

## **DEVELOPMENT**

- This year your child will learn his full name, age and sex. He may begin to learn the home phone number and address later this year, however, many three-year-olds will not yet be able to master long sequences of numbers.
- He/she may copy a circle well.
- Your child will be increasingly curious and ask many questions - simple, age-appropriate explanations are best. This curiosity may also include questions about where babies come from and about the differences between boys and girls.
- Your child may have imaginary friends.
- The child at this age does not understand "tongue-in-cheek" comments and cannot always tell when a parent is joking. Parents should never threaten to leave or abandon the child or offer choices that are not legitimate.
- Many children undergo a period of mild speech dysfluency (stuttering) some time between the ages of two and five years. This usually resolves on its own, and it is best to focus on what the child is saying, rather than how he is saying it.
- Provide opportunities for your child to make simple decisions, within reason.
- Parents may need breaks--playgroups or nursery schools can be helpful.
- He/she may walk upstairs alternating feet, and ride a tricycle.
- As for toilet training, approximately 85% of 3-yr-olds are dry in the daytime, but only 60% to 70% of children are dry at night. DON'T FORCE the issue of training. The child will let you know when they are ready. Allow the child to follow you into the bathroom, and see what you are doing in there. Some of the things that let you know when your child is ready include: imitating your actions, going into corners or squatting when they are having a bowel movement, taking off the diaper and showing you their accomplishment, and the desire to be changed promptly. Having the potty-chair available for use and rewards for positive steps are often helpful. You cannot over praise your child for a job well done. The process of toilet training can last weeks to months, so don't get discouraged. If you have further questions, please address them with the doctor.

## **DIET**

- Encourage eating healthy foods, but do not force feed. Many children will be picky eaters.
- Modeling and praise for appropriate behavior should encourage table manners.

## **HYGIENE**

- This would be a good time for your child's first dental visit. Be sure to choose a dentist who enjoys working with small children. Taking your child with you to one of your appointments to show them how "fun" it is to go to the dentist is a good idea.
- You should encourage your child to dress himself.
- Teach little girls to wipe from front to back after toileting --this helps prevent urinary tract infections and chemical irritation.
- Genital irritation is frequently caused by bubble baths, non-cotton underwear, or constricting clothing.

## **DISCIPLINE**

- Consistent enforcement of rules and praise for good behavior are essential.
- "Time out" is an effective method of shaping behavior. The number of minutes of "time out" that are appropriate is equal to the child's age (For example, a three year old child should be put into "time out" for 3 minutes maximum.)

## **SAFETY**

- Never let your child ride in a car unless properly restrained in a car seat. (Until 40 lbs., when a change should be made to a booster seat)
- Children should not ride in a car with a seatbelt until they reach 70-80lbs and can sit with their back against the seat with feet on floor allowing the seatbelt to fit correctly on shoulders and lap.
- Teach your child not to speak to strangers.
- Emphasize street safety. Begin to teach children how to look for cars before crossing the street.
- Encourage safety on tricycles or big wheels.
- Children should wear approved helmets when on a bicycle.
- If you own a gun, we encourage you not to store it at home or in the car. If you do store the gun at home, it should be unloaded, locked up and the ammunition should be stored in a separate place other than with the gun.

## **STIMULATION**

- This year your child may be ready for you to teach him/her numbers, letters, colors and shapes.
- Children love arts and crafts--provide crayons, blunt scissors, paints, etc. Three-year-olds are messy, so supervision is advised.
- Children enjoy excursions, such as to the zoo, picnics, children's museums, etc.
- Children of this age love story time, singing, make-believe and dancing to music.

## **TOYS**

- At this age children enjoy coloring books and crayons, clay, records, puzzles, riding toys, sand toys, books, etc.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS/TESTS**

- No immunizations are needed today, unless your child is behind on his/her shots or at risk tuberculosis.
- The Tylenol, or Tempra dose at this age is \_\_\_\_\_ of Tylenol children's elixir, every 4 hours as needed.