

# Knowing our Kids

## How Kids Grow

- ♦ Kids require love. They learn best when they know that they are special to God and to us.
- ♦ Kids require affirmation. Kids learn best when they feel secure in exploring ideas and trying new things.
- ♦ Kids look to adults for approval but have an increasing reliance on peers as they get older.
- ♦ Kids have greater understanding of others and learning to play and work cooperatively are hallmarks of kids growing up.
- ♦ Kids learn best by being involved in their learning and this active learning is fundamental.
- ♦ Kids want to learn. They are curious and creative.
- ♦ Kids thrive when concepts are taught multiple times in different ways.



## Kids and Faith

- ♦ All children need a relationship with God, but each child is unique in when and how they come to faith.
- ♦ The gospel message is the same for kids and adults — we just use language that they can understand.
- ♦ Foundational concepts of faith are “Jesus loves me” and “God created all things.” By teaching these things to all kids, from babies on up, we are teaching the gospel.
- ♦ Preschoolers and younger children relate to Jesus as friend.
- ♦ Between ages 8 and 10, we often see kids begin to ask serious questions about spiritual things and begin to feel the need for a Savior.
- ♦ By age 12, kids understand that “I need a personal and growing relationship with Jesus.”



## Family Life

Of American children under 18:

- ♦ 69% live with two parents
- ♦ 23% with only their mother
- ♦ 3% with only their father
- ♦ 4% with neither parent (76% with family, 24% non-relatives)
- ♦ 17% live in blended families
- ♦ 4% of all children live with parents who are not married
- ♦ 32.5% of children ages 9-11 are cared for after school by someone other than a relative
- ♦ In 58.1% of families, both parents work
- ♦ 29% of mothers are “stay at home” moms
- ♦ One-in-ten kids live with a grandparent, and 38% of these children are also being cared for primarily by that grandparent



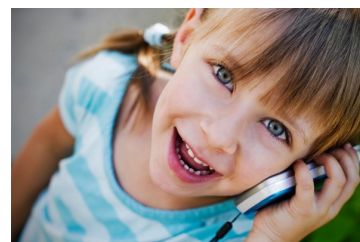
## Life in the 21st Century

### TV usage

- ♦ Kids 6-11 watch about 28 hours per week
- ♦ In 2/3 of households, TVs are on during meals
- ♦ In 75% of households, TVs are on when no one is watching them
- ♦ More than 70% of kids have TVs in their bedrooms

### Other Media

- ♦ Only 1/3 of households have media-consumption rules
- ♦ Daily total media exposure (TV, computer, video games and music); almost 8 hours for 8-9 year olds to almost 12 hours ages 11-14
- ♦ 78% of fifth graders have their own cell phone
- ♦ Children have much less structured time and are spending half as much time outside as they did 20 years ago



## Characteristics Of Children



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Information adapted from  
Kids Ministry 101  
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	General	1st and 2nd Graders	3rd and 4th Graders	5th and 6th Graders
SPiritUAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Developing a sense of right and wrong</li><li>♦ Learning to pray</li><li>♦ Developing the ability to participate actively in worship</li><li>♦ Growing in their faith in God</li><li>♦ Familiar with many Bible teachings</li><li>♦ Relating knowledge of the Bible and Christian faith to daily life</li><li>♦ Acquiring biblical knowledge, skills and principles for making right choices</li><li>♦ Learning to trust Christ without questions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Sees Jesus as a friend and helper</li><li>♦ Enjoys praying</li><li>♦ Likes learning from the Bible</li><li>♦ Is making conclusions about God</li><li>♦ Is interested in God’s world/nature</li><li>♦ Is beginning to understand truth and honesty, right from wrong</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Is becoming conscious of self and sin</li><li>♦ Is developing values</li><li>♦ Can see things in terms of right and wrong more than good and bad</li><li>♦ Asks serious questions about religion</li><li>♦ May be beginning to feel the need to accept Jesus as Savior</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Has concepts of love and trust</li><li>♦ Is ready for spiritual answers and direction in developing a value system</li><li>♦ Is learning limits of behavior</li><li>♦ Can experience conviction of the Holy Spirit</li></ul>
SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Seeking affirmation of individual gifts and talents</li><li>♦ Growing more independent</li><li>♦ Aware of own strengths and limitations</li><li>♦ Developing a sense of belonging</li><li>♦ Expressing feelings openly</li><li>♦ Anxious in large groups of unknown people</li><li>♦ Judging self according to adult interactions</li><li>♦ Realizing what triggers others’ feelings, emotions, and needs</li><li>♦ Able to work on group projects</li><li>♦ Developing friendships with same-sex peers</li><li>♦ Becoming able to demonstrate altruism and empathy</li><li>♦ Showing an interest in other cultures and their needs</li><li>♦ Understanding rules and consequences</li><li>♦ Loyal to friends and teammates</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Is moving toward independence, but still needs frequent assurance</li><li>♦ Is sensitive to what others think and desires approval</li><li>♦ Cries easily when scolded</li><li>♦ May avoid new situations</li><li>♦ Uses own experiences to understand others</li><li>♦ Can be self centered</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Enjoys being with friends</li><li>♦ May express dislike of children of opposite sex</li><li>♦ Likes to express himself</li><li>♦ Dislikes being treated as a “baby”</li><li>♦ Will accept carefully worded criticism</li><li>♦ Eager to please, wants to be liked</li><li>♦ Changes moods quickly</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Needs approval of peers; likes acceptance; enjoys companionship</li><li>♦ Can be sensitive to others</li><li>♦ Will take a stand contrary to family or friends</li><li>♦ May argue a lot</li><li>♦ Are beginning to be interested in the opposite sex</li><li>♦ Experiences extremes of emotions</li></ul>
MENTAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Curious and continually learning</li><li>♦ Able to make choices</li><li>♦ Predominantly literal thinkers but beginning to grasp abstract concepts</li><li>♦ Strengthening their language abilities</li><li>♦ Creative and inventive in their ideas and plans</li><li>♦ Able to focus on a task for longer periods of time</li><li>♦ Becoming independent thinkers</li><li>♦ Desiring an active role in group decision making</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Has limited ability to think abstractly</li><li>♦ Fears imaginary creatures/people</li><li>♦ Can follow specific instructions</li><li>♦ Has limited attention span</li><li>♦ Has good memory</li><li>♦ Can get deeply absorbed in activities</li><li>♦ Has a need to succeed</li><li>♦ Can find some verses in the Bible</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Beginning to think abstractly</li><li>♦ Is eager to learn</li><li>♦ Likes to experiment and find out ow things are made and work</li><li>♦ Wants to do things the right way and may feel ashamed when wrong</li><li>♦ Is able to excel in Bible skill activities</li><li>♦ May have difficulty making decisions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Growing in ability to think abstractly</li><li>♦ Thinks quickly and memorizes easily</li><li>♦ Can think for herself and solve problems</li><li>♦ Can concentrate when interested</li><li>♦ Is imaginative, creative and curious</li><li>♦ Can cope with success and failure</li><li>♦ Learns through various experiences</li></ul>
PHYSICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Active learners</li><li>♦ Utilizing all their senses</li><li>♦ Becoming more coordinated</li><li>♦ Increasingly able to use fine motor skills</li><li>♦ Experiencing uneven growth spurts</li><li>♦ Enjoying more organized sports and board games</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Is developing small muscle control</li><li>♦ Is developing eye-hand coordination</li><li>♦ Is active and has difficulty sitting still for long periods of time</li><li>♦ Tires easily</li><li>♦ Uses entire body to learn</li><li>♦ Likes all kinds of games</li><li>♦ Likes using her hands</li><li>♦ Enjoys creative play</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Has slow, steady growth and good muscle coordination</li><li>♦ Has good eye-hand coordination</li><li>♦ Is enthusiastic and may have trouble calming down</li><li>♦ Girls are growing more quickly than boys</li><li>♦ Can work for longer periods of time</li><li>♦ Needs to be able to let off steam</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Has good coordination and small muscle skills</li><li>♦ Is beginning puberty, girls usually ahead of boys</li><li>♦ Can be noisy and boisterous</li><li>♦ Enjoys competition and likes to win</li><li>♦ Is motivated by their own interests</li><li>♦ Likes to use abundant energy and physical skills</li></ul>