



5th Grade! Right smack dab in the middle of the “tween years”. This is a time when your child wants to be treated as an adult, but also wants to be cuddled and treated like a child. It is dichotomous, but true. One minute they are pushing their autonomy saying “ I can stay home alone by myself” and the next they are asking you to tuck them in at night as they cuddle their stuffed animals. For girls, this is the year you could very well start to see some [hormonal changes](#) affecting their body, emotions, and consequently their relationships with peers and you. For boys, they may not be experiencing the same hormonal rush as girls, but their time is coming. Some children in 5th grade really take off in their development emotionally, cognitively and physically, while others do not. The different starting points developmentally at this age is very normal. You’ve heard the terms early or late bloomer for a reason, because it will be different for each child. This can make friendships difficult because some may be moving into that next cognitive stage of development with increased ability to think abstractly and if their friends have not, it can make for confusing or socially awkward situations. Supporting your child through this time and checking in with them on all fronts will keep you connected with them.

Social interactions are important for children of this age. Encourage your child to participate in sports, clubs, the arts or other extra-curricular activities. These social interactions create improved social awareness surrounding areas of interest. Your 10 year old is starting to create larger world view opinions. They are largely idealistic and black and white. They are not developmentally able to perceive the gray areas of issues.

Our children push limits throughout their development. When they are younger, it is not necessarily appropriate to explain the “why” of the boundaries that you create as parents. But when your child is 10 years old, they want to hear the “why” and it becomes appropriate to give an explanation. Giving them an understanding of why you have the boundaries you have, will help them at this age to use reasoning and judgement and discern a greater depth of understanding of your values and expectations.

The 5th grade teachers want you to know that they are looking for you to continue to create structure and routines to promote healthy habits around studying and homework. This will support their continued development of [executive function](#) skills.

For more on developmental stages and parenting information, contact your Thrive Parent Liaison, Lori Swenson at lswenson@bssd72.org or 995-4281.