

# SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Spiritual beliefs are closely related to the moral and ethical portion of the self concept and must be considered as part of the child's basic needs assessment. Children need to have meaning, purpose and hope in their lives. Also, the need for confession and forgiveness is present even in very young children. Extending beyond religion, spiritual affects the whole person: mind, body and spirit. James Fowler has identified seven stages in the development of faith; three of which are closely associated with and parallel cognitive and psychological development in childhood.

## STAGE - 1 INTUITIVE PROJECTIVE FAITH Toddler and Preschool Ages 3-7 (Approximate)

This stage primarily is a stage of imitating the behavior of others. Children imitate the religious gestures and behaviors of others without comprehending any meaning or significance to the activities. If sins are washed away, then perhaps one can see the sins floating on the water after a baptism. The child becomes very upset when the adult rituals they have learned are interrupted or changed.

During the pre school years children assimilate some of the values and beliefs of their parents. Parental attitudes towards moral codes and religious beliefs convey children what they consider to be good and bad. Children still imitate behavior at this age and follow parental beliefs as part of their daily lives rather than through understanding of their basic concepts.

The danger of this stage is the fears inherent in a child's mind. A child may become terrified of hell and not be able to sleep, or an adult may use the fears of a child to manipulate the child into cooperation by de-



# WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR

# 3

## YEAR OLD

## AGES AND STAGES IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**E**ach of us wonders whether our children are developing appropriately and if they're achieving as they should. These are guidelines on what to expect from your child at age three. Remember that these are only guidelines. Child development is not age-specific. Each child develops at his or her own special rate.

## **SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL**

- ♥ Highly imitative of adults
- ♥ Wants to please adults, conforms, responds to verbal suggestions
- ♥ Easily prompted, redirected
- ♥ Can be bargained with, reasoned with
- ♥ Begins to share, take turns, wait
- ♥ Avid "me-too"er
- ♥ High-spirited, talkative, humorous
- ♥ Has imaginary companions
- ♥ Has nightmares, animal phobias
- ♥ Plays consciously, cooperatively with others
- ♥ Plays spontaneously in groups
- ♥ Dramatizes play
- ♥ Goes after desires, fights for them
- ♥ Asserts independence often
- ♥ Often puzzled, frustrated, jealous
- ♥ Sympathizes
- ♥ Strong sex-role stereotypes

## **PHYSICAL - MOTOR**

- ➔ Well-balanced body lines
- ➔ Walks erect, nimble on feet
- ➔ Gallops in wide, high steps
- ➔ Alternates feet in stair climbing
- ➔ Suddenly starts, stops
- ➔ Turns corners rapidly
- ➔ Swings arms when walking
- ➔ Jumps up and down with ease
- ➔ Uses toilet alone
- ➔ Loses baby fat
- ➔ Achieves bladder control
- ➔ Rides tricycle
- ➔ Puts on, takes off coat with help
- ➔ Unbuttons buttons
- ➔ Has some finger control with small objects
- ➔ Grasps with thumb and index finger
- ➔ Holds cup in one hand
- ➔ Pours easily from small pitcher
- ➔ Washes hands without help
- ➔ Can carry liquids
- ➔ Has activity with drive and purpose
- ➔ Can balance on one foot

## **LANGUAGE**

- ☞ Talkative with or without a listener
- ☞ Can listen in order to learn
- ☞ Likes new words
- ☞ Increases use of pronouns, prepositions
- ☞ Uses "s" to indicate plural nouns
- ☞ Uses "ed" to indicate past tense
- ☞ Uses sentences of three or more words
- ☞ Says, "Is that all right?"
- ☞ Often talks about nonpresent situations
- ☞ Puts words into action
- ☞ Moves and talks at the same time
- ☞ Substitutes letters in speech
- ☞ Interest captured by whispering
- ☞ Uses 300 to 1,000 words

## **INTELLECTUAL - COGNITIVE**

- 📖 Estimates how many
- 📖 Enjoys making simple choices
- 📖 Alert, excited, curious, has lively imagination
- 📖 Asks "why?" constantly
- 📖 Understands "let's pretend"
- 📖 Enjoys guessing games, riddles
- 📖 Often names block buildings
- 📖 Has short attention span
- 📖 Carries out two to four directions in sequence
- 📖 Often colors pages one color
- 📖 Can't combine two activities
- 📖 Names and matches simple colors
- 📖 Has number concepts of one and two
- 📖 Sees vague cause/effect relationships
- 📖 Can recognize simple melodies
- 📖 Distinguishes between night and day
- 📖 Understands size/shape comparison

### **Reference:**

Gordon, A. & Brown, K. W. (1996).

*Beginnings and Beyond*. New York: Delmar Publishing.