

CHARACTERISTICS OF SIX YEAR-OLDS

- Period of opposites, go to extremes, either very good, or very bad
- Bodies - all arms and legs - clumsy
- Wigglers, excitable - can't stand or sit still
- Need ways of getting rid of excess energy and feelings
- Tire easily - aches and pains in growing arms and legs
- Love words and numbers
- Writing and printing, very difficult
- Desire to be a winner, first, best-liked, and show-off
- Sometimes attempt things too hard for them
- The center of his own world, likes to dominate
- Beginning to stand on his own
- Choices are difficult and many involve anger
- Cannot face up to criticism or mistakes: needs to be distracted from bad behavior in a non-threatening way
- Like drama: identify and dramatize himself in everything
- Love to explore and collect things
- Dawdles, more interested in playing than eating or dressing
- Fears and nightmares about dark, fire, noises, death. (May need a toy, story or music, or flashlight under pillow after lights are out.)

HELPFUL HINTS FOR PARENTS

- Rub and massage aching arms and legs
- Practice patience! Avoid direct clashes of will
- Make child feel important: let him show what he can do. (i.e. When visitors come, give child some task so he will not feel it is necessary to act foolish for attention.)
- Build up behavior on good days, demand little on bad ones