

GROWTH

What is the skill?

Healthy growth reflects the body's ability to develop physically through adequate nutrition, healthcare, sleep, and nurturing relationships.

What does normal development look like?

Children typically grow steadily in height, weight, and physical strength. Growth occurs most successfully when children's nutritional, emotional, and medical needs are consistently met.

How does neglect interfere?

Neglect can slow growth through inadequate nutrition, untreated medical conditions, and chronic activation of the stress response. Elevated stress hormones may interfere with growth even when food is available.

What might this look like?

Children may be smaller than expected for their age, gain weight slowly, experience delayed puberty, or have developmental delays associated with poor physical growth.

Parenting implications

Supporting healthy growth involves more than providing food. Consistent meals, regular medical care, emotional security, and reduced stress all contribute to healthy physical development.

From Understanding to Attunement

Growth reflects how well a child's body believes its environment is safe enough to invest energy in developing.