

Stages of Development

STAGE	BASIC CONFLICT	IMPORTANT EVENT(S)	KEY QUESTION(S)	
Infancy 0-18 months	Trust v. Mistrust	Feeding and Comforting	Is my world safe?	At this age your baby relies on you to provide them with the most basic needs. In order to experience the world as a safe place they need to know that you are dependable, emotionally available, and accepting. Feeding them when they are hungry, holding them close, picking them up when they cry and treating them kindly all teach them that you are there for them.
Early Childhood 2- 3 years	Autonomy v. Shame & Doubt	Toilet Training and Dressing	Can I do things for myself or do I always need to ask for help?	Erikson claimed the focus is on self-control as you toddler learns to walk, grasp objects, and use the toilet. Your goal is to respect their developing independence. Supporting independence and keeping them safe, however is a delicate balance. Overly protective or critical behavior sends your child a message of inadequacy that leads to shame and doubt. Yet your safety concerns crop up, too. According to Erikson, you should reassure your child when they make mistakes
Preschooler 3-5 years	Initiative v. Guilt	Exploration Play	Am I good or bad?	With their increased motor skills and growing confidence in interacting with people, they are ready to take control of playtime and social situations. In their enthusiasm to lead, they can overstep their bounds or do something dangerous. Punishing their initiative can make them feel guilty. Your task is to get them back on course with gentle coaching and by consistently and calmly setting boundaries.
Elementary/ Middle School 6-11 years	Industry v. Inferiority	School Activities	How can I be good?	Your child's task is to develop and sense of pride in their skills and abilities. Your encouragement and affirmations teach them to enjoy learning, productivity, and striving for success. Encourage their best effort, help them when they get stuck, have patience when they don't learn something quickly, and remind them often of how capable you think they are.
Adolescence 12-18 years	Identity v. Role confusion	Social Relationships and Identity	Who am I and where am I going?	According to Erikson, this is the most important conflict you child faces and successfully managing the first four stages helps them navigate this one. As parental control gets pushed back and your child practices being an adult, peer relationships give your child clues to their political, religious, career and gender roles. At this stage Erikson believes that parents should support and encourage their child's exploration.