

Child Care Cues

What Every Parent Should Know

Preschool Age Children: Three and Four Year Olds

Your preschool child is full of wonder and spending a lot of time observing and modeling what he sees. He is full of energy and has an active imagination.

As he comes closer to age five, your child will start spending more time planning out what each friend does and what they are going to play. Having best friends is very important for five year olds!

This age group needs activities that will work their fine motor and large gross motor skills. For example, catching different size balls, throwing the balls back, jumping, skipping, walking in a straight line, gluing buttons and small items on to paper, peeling stickers.

The following lists will help you make sure your preschooler's child care environment reflects the quality standards you maintain at home.

Physical Environment

- ✓ Is there child-sized furniture?
- ✓ Are there props, costumes, musical instruments, blocks of all sizes, art supplies and toys for creative/imaginative play? How often are the toys, props and costumes cleaned?
- ✓ Does your child have a wide variety of books to explore? Are these books accessible to your child?
- ✓ Is there a place for your child to put their personal things, like a cubby?
- ✓ Is the outside play area clean, safe and well supervised? Are there toys and equipment for your child to play with outside?

Program

- ✓ What are the hours of business?
- ✓ What is the cost and what is included in that price? What is the late policy?
- ✓ What kinds of meals are served? Will there be snacks provided?
- ✓ What is the policy on sick children? What will happen to the children if the provider is sick?
- ✓ Is there a daily activity schedule? Will you be given one?
- ✓ What kinds of activities are planned?
- ✓ Will your child be allowed to choose their own activities for some of the day?
- ✓ Will your child go on field trips?
- ✓ How often will your child be read to?
- ✓ Will your child be allowed large blocks of time, to work on projects?
- ✓ Do the children have naptime? Does your child have to sleep at naptime, or can they have quiet time?
- ✓ How much TV watching will be allowed a day?
- ✓ Will you be allowed to stop by to visit your child any time during the day?

Observation

- ✓ Are the adults interacting positively with the children?
- ✓ Is there learning taking place and is it age and growth appropriate, meaning is the learning building on previous knowledge?
- ✓ Is your child being taught to problem solving in a positive way that will encourage their self-esteem?
- ✓ Does the caregiver show respect and acceptance toward your child?