

# Threes



I'm three. Welcome to my world! I'm known for having a short attention span because I don't want to miss anything. I love to wiggle and squirm. I'm full of wonder and love to explore. You often hear me say, "me" or "mine" because, of course, the world belongs to me. Join me in my journey and see how I do life!

"Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they never failed to imitate them."  
*James Baldwin*

"Parenting is a two-way street—as you take them by the hand, they will take you by the heart."  
*Judy Ford*

Repetition is the key to learning.

"There is nothing more serious than a child at play. Children learn through play."  
*Jean Piaget*

## Thought You'd Like to Know



- I like to do things for myself.
- I like to dress and undress myself.
- I love to move constantly and run without falling.
- I have bursts of energy but I still tire easily.
- My eye-hand coordination has improved. Lacing, coloring and stacking blocks are activities my hands are practicing.
- I can stand, balance and hop on one foot as well as ride a tricycle.
- I can use the toilet, brush my teeth and wash my hands by myself.
- I need ten to twelve hours of sleep a night.
- Weight: 25–44 pounds.  
Height: 34–43 inches.



- My emotions are usually visible, i.e. happy, jealous, sad, angry. Give me words to express my feelings. My emotions are often extreme and short lived.
- I can sense the emotions adults display through their nonverbal body language and tone of voice.
- I feel proud when I accomplish a job.
- Routines help me feel more secure.



- Sometimes I show a preference for one parent.
- I like to pretend being a mommy or daddy.
- I like to make others laugh and be silly.
- I am beginning to enjoy playing with other children for short periods of time but I still prefer to play alone.
- I enjoy hearing stories about myself.
- I need clear and consistent rules. Tell me what the consequences are for breaking the rules. Say what you mean and do what you say. This helps me feel secure. I can sense when you will not follow through based on our experiences together.
- I like to cuddle with people I trust.
- I will imitate the behavior of significant people around me.



- My vocabulary is exploding. Seventy-five to 80 percent of my speech is understandable. My sentences are three to five words long. I am learning fifty words a month.
- I'm beginning to understand right from wrong.
- I am very curious and like to ask who, what, why, where questions.
- I like to tell simple stories from familiar pictures and books.
- I understand simple directions with one or two steps.
- I enjoy singing and can hum a simple tune.
- Usually, I understand time concepts such as now, soon, later.
- Explain and show me how things are the same and different.
- Teach me to make decisions by giving me simple choices between two things (milk or juice). This helps to build my self-esteem.
- When you repeat poems, rhymes or finger plays, I learn faster. I can memorize short poems.
- I am still confused about what is real and what is not real. I need help to understand the difference.
- I love to imitate. Be mindful of what you say, how you act, and what you do.

- Listen to my questions, give honest answers and assure me of God's love.
- As I listen and watch the adults around me, my moral and spiritual ideas and images of God are being formed.
- Model God's acceptance by your words and actions. My experiences with you are the first stepping stones to understanding God's grace. Tell me often: I am loved; Jesus loves me; God made me.
- Model God's love by being consistent. It helps me to see the same faces and hear the same voices weekly at church.
- I can repeat simple Bible verses and learn truths such as:
  - God gives us friends.
  - God made everything, including me.
- I can say simple prayers. I experience prayer when you say, "Let's pray and talk to God." I can hold hands with others or fold my own hands.
- Read me simple stories from a children's Bible. I experience God's love by the way you treat and talk to me.
- I'm learning to help and serve others. I can help in simple ways like picking things up, putting things in the garbage or putting things in their places.
- Music and movement help me remember what I learn about God/Jesus/the Bible. I like simple Bible songs with motions.

"Moral intelligence means how we behave. It's moral behavior tested by life, lived out in the course of our everyday experience. We live out what we presumably want taught to our children. They are taking constant notice and measuring us not by what we say but what we do." **Robert Coles**

## Spending Time Together

- Show me you are confident in my ability. Encourage me. Gently show me and allow me do things by myself.
- I like to read simple books with large pictures and sturdy pages.
- Let me help you with simple chores such as picking up toys and throwing out garbage. I like to do things on my own.
- Provide fun spaces where I can spend time. I like forts/tents (big boxes or a blanket over two chairs).
- Praise me and remind me that I can do things. Catch me doing things right.
- When you teach me or play with me, remember I laugh hard when you are goofy and exaggerate.

**Favorite Activities:** climb on playground equipment; do puzzles with large pieces; name objects; count; use safety scissors; paint; play with wagons, trucks, wheelbarrows, large balls, cardboard boxes, large Legos, crayons, markers, finger paints, wide paintbrushes, puzzles (twenty pieces), sewing cards, dolls, blocks, pegboards, sand and water tables; listen to stories or CDs of children's songs; do finger plays; role play/ dress up; ride a tricycle; read books with repeated phrases or concepts.

## What I Really Need

- Places and people that provide safety, security and trust
- Give me consistent provision and love.
- Give me opportunities and experiences to discover what I am capable of doing myself.
- Share your faith stories with me. They help me form and shape my beliefs, values and behaviors.
- Model and teach me to give, save and spend money in a God-honoring way.

## Key People In My Life

- Parents
- Siblings
- Extended family
- Grandparents
- Caregivers

**Note:** A three year old's development and behavior will vary based on physical maturity, culture, environment, education, and the amount of experiences and interactions with adults and other children.



**WILLOW**  
Creek Resource

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