

3 Year Old Handout



Speech and Language Development

- Your child should be speaking in 3-4 word sentences with a vocabulary of about 1000 words.
- Should know her full name, one color, difference between day and night, and some prepositions (“put the block under the chair”).
- Stimulate speech by encouraging her to tell stories, by reading longer books, paying attention when she speaks, talking about her day/activities/friends, and talking about similarities/differences/relationship between objects.
- Stuttering (repeating words/sounds) is common at this age. Be patient, let your child complete her thought, and try not to focus on the stuttering.

Social Development

- Allow exploration and offer your child choices when appropriate.
- Talk about activities and encourage socialization and sharing.
- Sexual curiosity at this age is normal
- Your child will be interested in her body and those of her playmates.
- Answer questions about sex when they are asked, but stay within the bounds of the question.
- Teach your child the correct terms for genitals.

Physical Development

- Most children are feeding themselves and putting on their clothes/shoes.
- May be able to pedal a tricycle, jump in place, and kick a ball.
- Your child may still be wetting the bed; only 60% of three year olds are dry at night and 85% are dry during the day.

Your Active Child

- Apart from sleeping, children should not be inactive for longer than 1 hour at a time.
- Be active together as a family.
- Limit screen time to no more than 1–2 hours each day.
- No TV in your child’s bedroom.
- Keep your child from viewing shows and ads that may make her want things that are not healthy.
- Be sure your child is active at home and preschool or child care.
- Let us know if you need help getting your child enrolled in preschool or Head Start.

Playing With Others

- Playing with other preschoolers helps get your child ready for school.
- Give your child a variety of toys for dress-up, make-believe, and imitation.
- Make sure your child has the chance to play often with other preschoolers.
- Help your child learn to take turns while playing games with other children.

Diet

- Meals should become more enjoyable, especially if you provide clear expectations for mealtime behavior.

- Involve your child in meal preparation to help develop an interest in food.
- Try to present nutritious snacks at a planned time and place, to limit grazing behavior.
- Keep foods you do not approve of out of your house.
- Remember that children would rather drink than eat, so use juice/milk as foods and give water for thirst.
- You may try increasing serving sizes. A general rule is 1 tablespoon for each year of life (4 Tbsp = ¼ cup).

Family Support

- Take time for yourself and to be with your partner.
- Parents need to stay connected to friends, their personal interests, and work.
- Be aware that your parents might have different parenting styles than you.
- Give your child the chance to make choices.
- Show your child how to handle anger well—time alone, respectful talk, or being active. Stop hitting, biting, and fighting right away.
- Reinforce rules and encourage good behavior.
- Use time-outs or take away what's causing a problem.
- Have regular play times and mealtimes together as a family.

Safety

- Use a forward-facing car safety seat in the back seat of all vehicles.
- Switch to a belt-positioning booster seat when your child outgrows his/her forward-facing seat.
- Never leave your child alone in the car, house, or yard.
- Do not let young brothers and sisters watch over your child.
- Your child is too young to cross the street alone.
- Make sure there are operable window guards on every window on the second floor and higher. Move furniture away from windows.
- Lock doors to dangerous areas.
- Use gates on stairwells.
- Fence play yard and supervise outdoor play.
- Avoid burns, by watching your climbing toddler - beware of kitchen appliances and hot surfaces.
- Your child will taste everything! Keep household products and medicines out of reach. Try to remove any unnecessary poisonous products from the home.
- Never have a gun in the home. If you must have a gun, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun. Ask if there are guns in homes where your child plays. If so, make sure they are stored safely.
- Supervise play near streets and driveways.

Your Child's Next Visit is the 4 Year Visit.

Poison Help:

1-800-222-1222

Child safety seat inspection:

1-866-SEATCHECK; seatcheck.org