

Boys & Girls 3 Years Old

22 Common Skills of Children During Their 3rd Year



Young children are always learning.

They grow and develop at different rates, have different interests, and different experiences. This guide presents some of the skills most children are able to do during their 3rd year.

During the 3rd year, a child ...

1. Has good listening skills

- enjoys listening to songs on the radio and clapping to the music
- listens to grandma and mom talking and later, when playing, repeats what they said
- enjoys listening to a story and asking questions about it



2. Speaks clearly enough to be understood and enjoys talking

- asks for help and speaks clearly enough to be understood
- can tell a short story and listeners will understand what is being said
- enjoys singing short rhymes and making a puppet talk

3. Knows how to follow simple instructions

- can get shoes and bring them to mom when asked
- will turn off the TV for dad when asked



4. Tries to write

- likes to scribble on paper and tell someone what it says
- makes scribbles and says she/he is printing her/his name

5. Shows excitement about amounts and counting

- tells how many dogs were in the park
- holds up three fingers when asked "How old are you?"
- talks about numbers ("I saw millions of people at the store today.")
- sings a counting song using the numbers one to five



6. Wants to sort objects

- pulls all the red crayons out of the box
- picks out the big pencils

7. Knows some shapes

- wants to draw some circles and squares
- can point to things in the room that look like circles

8. Begins to understand positions of things

- tells you she/he put the toys under the bed
- talks about wanting to go to the front of a line or stand next to mom

9. Notices sizes

- says that the box that the delivery man brought was really small
- shows that Bobby is bigger than Tom
- tells you the macaroni necklace is very long

10. Starts to show she/he knows the right things to do

- knows to close the refrigerator door
- hangs up her/his jacket when she/he comes into the house
- knows the rules about not using crayons on the sofa

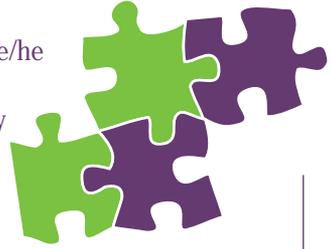
11. Begins to show some self control

- knows how to take turns with toys
- says good-bye to mom and is comfortable staying with grandma today
- leaves the park and swing set without tears when dad says it's time to go



12. Is excited about learning and learns through playing

- carefully watches what other children are doing and tries to do the same things
- wants to try new puzzles or to play the games others are playing
- asks lots of questions about new things she/he sees and asks “why” often
- tries to do familiar tasks in a different way
- asks for help when she/he is unable to finish a project on her/his own



13. Likes to play with another child

- helps her/his sister to set the table for dinner
- wants to join a friend who is playing with blocks

14. Enjoys seeing familiar adults

- tells a neighbor about going to the movie theater
- says hello to the adults when she/he goes into a friend's house

15. Knows and looks forward to routines

- knows that it's bath time before bed time every night
- reminds mom to do things she forgot to do
- knows that the toys must be cleaned up before dinner
- looks forward to going to the library each Tuesday

16. Shows caring for others

- puts her/his arm around a friend who is crying
- wants to help when the baby can't reach a toy

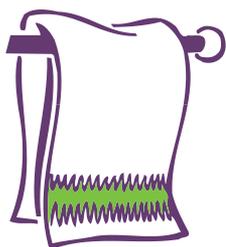
17. Explores and compares with senses

- picks a flower, looks at its shape and feels its texture
- tests to see what will float or sink in the bath tub



18. Notices how people look and what they do

- talks about having toes, ears, two eyes, two knees
- sees and says things aloud about how other people look
- puts on dad's white shirt and plays doctor



19. Begins to understand rules

- knows not to touch sharp knives or the hot stove
- knows the rule not to hit other children
- tells others when they are breaking the rules
- knows to hang the towel after taking a bath

20. Enjoys singing and dancing

- sings the words to some songs
- claps and dances to music
- enjoys twirling, hopping, and swinging her/his arms to music
- wants to imitate how others are singing and dancing

21. Begins to have some good physical skills

- can stand on one foot without falling
- is able to run and stop without crashing into things
- can crawl through play tunnels
- will line up blocks to make a road



22. Likes to try to do things on her/his own

- tries to pour juice into a cup
- wants to try to get dressed alone
- wants to be the one to open the door

Use this guide to help.

Remember that some children will be able to do all of these things and more. Other children may be able to do many of the things listed but not be able to do others. Use this guide to help you observe your three-year-old. If you have questions about your child, speak to your pediatrician or preschool teacher.

During the 3rd year, a child ...

1. Has good listening skills
2. Speaks clearly enough to be understood and enjoys talking
3. Knows how to follow simple instructions
4. Tries to write
5. Shows excitement about amounts and counting
6. Wants to sort objects
7. Knows some shapes
8. Begins to understand positions of things
9. Notices sizes
10. Starts to show she/he knows the right things to do
11. Begins to show some self control
12. Is excited about learning and learns through playing
13. Likes to play with another child
14. Enjoys seeing familiar adults
15. Knows and looks forward to routines
16. Shows caring for others
17. Explores and compares with senses
18. Notices how people look and what they do
19. Begins to understand rules
20. Enjoys singing and dancing
21. Begins to have some good physical skills

EPI-center prepared this document for use by families and caregivers of children preparing to enter pre-school

For more information about EPI-center,
visit our web site at www.epi-center.org



education
policy issues
center

425 Sixth Avenue
Suite 340
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1819
Tel 412.281.2000
Fax 412.281.3157
www.epi-center.org

Karen McIntyre, PhD, President
Written by Susan E. Gove, PhD