

**Table 22 Developmental Guide to Contributions**

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE	APPROXIMATE AGE RANGE	TIPS FOR CONSIDERATION
Toddlers	2–3 years old	Toddlers are developing gross motor skills and body control. They enjoy interacting and copying (give-and-take). Consider having children copy what you are doing. Clean up toys and objects they can hold and lift. Model and practice kind gestures and gentle touch.
Young Children	4–7 years old	Young children are discovering and learning through games and roleplay. At this stage, many develop fine motor skills and master gross motor skills. Consider turning prep and clean-up into games. Have young children set the table, sort objects (such as laundry or classroom materials), take on simple jobs, and play “what if” scenario games that focus on being good contributors.
Older Children	8–10 years old	Older children are learning and developing through active engagement, experiences, and reflection. They are becoming more complex and independent thinkers. Consider including older children in family or community decision-making and seeking their ideas and input. Assign older children more independent tasks, taking time to coach and counsel as needed.
Tweens	11–13 years old	Tweens are beginning to see themselves as connected to a bigger world and in the context of relationships. They are more aware of how people are treated and issues of fairness. At this stage, continue assigning jobs they can do on their own, but add in discussions about causes they care about, finding ways for them to get involved and make a difference.
Teens	14–18 years old	Teens are undergoing a period of rapid physical and cognitive development, much like early childhood. They are hypersocial with a need for more independence, autonomy, and healthy risk-taking. At this stage, encourage young people to help friends, families, and others in need. Social contributions will matter more than before. Shift from being directive to being a mentor, advising them on how to be of value at home, in the community, and elsewhere.
Young Adults	19–26 years old	Most young adults are becoming independent with a sense of who they are and what they care about. Maintain your mentor mindset from the teen years and be available to offer advice on how to contribute. <sup>1</sup> Identify and communicate ways the young adult can help within the family or community, especially if they move away. Seek the young person’s ideas and perspectives to solve problems or resolve issues.

<sup>1</sup>Yeager, D. (2024). *10 to 25: The science of motivating young people: a groundbreaking approach to the leading the next generation—And making your own life easier*. Avid Reader Press.