

# Human Life Cycle

What is the human life cycle?



# Stages of Human Growth and Development

It is possible to study human growth in lots of ways:

**Physical**

**Emotional**

**Social**

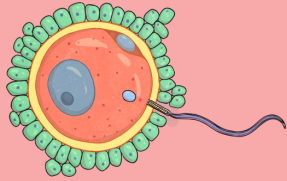
**Psychological**



In science, the focus is on the stages of human growth and development physically. The stages you will learn about are the major changes that take place.

# Prenatal

Prenatal means before birth. This stage of development is from the time of fertilisation (when the male and female sex cells fuse together) to the time of birth.



fertilisation



one-month-old  
embryo



nine-week-old  
embryo



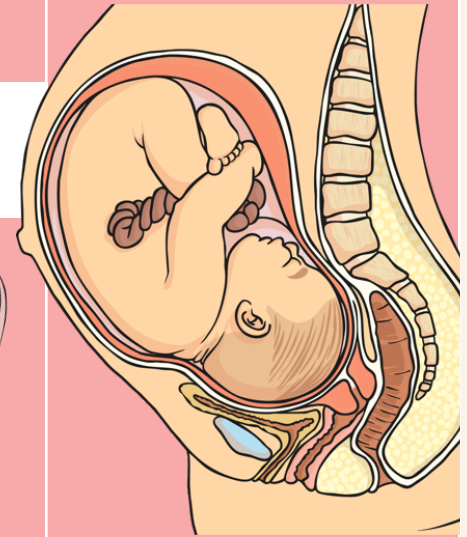
three-month-old  
foetus



five-month-old  
foetus



seven-month-old  
foetus



39-week-old baby  
in womb



1 month



2 months



3 months



4 months



5 months



6 months



7 months



8 months



9 months



10 months



11 months



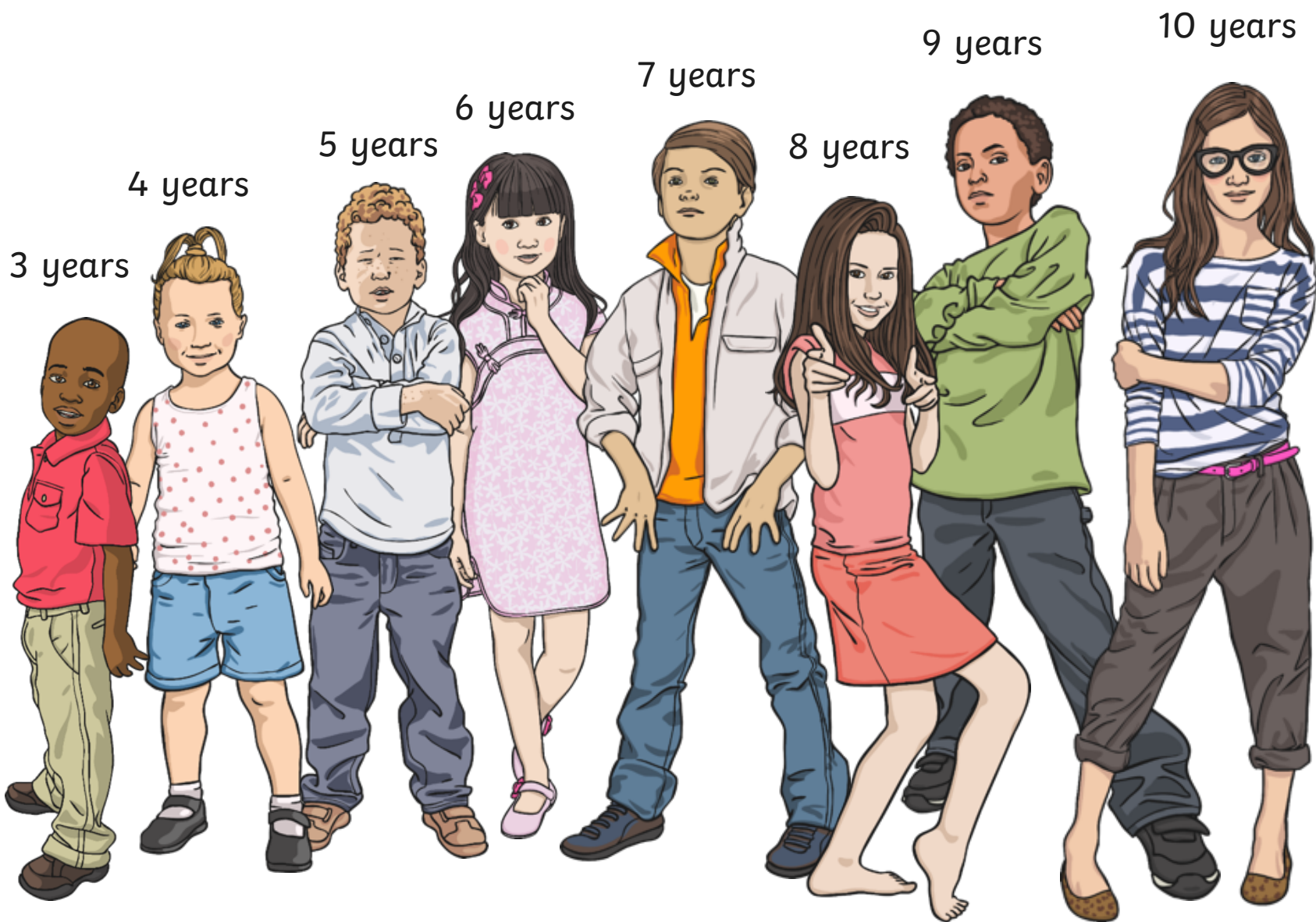
1 year



toddler







# Adolescence

The World Health Organisation defines an adolescent as being a young person aged between 10 and 19.

Puberty results in changes in the body.

Boys' bodies start changing from around age 12 but it can be earlier or later.

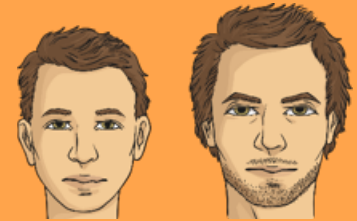
Girls' bodies start changing from around the age of 9 but it can be earlier or later.

The changes don't all come at once. They happen over a few years.

These changes occur to enable reproduction during adulthood.

Adolescents are increasingly independent.

There is even more brain development.



# Early Adulthood

This stage of development takes place from the ages of 18/19 to 39.

The human body is at its peak of fitness and strength.

There is still some growth but not of height.

This is the age at which most humans reproduce.

Humans are able to take care of their physical needs completely independently.



# Middle Adulthood

This stage of development takes place between 40 and 59 years of age.

Both male and female ability to reproduce declines with age.

Women experience menopause in their 40s or 50s when they no longer produce eggs.

Physical changes can include loss of hair among men and greying hair for both men and women.



# Late Adulthood / Old Age

This is the last stage of human development and takes place after the age of 60.

There is no physical growth although mental development is possible.

The body declines in fitness and health.

Some older people can become more fragile physically.

This can sometimes result in increasing dependency on others to care for them.

The end of the human life cycle is when a human dies. (The age at which this happens varies and is not simply dependent on physical factors.)



