

The Spiral of Development

Disequilibrium

4 ½ years:

- Sometimes acts like a 4, sometimes like a 5
- Insecure
- Emotional changeable

3 ½ years:

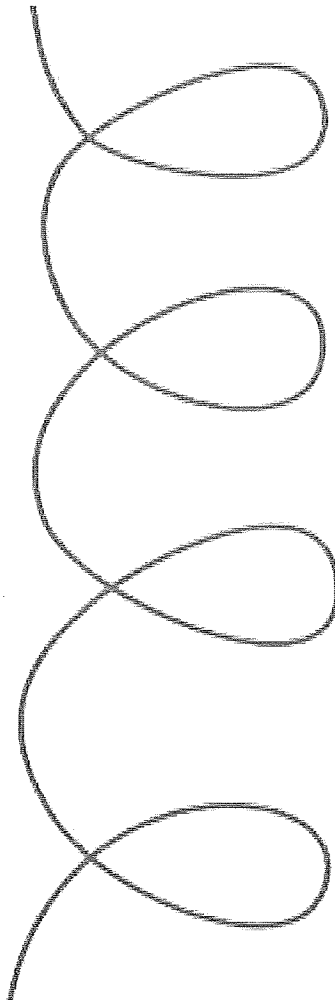
- Needs to succeed/have own way
- Insecure
- Disobeys
- Clumsy, stumbles often
- Objects to eating & dressing

2 ½ years:

- Goes to extremes
- Can't make choices
- Hates change
- Bossy, demanding, determined

18 months:

- Difficult, impatient
- Frustration with lack of communication
- Cries/tantrums when not understood
- Can't make body do what they want



Equilibrium

5 years:

- Quiet & secure
- Wants to be good & usually is
- Likes the tried and true, not the new and strange

4 years:

- Self-confident, loves to be silly
- Willing to try anything, wild
- Laughs and cries loudly

3 years:

- Happy with the world
- Likes to obey
- Controls body well
- Proud of ability to dress and feed self

2 years:

- Pleasant, friendly, calm
- Talks more easily
- Controls body well
- Can cooperate

- There are developmental ages in which life seems easy for the child; he or she seems pulled together and on an even keel. These stages of *equilibrium* alternate with stages of *disequilibrium*, when the child has trouble with many areas of living, such as eating, sleeping, responding to other people, and behaving in an acceptable way.
- The figure above shows these alternations as they typically occur for the average child in the early years of life. These stages show that behavior advances in a spiral pattern, going from one extreme to the other.
- If your child isn't doing all of these things or if you've been observing these behaviors for a while now, don't worry. Although these are typical behaviors for these ages, every child is an individual, developing at his or her own pace.

