

What is the research telling us?

There are a variety of socio-economic realities for children age 6 to 12.

Children have about 67 hours of discretionary time a week.

- Where are they?
- What are they doing?
- Who and what is influencing their cognitive, social, emotional and physical health?

Children are vulnerable due to:

- poverty,
- lack of adequate affordable childcare,
- language, culture and race,
- physical or mental challenges,
- domestic instability.

Challenges children can face as a result of their socio-economic realities and their physical, cognitive and social development are:

- bullying,
- low self esteem/
social isolation,
- poor physical health,
- poor performance
in school.



What is United Way doing?

In 2004 children age 6 to 12 were established as a United Way priority.

Our focus is to:

- look at the socio-economic landscape of children,
- look at the developmental capabilities of children 6 to 12,
- identify some of the issues/challenges that must be addressed and develop strategies.

Our strategies are:

- to invest in advocacy,
- focus on root causes through research,
- engage and support communities to identify and address their own needs,
- strengthen existing services at the community level to build capacity.


United Way's impact in 2009/2010

We invested in 73 organizations that delivered 142 programs and initiatives for children age 6 to 12. These included after-school programs, mentoring and tutoring services, homework clubs, drop-in programs and advocacy initiatives. Many of the organizations and programs we funded specifically supported immigrant and newcomer children who were at risk of social exclusion due to language barriers and issues related to access and integration.

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United Way
Growing Up Great



United Way of the Lower Mainland supports innovative initiatives that are helping children 6 to 12 develop the capacity to make wise future choices. By helping kids to be healthy, happy and resilient, United Way sets them on the right path.



Developmental characteristics of children age 6 to 12

Children grow very quickly. Between ages 6 and 12 they experience rapid physical growth and development of motor skills. Their cognitive and social development also progresses enormously throughout this time.

The table below shows the main characteristics of children according to their age group.



	6 – 8 years old	9 – 10 years old	11 – 12 years old
Physical: What children can do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They learn how to control their bodies. • They have a lot of energy. • They enjoy manipulating objects. • They may find handling small objects or performing fine motor tasks challenging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They enjoy moving and being active. • They enjoy sports, dancing and physically intense games. • They can play until they are exhausted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They experience physical changes, especially girls. • Their energy levels vary. • They may find it difficult to control their emotions.
Cognitive: What children can understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They learn best by doing. • Instructions need to be few and simple. • They have a limited attention span and are easily distracted by their environment. • They are very imaginative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are curious and enjoy learning new things. • They learn best when involved in a concrete project. • They may become frustrated when things do not turn out as expected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They begin to develop abstract thinking skills. • They learn well through imitating role models. • They are adventurous and enjoy change. • They have a good attention span.
Social: What types of relationships children can have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can be somewhat self-centred. • They play better in pairs than in groups. • They need to be constantly reminded of the group rules. • They like to express themselves, but must be asked directly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They place increasing importance on friendships. • They enjoy playing and taking up group challenges. • They are sometimes competitive. • They can express what they like or do not like, but their judgment is sometimes not well developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They enjoy working in teams. • They seek the approval of their peers. • They are more independent and begin to question authority. • They enjoy projects that involve helping others and social justice.