

# Child Development: A Conversation with Families



**Total Time:** 30 minutes

**Goal:** Partner with families to strengthen their knowledge of child development and equip them to support their children's learning and growth.

## Welcome & Purpose (5 minutes)

- Warm greetings, and thank you for attending.
- Briefly introduce *Yardsticks* and its value: helping adults understand what's typical and expected at each stage of child development.
- Emphasize the importance of school-home partnerships in supporting children's growth socially, emotionally, and academically.



**Yardsticks:  
Child & Adolescent  
Development Ages 4-14**



**Yardsticks Guides**

## Developmental Snapshots by Grade Span

Refer to the notes below to guide a family presentation on the grade spans in your school community.

### Grades K–2

Approx. 6 minutes



### Key Milestones

- Energetic, imaginative, often literal thinkers
- Thrive on routines and clear expectations
- Learn best through play, movement, and concrete experiences
- Need adult approval and reassurance
- Peer relationships are forming, but still learning how to share and take turns

### What It Looks/Sounds Like

- “Look what I made!” / “Is this right?”
- Fidgeting or blurting out without raising hands
- Big feelings, quick recoveries

### How the School Supports Students

- Use of morning meetings and structured transitions
- Visual schedules and hands-on learning
- Social-emotional instruction like sharing, turn-taking, and name-calling discussions
- Close teacher guidance during play and conflict resolution

**Grades 3–5**

**Approx. 7 minutes**



### **Key Milestones**

- Growing independence and responsibility
- Begin comparing themselves to others
- Strong sense of fairness and justice
- Peer friendships become more important
- Can reflect on their learning and emotions

### **What It Looks/Sounds Like**

- “That’s not fair!” / “Why do we have to do it this way?”
- Friend conflicts or hurt feelings over small issues
- Pride in being a helper or leader

### **How the School Supports Students**

- Classroom jobs and student voice opportunities
- SEL curriculum that includes empathy, decision-making, and friendships
- Choice in learning and small group academic support
- Conflict resolution and group agreements

**Grades 6–8**

**Approx. 7 minutes**



### **Key Milestones**

- Deepening self-awareness and identity
- Strong need for peer connection but still craves adult support
- Capable of abstract thinking, but emotions often override logic
- Seeking independence but still benefiting from structure

### **What It Looks/Sounds Like**

- “You don’t get it.” / “Everyone else is doing it.”
- Mood shifts, push-back, and testing limits
- Passion for causes, identity, or friend groups

### **How the School Supports Students**

- Advisory programs and trusted adult relationships
- Collaborative group work, project-based learning
- Structured spaces for self-expression and leadership
- Health and wellness education, digital citizenship, and restorative practices

## Closing & Q&A (5 minutes)

- Reaffirm the school's commitment to child development
- Invite parents to reach out to teachers or school leaders with questions
- Offer take-home materials or encourage further reading from *Yardsticks*
- Thank families for their partnership and support

