow the maligait. If your child doesn't believe in the maligait, he will do what

he wants and this will cause negative consequences for everyone. Teach him to obey the maligait now and he will have an easier life.

## The Four Maligait

- ✓ Work for the common good
- ✓ Respect all things
- ✓ Seek harmony and balance
- ✓ Prepare for the future

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Explain rules in simple words, such as do not lie, do not steal, think of others first, and show respect. Repeat them often. Have clear expectations for your child. Talk with him about your expectations so you have a shared understanding.
- Teach your child the Inuit inutsipagutit (Inuit proverbs). This will help her to live a good life.
- Teach specific skills and information your child needs to live a good life. Teach social expectations, and how to develop positive relationships. Teach him about safety, including tides and other dangers. Involve him in planning ahead and have him help you with tasks to prepare for each season.
- Talk to your child about the importance of learning from others and listening to instructions. Teach her to show respect and not to ignore warnings when being instructed about dangerous situations like ice conditions or use of tools.

## Tips for Parents

- ✓ This is a hard age for parents. You and your child will need to be patient with each other! Pay close attention and spend more time with your child between 10 and 12 years old. This will give her a strong foundation. You are preparing her for a good life.
- ✓ Build your child's abilities and proper attitudes. You can do this by including him in everyday activities.

# 12 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ At this age, children are going through puberty. To develop properly, they need a healthy diet. They also need an active lifestyle, with fresh air and exercise.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- My character is mostly formed. At this age, I need you to build my natural strengths and help me work with my weaknesses.
- I need to correct any bad habits now so that I will be successful in life. At this age, I need you to pay special attention to teaching me proper attitudes.
- I can help the community. Encourage me to find a way to contribute, using my talents and interests. I will feel good when others value me and notice that I am working for the common good.



### Communication

- I can express my thoughts honestly and respectfully. I can ask questions to get information that I need. I can stand up for myself respectfully.
- Today, Inuit rely on written language. At this age, I need good writing skills. I need to be able to use syllabics well.



### Skill Building

- I have developed strong skills in several areas. I am confident about these skills. I can use these skills to do projects independently.
- Encourage me to develop more skills. I need to become highly skilled in many areas. Encourage me to always increase my capability, now and throughout my life.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Resourcefulness

#### Definition

Resourcefulness is using creativity, innovation, and deep thinking (isumaksaqsiuttiarniq) to resolve issues. Resourcefulness enables us to face challenges using the resources we have. The world is changing quickly so we need to be adaptive and creative. We need to be resourceful to plan for the future.

#### Process

Isumaksaqsiuttiarniq is deep thinking that helps us improve a situation in innovative ways. We learn how to think this way through skilled perseverance (upalurniq). It is a life long process. Eventually, we reach a high level of wisdom that supports the whole group (silaturniq). We often see this wisdom in older people, but sometimes also in younger people. As a group, we can nurture and develop this wisdom. We consider those who think deeply and have wisdom to be leaders.



## About this Age

At this age, your child is a very capable person. She knows herself. She knows her strengths, weaknesses, personal traits, and interests. She is becoming better at controlling her emotions and behavior. She takes on many responsibilities. She is a big help to the family.

Twelve-year olds are proud to have responsibilities. Your child wants to complete tasks without help or supervision. He wants to be independent and capable. He can solve small challenges. He thinks about possible problems and plans ahead to avoid them.

When you have a task to do, involve your child at this age. Consult her when you have to plan a trip or do a sewing project.

At this age, encourage your child to think about his future. He should have some ideas about what he wants to do, such as what kind of work he wants to do.

Be aware that children are easily influenced by others at this age! They could develop bad habits and lose their way. This can happen if you have not taught them their role in the family or if you have not encouraged their abilities. This can also happen if you discipline them too harshly or neglect them. There is a negative love that involves being lazy about discipline and ignoring the child's learning needs. Real love involves proper discipline, careful attention to skills development, opportunities to learn, and teaching the child their role in the family. This love protects them from negative influences.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Be very supportive.** Your child needs lots of encouragement at this age.
- **Talk about the future.** Tell your child what you envision for them based on his strengths and interests. Encourage him to think about the future.
- **Encourage new experiences.** Provide opportunities for your child to learn new skills and experience new activities.
- **Give helpful criticism.** Talk with your child about her weaknesses. Give her ideas about how she can work on them. Be loving and encouraging.
- **Balance family and friends.** Allow your child time for friends and interests. But, have clear expectations for his participation in family activities.
- **Talk, talk, talk!** Your child has many questions and she may be too shy to ask. If you

communicate openly, your child will be comfortable to talk with you when she has concerns.

- **Use discipline.** At this age, your child still needs clear rules. He should expect consequences for not following the rules. To discipline a child this age, talk seriously with them about responsibility and behaving like a capable adult. Teach him that if he behaves like a child, he will lose privileges.
- **Support personal and cultural identity.** Talk with your child about namesakes, kinship relationships, and family heritage. Make a family tree together.
- **Support decision-making skills.** Help your child think through consequences to actions. This will help her learn to make good decisions.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Include your child in land activities and on trips. Teach them place names. Teach them directions and landmarks to help find direction.
- Help your child develop thinking skills by asking him questions. Ask him about what he sees and what he experiences. Encourage him to notice cause and effect. Encourage him to think about how things work.
- Observe your child's interests. Get involved and help her develop her skills.
- Give your child tasks that will help him build his skills. Encourage him to observe others to learn how to complete the task independently. For example, you could challenge your child to build a small sled or cut and sew a garment independently.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ If you don't have the skills your child wants to learn, ask an expert in the community to teach your child.
- ✓ Balancing family time and free time for your child is difficult for everyone at this age. Pay close attention if your child changes their behavior suddenly or if he becomes rebellious, withdrawn, irritable, or secretive. He could be having problems with peers, such as bullying or using drugs or alcohol. Talk with him and seek help from others who have a good relationship with him.

# 13 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ Youth are going through puberty at this age. They experience many physical and emotional changes. Make sure that your child has a full physical examination.
- ✓ Youth need calcium. Calcium is in milk, cheese, yoghurt, caribou broth, and soft bones.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am learning the importance of contributing to the community. Encourage me to value the knowledge I gain by helping others. Teach me to help others without expecting to be paid. I am learning the maligait of working for the common good.
- I need you to notice my skills and my ability to think of solutions. Encourage me!



### Communication

- I have a strong memory. I can remember songs and stories.
- I am also starting to understand the significance of songs and stories more. I can understand symbols, deeper meanings, and older terminology.



### Skill Building

- I need to build my skills now as I prepare for independence. Encourage me to develop specialized knowledge and to work hard at school and attend everyday.
- Encourage me to learn by helping others with tasks. This helps me build new skills.
- I am learning to value doing tasks well, not just to get the job done. Encourage me to become proficient at each skill. For example, when I make a fishing hole, I should learn to make precise cuts and use my strength efficiently. This conserves energy.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Survival

#### Definition

We will survive if we are skilled and able. To survive, we must be observant, thoughtful, and quick. We must apply our skills and learning from past experiences. We must be well prepared to face difficulties.

Inuit talk about continually planning and preparing for the future because nothing is ever certain. Learning is a lifelong process. It starts early in life and is perfected in youth. Lifelong learning is essential for survival.

These strengths are essential for survival:

- Becoming highly skilled
- Being able to operate independently
- Seeking solutions
- Thinking deeply
- Respecting and caring for the environment and people



## About this Age

At this age, youth begin the transition to adulthood. They help the family a lot. They have many skills. Sometimes, they get excited and try new things without thinking through the consequences, but parents do not need to worry about them most of the time.

This is a happy age for many youth. They are glad they can do tasks independently. They like to test their skills and show their capacity for independence. They are excited about their new freedom and they want to show who they are as individuals.

If youth have not developed good skills and do not feel confident, this can be an unhappy age. They feel insecure and fearful. They struggle to find a place where they belong. This makes them vulnerable to negative choices, such as using drugs or alcohol or developing unhealthy relationships based on dependence.

The most dangerous condition for a youth is sammuktuq. Sammuktuq means giving up on wanting to learn and do things. This happens if a youth has been discouraged or put down so much that she is scared to try anymore. In this condition, the youth's spirit could be crushed. Or, with love and encouragement, she could be enabled for life.

At this age, all youth need encouragement and acceptance by adults. If they don't get it in positive ways, they will try to get it in negative ways.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Support independence.** As children grow, we give them harder tasks that match their skills. At this age, support your child to take full responsibility for completing household tasks. Your job is to prepare your child to be able to live independently one day.
- **Have high expectations.** Encourage your child to complete tasks quickly and without wasting resources. Expect her to clean equipment and to put it back when she is finished.
- **Explain the purpose of your teachings.** If your child complains about your high expectations, explain that your purpose is to prepare him to be independent. This is training for life and will cause others to treat him as an adult.
- **Keep talking.** Keep talking with your child, even if she seems distant. Never stop communicating. Make sure the teachings are understood.

## More Comments from Elders

Youth who have not learned to take responsibility are not able to be independent. They have not matured. They rely on their parents for everything. Parents worry when this happens. We worry about such youth when they go out on the land because their skills are not strong enough. This burdens the family and the community.

Another burden is supporting young people who have children before they are prepared to raise them properly. At this age, teach your child to think carefully about consequences and to prepare. You are responsible for teaching this from an early age. Reinforce this teaching now.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Many youth this age find it hard to talk about their thoughts and feelings. They may be shy about sharing their concerns or opinions. Find ways to spend time with your child. Talk openly with them. Talk about life, becoming an adult, what to expect, and how to live a good life.
- Share the teachings. The teachings will help them throughout life. Repeat them often so you're your child remembers them. The teachings will be easier for your child to accept if you teach them a little bit at a time, continuously. Connect the information with daily activities.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Many things in our lives are changing, but some things will always remain the same. We need to hunt to supply food to our families. We need to know the weather and the water. We need to raise children well so they become capable human beings. The basic principles of good parenting have not changed over thousands of years. We can rely on these teachings today. We must maintain IQ so the next generations can rely on the teachings, too.
- ✓ Do not be afraid to actively instruct your child even as he becomes an adult.



# 14 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ At this age, your child's eyes can change. Have their eyesight checked every few years.
- ✓ At this age, your child might also have new teeth come in called 'wisdom teeth'. Take your child to a dentist regularly.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am learning to work for the common good and to be positive. These attitudes will help me be successful in life.
- I am learning to be humble and unpretentious. This will help me to appreciate others as they are and to be patient and accepting.
- I enjoy the satisfaction I get from helping the community and working with children.



### Communication

- I am transitioning from childhood to adulthood. I want a lot of information and opportunities to develop my skills. I am learning to ask questions respectfully.
- I am forming language habits that I will have for life. Encourage me not to mix Inuktitut and English, because this could weaken my skills in each language. Encourage me to keep each language strong.



### Skill Building

- I need to keep building my skills in many areas so I will have options. Encourage me to keep learning and improving skills.
- I am learning to contribute. By contributing, I earn a good reputation and show respect to those who helped me and taught me. I need you to give me opportunities to contribute.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Unpretentious

#### Definition

Inuit are expected to be humble. We are taught not to seek recognition for our skills. But, we are also expected to show our skills. We earn a reputation for the level of competence we've developed. We should always use our skills to help others, not to promote ourselves. We should strive to develop our skills, but always remain humble. This is being unpretentious.

*I knew a woman who could make beautiful kamiit, unlike anyone else. I really wanted to be like her. Youth can seek out those who have mastered the skills they want to learn. Encourage them to do this. Those who have mastered skills will share their skills openly so that everyone benefits. We would consider someone to be proud and selfish if they were not willing to share their skills. To willingly share your skills makes you more valuable to the community.*



## About this Age

At this age, youth think about having fun and being able to do what they want. They also want to build a good personal reputation, be an adult, and start a family. They have to decide between playing around for fun and taking on responsibilities, such as providing food for the family.

Becoming an adult means putting the needs of others first. Youth who have not learned this try to satisfy their wants rather than do what needs to be done for the common good. At this age, this difference becomes very noticeable.

The individual youth's attitude determines whether she is treated like an adult or a child, not her age. If she has a good attitude about learning and helping others, she will be treated like an adult. If she doesn't have a good attitude, she will be treated more like a child.

At this age, many youth have strong skills, strong character, and positive attitudes that will help them have a good future. But, some youth don't want to show their abilities because they want to blend in with their peers. They don't want to seem proud or competitive, so they might not want to use their skills when others can see them. They are still learning to be comfortable with their abilities.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Talk openly about relationship skills.** Support your child to think about whether they are ready for a relationship. They need to be able to live independently. Encourage them to think about skills and knowledge they still need to be able to do that. Talk with them about being in a relationship. How will they handle arguments and problems? How will they show respect for a partner? Tell your child what is expected of them as an adult.
- **Continue to set expectations and have consequences.** Discipline makes your child's life more stable and helps them find balance. If you ignore the training of a child, you leave them drifting. Discipline does not need to be harsh and should not be done in anger. Use a calm, stern voice to express your disapproval. If necessary, take away privileges until your child shows they are responsible.
- **Encourage learning from Elders.** Encourage your child to value Inuit principles more than the desires of youth. Support your child to build relationships with Elders. Even though many Elders are

less able physically, they have a lot of knowledge to share and can contribute to the wellbeing of others. Even those older people who are not wise or who have not lived good lives must still be respected, as all people should be respected. Teach your child to serve all Elders and learn from their experience. This will enrich your child's life and give her a solid foundation.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Observe how your child does tasks. Provide feedback so she knows what she did well and how she could improve.
- Point out role models. Draw your child's attention to individuals who have become highly skilled, accomplished something, or made a big contribution. Talk about how the person became that way. You could also draw attention to individuals who have not developed well. Talk about the consequences for how they live their lives.
- Observe how your child approaches things. Encourage him to be thoughtful and positive. Good thinking starts with having a good attitude. Teach your child that a positive attitude always has positive results.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ **Keep communicating.** Spend time with your child. Talk with him about things that interest him. Talk with him about his concerns. Do family activities together. Your child will want to spend a lot of time with his friends at this age, but insist that he spend some time with you and other family members. Remind him that he'll soon be off on his own.
- ✓ **Help your child connect with mentors and role models, especially those who can teach her skills she is interested in.**



# 15 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ You and your children will be healthier if you spend time on the land. We are not encouraging our minds and bodies to be healthy if we lie around the house and depend on others to provide for us.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- My character is mostly developed, but I can still be corrected. Help me to see how I can improve and what changes I need to make. Encourage me to persevere. Celebrate my successes.



### Communication

- I am developing essential communication skills for employment and for my identity as an Inuk. Encourage me to develop my Inuktitut skills, including correct grammar, spelling, and typing.
- Remember that I may receive less Inuktitut instruction at school as this age. So, I need more encouragement at home to maintain my skills.



### Skill Building

- I have developed many skills. Now, I am learning how to use my skills in different situations. Encourage me to notice how my skills in one area can be used in other areas.
- Inuit are always encouraged to think about the connections between our experiences, our knowledge, and our skills. Now, I need encouragement to think about options for my future, based on what I know and can do well.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Perseverance

#### Definition

To persevere means to always try to learn and improve, even when we face difficulties. It means never giving up.

#### Commentary

*"Today, I hear people asking for food and other things on the radio. They are not self-sufficient. And, they don't give anything back to the people who help them. For example, they could offer to clear snow from the doorway or help in other ways. My wife and I are quite old, but we still go out on the land and bring food back to the community. It is difficult for us, but*



*we are not giving up. We do what we can do. Some young people today seem to expect others to provide for them. They don't even get out of bed. We were always taught to feed others, but also to help them learn to survive independently. Today, some people don't want to learn for themselves. We need to emphasize Inuit teachings more, such as perseverance, self-sufficiency, and never harming others, including your wife and children. "*

## About this Age

At this age, a youth should be very capable and independent. He should be able to do tasks well, using the correct tools and techniques. He should be using his skills to help others and contribute to the family.

If a youth is not able to help others and contribute to the family, she might have low self-esteem. Low self-esteem can make learning more difficult. If she has not been taught how to live properly and to be independent, she might believe that she is unable to learn. She might not want to try to learn any more. At this age, youth are at risk of giving up on themselves.

By this age, youth should be able to plan ahead. They should know how to plan for each season. They should also be prepared to plan for their future. Without a clear plan in life, a youth feels insecure and might feel afraid of the future.

A youth who is fearful and does not have a clear direction in life might become disruptive. He might challenge authority and break laws. He might take risks, doing dangerous things to hide his fear. He might also bully others or be controlling in relationships. This behavior will hurt others and will also hurt the youth.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Keep teaching expectations.** Your child needs to know what is expected of him in the family, in the community, and in his life. He needs rules and clear instructions. He needs you to continue teaching him throughout his life, preparing him for each stage.
- **Never give up!** Never give up on teaching your child, even if she wants to give up on herself. If you stop trying to teach her, she will become a burden to the community and will not be able to teach her own children later in life. We must continue to confront such youth and support them. A youth who

still needs to learn core skills should find caring and qualified adults who can teach her. She can offer help in exchange for their teaching.

- **Teach preparation and organization.** Explain to youth that Inuit survived in the past by being prepared and organized. They could not have survived without these skills. Teach your youth that he will be successful if he thinks ahead, always prepares, and keeps his life organized. Life will be much easier this way.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Today, some parents spoil their children and protect them too much. They see only the good in their children. They don't want to discipline their children or correct their children's mistakes. They think this is love. But, this is not real love. It is laziness and neglect. Their children will not be prepared for life and will suffer. In the past, Elders would have corrected such parents.
- Parents' most important responsibility is discipline. Discipline is hard work. It takes a lot of energy and patience. When we set expectations for our children, we are helping prepare them for a good life. Good parenting prepares future generations to be strong and to survive. Proper discipline gives children a strong foundation. Discipline should not be cruel, but should involve re-direction, showing appropriate behaviours, and correcting children's mistakes.
- Without a strong foundation, children will become frustrated in life. They may be unable to cope with hardships and may even become suicidal.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Show healthy love. This includes high expectations, discipline, personal attention, and time together.
- ✓ Remember that becoming a capable human being takes a lifetime. Your role as a parent doesn't end when your child becomes a teenager or adult.

## 16 Years



### Reminders

- ✓ Make sure 16-year olds have information about sexual and reproductive health and relationships. The school and health centre might provide information and programs. Parents should also talk with youth about healthy and respectful choices.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am learning to be mature and self-reliant.
- I am learning about interdependence. I am finding a balance between doing things by myself for myself and doing things with others, to help each other.
- I am learning about reciprocity. This means giving to others and allowing them to give back to me.



### Communication

- I am learning how to ask for help when I need it and who to ask.
- I am learning to build relationships outside my family.



### Skill Building

- I am learning how to keep and maintain my own things, so that I don't have to borrow from my parents. This is preparing me to live independently.

### Commentary

In the past, youth had to make their own equipment at this age. Others would notice if a young person needed something. They would go out of their way to teach the young person how to make the thing they needed or to give them something extra they could offer. Young men would feel very motivated when older men offered to help them in this way. It is still important for us to help youth in this way today.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Mastery



### Definition

Mastering a skill means that you can use the skill independently and at a high level of expertise.

### Example: Mudding Sled Runners

Mudding your sled runners was an important skill. It made our sleds run faster and easier for the dogs to pull. We needed to know the basic principles of mudding to do it well. We needed to know the right materials and consistency, making sure no sand is mixed in, how to shape the mud on the runners, and how to make a smooth surface with water at just the right temperature. Then, we had to polish it perfectly.

To do this well, we had to commit to learning it and then always do the job with great care. And, the job did not end there! We had to protect the runners by sheltering the sled from sunlight and having well trained dogs that could avoid rocks. This is an example of mastery.

## About this Age

At 16 years, youth start to think like adults. But, they are not adults yet. They are eager for independence, and they still need guidance and support.

Parents often worry about 16-year olds because they are harder to control. They go out on their own. They have new experiences and many choices to make. They try to look fashionable, like people on TV.

Many do not want advice from parents and elders. They talk back, testing their independence. They may not show respect.

At the same time, brothers and sisters often become closer at this age. They rely on each other more.

16-year olds worry often! They face many stresses from home, school and peers. Sometimes, they sit around or stay in bed to escape the stresses.

They worry about who will help them do what they want to do in life. Our extended family relationships are not as strong these days. So, they feel insecure about who they can rely on.

At this age, youth need reassurance. They need to know they are valued. They also need patience and support. This is why families are so important.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Support youth to master the skills they need to live on their own.** This is an age of mastering skills, planning, and preparing for a bright future.
- **Teach safety.** Many youth seem to be more careless with safety these days, including safety in vehicles and on the land. Teach them to be aware of the many dangers today.
- **Be strict about chores and work.** Make youth do things that need to be done, even if they don't want to. For example, tell young men to lift heavy things to build strength, to work long hours, and to spend time in the cold. Also, be sure to treat them like adults when they work hard.
- **Invite them to contribute like adults.** Don't treat them like the younger children and have the play with younger children. Speak to them as adults and include them in adult tasks and activities.
- **Encourage them to wake up early and start useful tasks (such as preparing for**

**the day or fixing equipment).** Encourage young women to be good workers, so they will be strong partners and be able to support others who cannot support themselves.

- **Talk with them about good relationship habits.** Many youth are already in relationships these days. Prepare them to handle compromises and face hardships well. Teach them not to cause conflict. Teach them to resolve conflict as a team.
- Teach them to express strong emotions through art, music or stories.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Always support youth to take their skills to the next level. This way, they will continuously improve and grow into their roles as adults.
- At 16, youth should be developing a desire to help others. This is an important aspect of becoming an adult. Provide your 16-year old with opportunities to help others. Explain the importance of serving others.
- Today, many things get in the way of traditional childrearing in the family. Our children and youth are learning many new things from others. But, they still have much to learn to from family members, especially Inuit skills. For example, all women still need to know how to make an amautiq, warm winter clothing, kamiit, and mittens. We still need to know how to live in our Arctic climate, to hunt well, and respect the land.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Embrace Your 16-year Old's independence
- ✓ Sometimes this is a harder age for parents than it is for youth! Your role is changing. Your child is relying on you less and becoming more capable. But, as she becomes an adult, she needs help in many new areas of learning. Learning to be a human being and live a good life is a lifelong process. Support your child's increasing independence. Welcome the change in your relationship. This will keep you close and strong as a family.

# 17 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ Sometimes, youth need someone to talk to, such as a counselor or an adult to talk to confidentially. Encourage youth to find people who can support them this way.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am learning to deal with adversity. Teach me to accept situations that I cannot change. Teach me to persevere when I face difficulties. This will help me succeed in life.
- I am learning to always have a good attitude. Teach me that a positive attitude will help me think clearly and find solutions to my problems. Teach me that negative attitudes make it difficult to think clearly.



### Communication

- I am learning to explain my ideas and be persuasive. To do this, I have to think about all the options available in a situation and the "big picture." I am learning that when I share ideas that I've thought about carefully, I help the whole group reach consensus.



### Skill Building

- I am very skilled, but I know I can always learn more and improve. Encourage me to always observe others' techniques so I can learn more.

- I am learning to apply my skills and knowledge in different situations. Teach me to be observant and adaptive. When I use my skills and knowledge in new ways, I show innovation (iqqaqqaukkaringniq) and wisdom (isuma). I need encouragement when I do this.
- I need to be supported to keep working hard at school.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Moving Forward



### Definition

"Moving forward" is way to face life's challenges. First, we must accept where we are at any moment. Then, we can identify where we want to go and make a plan to get there. Moving forward requires patience and persistence.

### Commentary

Sometimes, people who don't have strong skills are teased and put down. But, we must always move forward and never give up. We have many traditional stories that teach us to persist. Some young people do not have someone to help them. But, they can still make a plan to learn what they want to learn. Our message for young people is that they must be patient and persist. This is a time to plan and prepare for the future. Find a way to learn what you need to learn. There is always a way forward. Consider all the options available in your community.

## About this Age

At this age, youth should notice what others need and try to help them. They should be quick to offer help to their family and friends.

At seventeen years old, youth need to prepare for the future. They should be planning their next steps in life. Planning is an important skill. They should be able to think through options and make good decisions.

Communication skills are also very important. At this age, youth should be able to communicate their ideas. They should be able to support their ideas with good evidence and clear thinking.

Youth who have been trained well by their parents are ready for the transition to adulthood. They feel comfortable and prepared. They are confident in their knowledge and skills.

Other youth may not feel confident and prepared. They may not have the skills and knowledge they need yet. They need more time and support to learn. They should find mentors and ask for support. They can learn from skilled peers and adults in the community.

Today, many young people are raised by only one parent. They may have missed out on learning the skills and knowledge that two parents can offer. These youth need to advocate for themselves and find ways to learn the skills they want.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage good decision-making.** Support your youth to plan ahead. Encourage him to think carefully about actions and consequences.
- **Talk about core life skills.** Talk about the core skills and knowledge your youth will need to live independently.
- **Identify learning goals.** Help your youth recognize his strengths and what he still needs to learn.
- **Support more independence.** Support your youth to try being more independent in safe ways. For example, allow her to go on group trips or activities supported by other adults that you trust.
- **Encourage perseverance.** Encourage your youth to accept situations that cannot be changed and to persevere through difficulties. Teach him to make the best of any situation and to learn from challenges. Teach him that how we react to situations makes them better or worse.
- **Reach out to youth!** Sometimes, youth are afraid to ask for help when they need it. Be aware of youth who need help. Reach out to them with love and respect. Involve them in activities so they become more capable.
- **Take responsibility.** Today we are not self-reliant like we were in the past. We expect others to help us and intervene in our lives. We must take responsibility for our own lives. For example, we must prepare for challenges. And, we must heal from past hurts. Teach your youth this.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- We must teach youth to take responsibility for their choices and plan for the future. This is how we show to respect others and ourselves. Talk with your youth about being prepared for parenthood.
- Youth are having children too early, without spouses and before they are ready. This forces youth to grow up and become independent too quickly. Without spouses, young parents miss out on the important support that everyone needs in the early days of parenthood.
- Teach your youth to consider how their life will be changed by having a baby. Teach them to consider how it will affect their family, too. For example, the family will be in a lifelong relationship with the other parent.
- Young mothers need support. They should not be expected to cope with parenthood alone. Young men must take responsibility for parenting. We should expect and encourage young men to provide support for the mother and child.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Try to talk with your youth before they have a problem. Teach them that planning has always been important to Inuit. Life matters were not left to chance. For example, people arranged marriages because marriages affect the two individuals and their families for the rest of their lives. In the past, people did not get married until they were ready. Men had to be able to build a proper iglu. This was a sign of being ready to look after a family. Talk with your youth about the responsibilities of having a family today.



# 18 Years



## Reminders

- ✓ Parenting never ends. When children are young, we tend to focus on physical health. As they age, we need to focus on mental health. Young adults experience stress and need our support.

## What's Special About Me at this Age?



### Character Building

- I am strengthening relationships with others. I am learning my new role as an adult in my family and community.
- I am finding my way in the world. I am meeting other families and groups more. I am learning to build new relationships on my own.



### Communication

- I am learning to maintain good communication with parents and Elders.
- I am finding my own "voice." I am learning to contribute to adult conversations. I am building my reputation in the adult world.



### Skill Building

- I am learning the value of planning, organization and preparation. I am learning that this makes life more predictable. Remind me that these skills are essential for success.
- I am learning to build a network of support, especially to help me develop skills I still need to learn. Encourage me to identify Elders and other experts I can learn from.
- I am learning how to use my skills to help others. Encourage me to find ways to contribute to others' wellbeing.

## Applying Inuit Values

### Interconnectedness



### Definition

Interconnectedness is being in relationship with everything in the natural world.

We are all interconnected. We are not alone. We rely on each other and the natural world for survival. To live in balance, we must respect others and reciprocate their support.

### Commentary

Interconnectedness means that when someone needs help, they can get help. We must always encourage and support each other. Stories and legends make us reflect on this. So, we must keep sharing stories and legends with youth as much as we can. I heard a story about a family that was traveling without anything. Another family gave them some matches and a plate of food. That was not much, but it was enough to encourage the family and keep them moving forward. It helped them because it was an act of love. We need to remember that everyone needs love and care. When we receive love and care, we feel happy and we can keep going and try harder. We need this from each other.

## About this Age

At this age, youth have most of the responsibilities and capabilities of adults. They should be able to get what they need to live on and help others get what they need. They are



skilled and independent. They are fully capable and have found their role in the community. The youth's role will change over time, but by this age she has a reputation and status.

At this age, good organization and planning skills are important. Eighteen-year olds should be able to care for their own equipment, clothing, and supplies.

Encourage and expect eighteen-year olds to be self-reliant and to face life's challenges. At this age, they are independent and make decisions. Include them in all adult conversations. Seek their input in any serious family or community issues.

Adults can always seek advice from others, as our development continues throughout life. But, we don't tell individuals what to do at this age. At this age, each individual decides whether they take advice or not. We hope they will use the advice their parents and elders have given them up until this age.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage and praise!** Encourage and praise young people as they take on their role as adults.
- **Stay close.** Stay in your youth's life. Contact her often even if she lives far away.
- **Treat them like adults.** Recognize your youth's new status as an adult. Include him in adult conversations and activities. Encourage and expect him to contribute as an equal.
- **Expect self-reliance.** Don't rescue your youth from challenges. When she experiences a challenge, support her to find a solution. When you offer support, encourage and expect her to repay it. She could repay you by using her skills to help you or another person in the family.
- **Give advice by explaining consequences.** For example, explain to your youth that if he drives too fast, he will damage his equipment. If he cuts a pattern poorly, the clothing will not fit well. If he communicates well, people will understand. By giving advice this way, your youth will not feel personally criticized.
- **Teach reciprocity.** Teach youth the importance of reciprocity so they do not depend on others and become a burden. Reciprocity means giving back. For example, if a person receives advice or support from an Elder, they reciprocate by doing something small to make life easier for that Elder.

- **Let them make decisions.** Give your youth space and independence, even if they live in your house. Encourage and expect them to contribute in whatever way they can to the family's wellbeing. They could provide food or help out with household chores.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- At this age, your child is becoming an adult. She is capable and self-reliant. But, she still needs her parents. She needs her parents to be aware of how she is and to give advice as she finds her way in life. She needs encourage and praise for her accomplishments. She might also need help with planning and preparing for her future. Remind her of values and wisdom that will help her succeed.
- Although your youth is very capable at this age, he is still learning. He will experience many new things, such as furthering his education, living on his own, working at a job, marriage, and parenthood. Keep your relationship strong so that he talks with you when he has concerns.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ We need to teach young people to build strong relationships and to be good parents. This is the time to prepare for the next stage of life. Help your youth prepare to have a good relationship and be a parent.
- ✓ Today, many relationships end quickly. Elders worry about his. Many young people don't understand how to have a strong partnership. They need to learn how to give and take in a balanced way for a good marriage.
- ✓ In the past, young couples were taught about babies. They would learn about the stages of development so they were prepared to raise a child. They were also taught about delivery so that they would be able to deliver the baby if they were alone or traveling when the baby came.