

Development of General Information Processing

M I L E S T O N E S

Age	Basic Capacities	Strategies	Knowledge	Metacognition
2–5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organization of the mental system into sensory register, working memory, and long-term memory is adultlike. ■ Many basic processing skills are evident, including attention, recognition, recall, and reconstruction. ■ Overall capacity, or size, of the system increases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attention becomes more focused and sustained. ■ Beginnings of memory strategies are present, but they are seldom used spontaneously and have little impact on performance. ■ Variability and adaptive selection among problem-solving strategies is evident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge expands and takes on adultlike organization. ■ Familiar events are remembered in terms of scripts, which become more elaborate. ■ Autobiographical memory emerges and becomes more detailed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Differentiation of thinking from other activities occurs. ■ Awareness of a limited-capacity mental system is present, but preschoolers view the mind as a passive container of information.
6–10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Overall capacity, or size, of the system continues to increase. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attention becomes more selective, adaptable, and playful. ■ Cognitive inhibition improves markedly. ■ Memory strategies of rehearsal and semantic organization are used spontaneously and more effectively. ■ Ability to apply multiple strategies increases. ■ Ability to draw inferences in reconstructive processing improves. ■ Reliance on fuzzy, reconstructed gists for reasoning increases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge continues to expand and become better organized, which facilitates retrieval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ View of the mind as an active, constructive agent develops. ■ Knowledge of different types of cognitive processes and the impact of psychological factors on performance increases. ■ Knowledge of the impact of task variables on performance increases and is integrated with psychological factors. ■ Cognitive self-regulation improves gradually.
11 years–adulthood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Overall capacity, or size, of the system continues to increase, but at a slower pace than in childhood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Memory strategy of elaboration appears and improves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knowledge expands further and becomes more intricately organized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Metacognitive knowledge and cognitive self-regulation continue to improve.

