

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; four 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

5

YEAR OLD

AGES AND STAGES IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Each 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

- ♥ Want to please and be liked by their friends; however, they may occasionally be mean to others.
- ♥ Agree to rules most of the time.
- ♥ Show independence.
- ♥ Are aware of sexuality.
- ♥ Are more able to distinguish fantasy from reality but enjoy playing make-believe and dress-up.
- ♥ Have distinct ways of playing according to gender. Most 5-year-old boys play in rough or physically active ways, whereas girls of the same age are more likely to engage in social play.

Reference:

American Academy of Pediatrics (2004). Age three to five years. In SP Shelov, RE Hanne-
mann, eds., Caring For Your Baby And Young
Child: Birth to Age 5, 4th ed., chap 12, pp. 339-
388. New York: Bantam.

PHYSICAL - MOTOR

- ➔ Hop, somersault, and possibly skip.
- ➔ Swing and climb.
- ➔ Stand on one foot.
- ➔ Use the toilet by themselves. They may still wet the bed, however.

By age 5, most children can use their hands and fingers, which are called fine motor skills, to:

- ➔ Copy triangles and other geometric shapes.
- ➔ Draw a person with a head, a body, arms, and legs.
- ➔ Dress and undress on their own, although they may still need help tying shoelaces.
- ➔ Write some small and capital letters from the alphabet.

LANGUAGE

- ➔ Carry on a meaningful conversation with another person.
- ➔ Understand relationships between objects, such as "the boy who is jumping rope."
- ➔ Use the future tense, such as "Let's go to the zoo tomorrow!"
- ➔ Often call people (or objects) by their relationship to others, such as "Bobby's mom" instead of "Mrs. Smith."
- ➔ Talk about or tell stories. They have little or no trouble being understood by others.

INTELLECTUAL - COGNITIVE

- 📖 Know their address and phone number.
- 📖 Recognize most letters of the alphabet.
- 📖 Can count 10 or more objects.
- 📖 Know the names of at least 4 colors.
- 📖 Understand the basic concepts of time.
- 📖 Know what household objects are used for, such as money, food, or appliances.
- 📖 Know the difference between fantasy and reality. However, they still play "pretend", which becomes increasingly inventive. They also may blur fantasy and reality when they are stressed or have extreme emotions. They may develop new fears as a result of their active imaginations.