



The Three-Year-Old Child's Speech and Language Development

At age three, your child....

- ❖ Can match primary colors and can name one color
- ❖ Knows the difference between night and day
- ❖ Understands time concepts like "yesterday," "summer," "lunchtime," and "tonight"
- ❖ Understands some basic concepts such as "little" and "big"
- ❖ Shows understanding of some location words by following directions ("Put the block under the chair")
- ❖ Uses words to relate observations, concepts, ideas, and relationships
- ❖ Frequently practices speech by talking to himself or herself
- ❖ Knows facts about self like last name, sex, name of street he/she lives on
- ❖ Can sing songs and recite several nursery rhymes
- ❖ Able to tell a story or relay an idea to someone
- ❖ Has a sentence length of 3-4 words
- ❖ Has a vocabulary of nearly 1,000 words
- ❖ Can consistently say the following sounds: /m, n, h, w, p, b, d, k/
- ❖ May repeat sounds, words, and phrases while talking (sounds like stuttering), which is normal for many kids at this age
- ❖ Asks "what" questions frequently
- ❖ Expresses fatigue verbally
- ❖ Stays interested in one activity for 8-9 minutes

You can help promote your three-year-old child's speech & language by...

- ❖ Continuing to carry on longer conversations with him or her
- ❖ Frequently using words that he or she has trouble with in your own speech
- ❖ Teaching your child relationships of words, objects, and ideas
- ❖ Talking about similarities or differences between things
- ❖ Encouraging your child to tell stories using books and pictures
- ❖ Letting your child play with other children
- ❖ Reading longer stories to your child
- ❖ Paying attention to your child when he or she is talking
- ❖ Keeping a daily routine (morning, bedtime) so he or she has some structure, and discussing what to do during this time
- ❖ Remembering that repeating words and sounds is often normal during this period of development
- ❖ Remembering that making errors on some sounds (s, z, l, r, sh, f, etc) is also often normal during this period of development

