4.4 Early Detection Guidelines

4.4.2.2 Assessment for Identified Concerns

4.4.2.2.7 How Children Develop - 11-12 Year Olds

The following section outlines the major developmental milestones for eleven to twelve year old children. Six areas of development are addressed: social/emotional, personal/social, gross motor, fine motor, language and communication and cognition. Developmental profiles given for each age should be considered as those that will typically be reached by the upper level of the age range.

A child’s development can be affected by how they process and use sensory information. This can impact on how they learn, attend and interact with others & express feelings. Their senses are the building blocks for developing many other skills including the six areas of development mentioned above. This document identifies warning signs for children experiencing difficulties with sensory processing, to provide an indication of when additional support or referral may be required.

The document also includes general warning signs for child developmental problems which may require referral for further assessment and intervention. The warning signs are indicators only and need to be considered in context of the child and their family.

All children develop at different rates across all domains and within specific areas of development. Some children are slower than others but catch up with time. Other children, however, may have an underlying problem that causes their delayed development, and they may not catch up. There are a number of factors which can affect whether children reach the milestones stated including bilingualism (for language development), ongoing illness, the presence of genetic abnormality and family stress.

The document aims to assist community health nurses to assess eleven to twelve year old children and take early action to rectify problems when normal development deviates. This is not a checklist and acts only as a guide for community health nurses. It should be used in conjunction with professional judgement and consultations with teachers and parents.
### How Children Develop

**Around the age of 11-12 YEARS**

A child should be able to do some or all of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social/ Emotional</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ seek out friendships based on psychological closeness</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ take the perspective of others into account with own perspective</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ resolve social problems such as fights with friends and siblings</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ understand other people’s points of view</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ handle frustration with fewer emotional outbursts and is able to discuss what is emotionally troubling</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ display a strong urge to conform to peer-group morals</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal/ Social</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ begin to question social conventions and re-examine own values and moral/ethical principles</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ display an intense self-focus and can be worried about what their peers think of them</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ understand the need to assume responsibility for his or her own behaviour and that there are consequences associated with one’s actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ display an increased desire for privacy and sensitivity about body</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ show increased body awareness and self-perception</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ show increased understanding of sexuality, with the possibility of acting on sexual desires</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ manage a degree of independent work and organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ develop detailed plans and lists to reach a desired goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ give and maintain appropriate eye contact during conversation and in classroom environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ manage a variety of experiences within a classroom, respond appropriately and maintain focus on the activity at hand</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ take responsibility for choosing their own clothes, making their own personal arrangements and performing more responsible tasks</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gross Motor</th>
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<tr>
<td>➢ participate in team sports (soccer, football, cricket, tennis etc.) but might still need to develop some of the necessary complex skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ demonstrate an ability to swim competently (if taught)</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ use improved strength to run faster, throw balls further, jump higher and kick or bat balls more accurately</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ participate with confidence in movement activities in classroom and playground</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ show increased awareness of own physical skills and how they appear to others</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fine Motor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ demonstrate linear perspective in drawings</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ display fluid and automatic handwriting skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ write well without ruled lines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## How Children Develop

### Around the age of 11-12 YEARS

A child should be able to do some or all of the following:

- display a gradual emergence of fast, legible style of handwriting
- touch and work with a variety of textures and grasp objects using all of hand confidently e.g. craft activities
- concentrate on continued refinement of fine motor abilities through a variety of activities e.g. model-building, playing an instrument, drawing, woodworking, cooking, sewing etc.

### Language and Communication

- master increasingly complex vocabulary and construct longer and more complex sentences
- accompany words with facial expressions and gestures for emphasis
- use vocabulary skilfully to weave elaborate stories and precise descriptions
- show signs of being a thoughtful listener
- master several language styles, shifting back and forth based on the occasion e.g. a more formal style when talking to teachers, a more casual style with parents and a style that often includes slang and code words when conversing with friends

### Cognition

- develop new thinking skills e.g. thinking more about possibilities, thinking more abstractly, thinking in multiple dimensions
- challenge adult knowledge
- develop solutions and responses based on logic
- display improved long-term recall
- use their long-term memory capacity for sequencing, ordering and classifying e.g. for solving complex mathematical problems
- use humour focused on satire, sarcasm and sex

### How Children Develop

### Around the age of 11-12 YEARS

Warning signs - it may be of concern if a child:

#### Social/Emotional

- has little or no capacity to see things from another’s point of view
- has a poorly developed idea of right and wrong (still self-centred and toddler-like)
- has a poor ability to see how they can help in a problem situation
- shows a lack of compromise and flexibility

#### Personal/Social

- often shows frustration and poor self confidence
## How Children Develop

### Around the age of 11-12 YEARS

### Warning signs - it may be of concern if a child:

- Has low levels of self-perception regarding physical ability and appearance

### Gross Motor

- Avoids sports in general
- Avoids team sports
- Has decreased levels of endurance and fitness

### Fine Motor

- Has difficulty with construction and fine manipulative work
- Has handwriting isn’t fluid and automatic
- Has difficulty keeping up with written demands in class
- Relies heavily on structures/lines for setting-out written work
- Easily gets tired when completing a fine motor or writing task

### Language and Communication

- Can not read or tell a short story independently and logically using full sentences
- Is frustrated in the classroom or playground because they are unable to express themself properly
- Is withdrawn in conversation or in class
- Uses grammatically incorrect sentences
- Constantly wanders off the topic in conversation

### Cognition

- Struggles with curriculum expectations
- Displays frustration about learning or the classroom
- Has difficulty following instructions or remembering important information

### Sensory Processing

- Avoids movement activities, especially when feet leave the ground e.g. playground/outdoor equipment or rough & tumble play
- Seeks all kinds of movement, which interferes with daily routines e.g. can’t sit still, fidgets, finds excessive reasons for approaching the teacher
- Has difficulty maintaining posture for extended periods
- Displays an unusual need to touch people and objects to the point where it is irritating to others
- Avoids or has difficulty with close body contact with other children or adults
- Avoids messy play or is repelled by the feeling of certain textures e.g. sand, paint, glue, tape
- Avoids eye contact with children and adults
- Misses written or demonstrated directions more than other students
# How Children Develop

## Around the age of 11-12 YEARS

**Warning signs - it may be of concern if a child:**

- misses verbal directions in class more than other students
- seems oblivious within an active environment
- becomes distressed when there is a lot of noise in the area e.g. during assemblies, lunch or large gatherings

**Other**

- any parental concerns
- significant regression of skills and abilities