

your child: from 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 years

From Terrific Twos to Delightful Threes: The Most Important Developmental Achievements

SOCIAL

Typically Can:

- Join in associative play with a group of peers
- Show empathy if not overwhelmed
- Complete toilet training
- Cooperate with dressing and undressing
- Enjoy being in a play group

Emerging Skills:

- Share toys
- Cooperate in putting toys away
- Take turns
- Play games with simple rules

LANGUAGE

Typically Can:

- Be understood most of the time by people outside of the family
- Use language to get what is wanted
- Use language to express feelings
- Respond to simple instructions
- Use plurals and personal pronouns "I", "you", "me"
- Use short sentences
- Repeat a few rhymes and songs
- Name pictures of familiar things in picture book

Emerging Skills:

- Ask "what", "where", "who" questions
- Play with words in silly rhymes
- Use new and unfamiliar words



GROSS MOTOR

Typically Can:

- Run 50 feet in under 10 seconds
- Climb on a jungle gym & other equipment
- Kick a ball, throw a small ball
- With hand held, jump from height of 8"
- Stand on one foot with momentary balance
- Get up by self from squatting position

Emerging Skills:

- Do standing broad jump for 12 inches
- Jump off ground with two-footed jump
- Hop on one foot for a few steps
- Use pedals to ride tricycle and steer to avoid obstacles
- Catch a large ball with arms extended
- Skip six times imitating another person

COGNITIVE

Typically Can:

- Sort objects
- Classify objects by purpose (e.g., to play with, to wear)
- Name one or more colours
- Count 3 objects
- Say name and part of address
- Understand time intervals better (e.g., today, tomorrow, yesterday)
- Differentiate boys and girls
- Understand cause and effect

Emerging Skills:

- Count up to 10 and understand number concepts up to 3
- Use increasing number of pronouns and prepositions with understanding
- Understand "It's time to"

EMOTIONAL

Typically Can:

- See things from another person's perspective
- Control aggression and tantrums at least part of the time
- Less upset by limits and discipline
- Understand and follow simple rules
- Be settled after nightmares more easily
- Sleep through night

Emerging Skills:

- Be much more even-tempered and cooperative with parents
- Keep room & toys in order
- Continually grow in independence and self-esteem
- Expand pretend play into rich, connected themes
- Use pretend play to gain control of frustrating and frightening experiences
- Play out adult roles in play

FINE MOTOR

Typically Can:

- Copy a circle from a drawing
- Build tower of 9 blocks
- Place round, square, triangular blocks in a form board
- Complete easy puzzle
- Copy bridge of blocks from model

Emerging Skills:

- Handle scissors and cut out
- Copy a cross
- Pull up zipper but cannot do buttons
- Screw lids on jars
- Carry liquids in cup
- Put on shoes but not tie laces

For More Information

**Contact Your Local Northwestern Health Unit Office
or Healthy Babies Healthy Children**

Toll Free at 1-800-465-4377