

The Gesell Assessment and Developmental Age

The Gesell is an assessment tool that allows us to view the developmental age of your child. Developmental age indicates where your child is (generally) behaving socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually when compared to typical behaviors characteristic of that age. It also includes skill levels related to language and learning. Most children do not experience an even growth rate across these various areas of development. Some individual behaviors may be ahead and some behind those assumed to be typical of a given age.

Your child's developmental age may be different from his or her actual age. Kindergarten is the first year of formal schooling for most children and some specific behaviors in all of these areas are anticipated. However, these behaviors may or may not be consistent with the child's actual development stage at this time.

Consideration of your child's behavioral age is important when determining school readiness. It is this school readiness that plays a huge part in a child's success. Coping with school routines requires that a child be able to adhere to rules, listen to and follow directions, wait his or her turn, work independently, and much more. Children are ready to start school when they can cope with the complexities of the school environment and learn at the same time.

One cannot push a child to develop more quickly; however, a large variety of enriching experiences will enable your child to grow more fully in skill and confidence at his or her developmental stage. By reading to your child often, encouraging imaginative play, by talking with your child and using everyday tasks as learning opportunities, you can make valuable contributions to his or her progress.

The above explanation is taken from *The Gesell Institute: Ready or Not, Is My Child Ready for Kindergarten?* copyright 2006 by Gesell Institute of Human Development