

| | Pathfinder | Tenderheart | Explorer | Pioneer | Patriot |
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| Physical | Awkward Fine Motor Skills Tires Quickly Need reminders for personal hygiene – washing hands, etc Likes to test strength and motor skills, but not emotionally ready for competition Can run, gallop, tumble, skip and jump rope | Has a High Energy Level Loves to Play Not concerned with personal appearance Needs help in new skills Can use scissors, print name, catch balls | Coordination more developed Craves excitement and physical motion Often a growth spurt Puberty may begin for some girls, and may begin to menstruate Able to take responsibility for personal hygiene | Reach peak of growth spurt, average age of menarche Girls may have relationships with older boys Increased gender stereotyping of attitudes and behaviors, which is often difficult for girls Tremendous appetite Need extra sleep | Reach adult physical development Physical activity for girls often declines due to fewer opportunities and less encouragement Tremendous appetite Need extra sleep |
| Emotional | Confuses fantasy with reality Often fears loud noises, the dark, animals and some people Expresses anger and jealousy physically Sensitive to others’ feelings | Seeks approval of adults – imitates to gain approval Enjoy recognition Deep interest in heroes and tall tales Express feelings freely Sense of justice is based on reciprocity – give and take Sensitive to failure and criticism Can still be afraid of the dark Enjoys caring for and playing with younger children | Still learning emotionally Confidence in self is increasing Developing a realistic self image Have begun to adapt strategies for regulating emotions Begin to judge others with more discernment and objectivity Enjoy new experiences and challenges Need adult role models, other than parents May alternate between mature behavior/ language and childish Increasing freedom creates concern for security of the world around them | Preoccupied with self, introspective, self-evaluative May be more moody or depressed Increased conflict between parent and child Regard themselves as always on stage, everyone’s focus May develop an inflated opinion of their importance Self-esteem declines, need opportunities to plan and lead in accepting, safe environments Dread violence and aggression in school and community | Self-esteem rises due to approval of parents, other adults and peers Sense of identity becomes more clear Self concept is more organized and consistent, with personal and moral values key themes Balance between social and emotional growth Receptive to criticism, may try to change Friendships based on greater loyalty and intimacy May be anxious about forming intimate heterosexual relationships Concerned about career choice and other aspects of the future |
| Social | Likes to Help Dependent on Authority May use swear words and “bathroom words” to get attention Can be very bossy Can take turns, but doesn’t always want to Seeks adult approval Have a good sense of humor | Needs affection Needs help in cooperation Needs help to develop an appreciation of others Concerned with fairness and playing by the rules Enjoy playing with others Begin developing “best friend” relationships based on trust Interested in rules and rituals | Peer interest is strong Seeks approval of peers Can be interested in the welfare of the group Needs to continue to develop respect for girls her own age Friendly, cooperative Value fairness and respect authority Becoming more competitive as well as responsible | Conformity to peer pressure increases Cliques form Maximum impact of peer groups Loyal friendship continue and become more intimate Dating relationships lag behind same-sex friendships May experience identity confusion; what’s their role, adult or child Peer group loyalty very strong | Conformity to peer pressure declines Cliques and Crowds may begin to decline Many have started dating Family system may have changed, allowing more independence and freedom, therefore less conflict Autonomy leads to being more responsible, dependable Perform social niceties Siblings may be companions Forming emotionally intimate pre-sexual partnerships Peer group loyalty very strong |
| Intellectual | Active Learners Think Out Loud Learns best through senses, play and own actions Does not yet think logically Can recognize categories Like to make their own decisions Interested in cause and effect Counts up to 10 objects Understands stories having a beginning, middle and end | Works attentively for only short periods of time Likes magic, fantasy and stories Full of questions Word definitions are concrete, referring to functions and appearance Vocabulary increasing rapidly Can understand right from wrong May reverse printed letters Enjoys planning and building Longer attention span Enjoys creating elaborate collections | Mental development is rapid Interest topics broaden Works hard on exciting jobs Needs opportunities to explore Needs opportunities to experiment, create & plan Needs to carry out responsibilities Begin to ask logical questions and make generalizations about real things and events Can work alone for longer periods of time Can increase learning by making plans, following them and evaluating Develops pride in self by doing things well and cooperating with peers | Begin using abstract thinking, inductive and deductive logic and solve problems by considering alternatives Want facts and proof for things previously accepted on trust Want to be part in decision making affecting them Most adhere to internalized values of parents Want definitions and details about social, moral and political issues Become more idealistic and critical of adults and themselves Enthusiasm great in interest areas | Engage in hypothetical and deductive reasoning Like to discuss and explore Able to coordinate theory with evidence and evaluate the logic of complex problems, thus forming personal convictions Realize academic potential with encouragement from parents, peers and teachers/Leaders Better at everyday planning and decision-making Begin to balance school, job, recreation, family, etc. Enthusiasm great in interest areas |
| Spiritual | Need to hear Bible stories, as they cannot “use” the Bible Can memorize verses | Need help using the Bible, though some can read independently Can memorize verses and understand basic Bible truths Understand they can have a relationship with God and Jesus Can confess wrong things and ask for forgiveness Feel they can tell God anything – he is a friend and helper Begin to see Church as a group of people rather than a place | Able to study the Bible on their own and develop Biblical values Desire to understand more about God Can comprehend the death and resurrection of Jesus Can apply Biblical values to real-life situations and make decisions accordingly | Capable of a commitment to Christ Able to practice Christian growth principles Struggle with failure to live up to Biblical principles and their ideals Have keen sense of right and wrong Becoming aware of social and moral issues Like to be involved in activities and events that are significant and help others | Able to practice Christian growth principles Able to give, serve and to make personal commitments to Christ and to causes Acquiring an ethical system and set of values as a guide to behavior May consider how spirituality is part of their search for meaning in their life. |
| Activities | Enjoys Show & Tell Enjoys Coloring & Painting Enjoys New Games | Likes games using individual competition Likes simple games & songs Likes to collect things | Interest in team games Weekend overnights | Enjoys leading groups of girls | Longer lasting adventures Mission Trips |

Adapted from information in Virginia Patterson, Ed.D's article “Age Group Characteristics: Key to Understanding Kids” featured in *Focusing on the Foundations of Christian Camping*.

This chart is a guide to developmental characteristics within each level of AHG. These characteristics will inevitably vary with each girl, based on factors such as her maturity, environment, presence of any special needs, personality, etc.