

# Your Child at 3 Years



How your child plays, learns, speaks, and acts offer important clues about your child's development. Developmental milestones are things most children can do by a certain age.

Check the milestones your child has reached by his or her 3rd birthday. Take this with you and talk with your child's doctor at every visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next.

## What Most Children Do at this Age:

### Social/Emotional

- Copies adults and friends
- Shows affection for friends without prompting
- Takes turns in games
- Shows concern for a crying friend
- Understands the idea of "mine" and "his" or "hers"
- Shows a wide range of emotions
- Separates easily from mom or dad
- May get upset with major changes in routine
- Dresses and undresses self

### Language/Communication

- Follows instructions with 2 or 3 steps
- Can name most familiar things
- Understands words like "in," "on," and "under"
- Says first name, age, and sex
- Names a friend
- Says words like "I," "me," "we," and "you" and some plurals (cars, dogs, cats)
- Talks well enough for strangers to understand most of the time
- Carries on a conversation using 2 to 3 sentences

### Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Can work toys with buttons, levers, and moving parts
- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals, and people
- Does puzzles with 3 or 4 pieces
- Understands what "two" means
- Copies a circle with pencil or crayon
- Turns book pages one at a time
- Builds towers of more than 6 blocks
- Screws and unscrews jar lids or turns door handle

### Movement/Physical Development

- Climbs well
- Runs easily
- Pedals a tricycle (3-wheel bike)
- Walks up and down stairs, one foot on each step

## Act Early by Talking to Your Child's Doctor if Your Child:

- Falls down a lot or has trouble with stairs
- Drools or has very unclear speech
- Can't work simple toys (such as peg boards, simple puzzles, turning handle)
- Doesn't speak in sentences
- Doesn't understand simple instructions
- Doesn't play pretend or make-believe
- Doesn't want to play with other children or with toys
- Doesn't make eye contact
- Loses skills he once had

If you notice any of these signs of possible developmental delay, tell your child's doctor or nurse, and talk to someone at your local public school who is familiar with services for young children. For more information, visit [nyc.gov](http://nyc.gov) and search for "Child Development."

Content provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Learn the Signs. Act Early program. For more information go to [www.cdc.gov/ActEarly](http://www.cdc.gov/ActEarly).

**Your Child's Growth Is More Than Physical**

To learn more about development visit [nyc.gov](http://nyc.gov) and search for "Child Development"

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