

# Preschooler

By **preschool** we mean a **child from 3 to 6 years** of age (i.e. 3 calendar years). At the end of this period, most children are able to start school.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Motor development

- there is further refinement, improvement of movement coordination, greater agility and elegance of movement;
- a four-year-old child runs well, runs nimbly down stairs, jumps, hops, climbs a ladder, jumps off a low bench, stands longer on 1 leg, can throw a ball;
- he eats independently, undresses and dresses himself, puts on his shoes and tries to tie his laces; needs only a little help when toileting; he can wash his hands well and can bathe himself under supervision; likes to "help" with simpler household chores and complete small assigned tasks;
- drawing: a three-year-old child can imitate the different direction of the line (vertical, horizontal, circular) according to the model, draws a cross; a five-year-old imitates a square, a six-year-old a triangle;
- drawing of a person: first roughly depicts the head, legs and main parts of the face (mouth, eyes) - a "cephalopod", a five-year-old child also draws the torso with limbs, but the body proportions are still random.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Speech development

- speech, vocabulary and sentence structure are improved;
- at age 4 uses approximately 1500 words and intelligible sentences of 5 words;
- at age 6 uses about 2,500 words and comprehensible sentences of 6-7 words;<sup>[3]</sup>
- first uses coordinating conjunctions and before the end of the 3rd year also subordinate clauses ;
- interest in spoken language is growing - three- and four-year-old children can already listen to short stories for a longer period of time;
- a three-year-old usually knows some nursery rhymes;
- the development of speech enables the development of knowledge about himself and the surrounding world - a three-year-old child usually knows his full name, tells his gender when asked, correctly identifies the main colors and, around the age of 5, gives a simple definition of familiar things (mostly purpose, material and shape);
- can recite (albeit sometimes skipping) a number line up to about ten and matches number names to counted objects; before the age of 5 understands what number means (ie knows that number is determined by the last number that occurred during counting); at the age of 6, he correctly determines the number of subjects (up to approx. 10), if he has illustrative material.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Psychosocial development

- around the age of 4, the development of intelligence shifts from pre-conceptual (symbolic) to conceptual (intuitive) thinking, he thinks in holistic terms;
- they can already draw conclusions (e.g. assess what is less and what is more), but these judgments are completely dependent on opinion, usually on visual form; thinking does not yet proceed according to logical operations - it is pre-logical, pre-operational (e.g. there are the same number of beads in 2 identical glasses, after pouring all the beads from 1 glass into a glass of a different shape, the child shows that there are "more beads in the glass with a narrower bottom because it is the higher");
- **Jean Piaget** calls the period between 2 and 6 years '**preoperational**';
- **Sigmund Freud** calls the period between the ages of 3 and 6 **the Oedipal phase**, because attachment to parents of the opposite sex dominates, then, on the contrary, attachment to parents of the same sex is strengthened;
- **thinking** is still tied to the child's own activity - it is **egocentric** (e.g. the child covers his eyes so that others cannot see him), **anthropomorphic** (humanizes everything - "Cups are angry!", attributes human feelings to inanimate objects), **magical** (allows changing facts according to own wish) and **artificialistic** (everything is "done"); they think that humans control all natural events;
- perceives the world egocentrically, does not understand the relationship between cause and effect and often interprets it wrongly egocentrically ("Daddy left us because I was naughty") - therefore everything needs to be thoroughly explained to the child so that he does not suffer from unjustified feelings of guilt;
- the preschooler learns to manipulate the symbolic world - he cannot yet separate reality from fantasy very well; **it is a period of night terrors and fear of ghosts**;
- unrealistic thinking peaks between 3-5 years;
- already at the age of 4 he partially understands death (of people, animals and plants), around the age of 6 he fully understands death with its universality, irreversibility, finality and causality;
- pre-school age is a **period of play: at first common - associative play** predominates, then comes **cooperative play** - organized in cooperation and with the division of roles; often based on fantasy;
- **around 3-4 years of age, the rivalry** between children is clearly manifested.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

## Child growth period

- a period of stable growth between the dynamic periods of infantile and pubertal growth;
- between 2 and 11 years of age, the growth curve is almost linear and does not differ significantly between boys and girls;
- the action of growth hormone is applied;
- the child grows along the percentile, which is determined by the growth potential of the parents, at least 5 cm per year;<sup>[3]</sup>
- it gains 1.5 kg per year.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Links

### Related passwords

- Child age distribution: Newborn ■ Infant ■ Toddler ■ Schoolboy ■ Adolescent
- Psychomotor development of the child ■ Neuromotor development of the child ■ Psychosocial development of the child ■ Growth and development of the child
- Nutrition of children

### References

1. LEBL, Jan – PROVAZNÍK, Kamil – HEJCMANOVÁ, Ludmila. *Preklinická pediatrie*. 2. edition. Praha : Galén, 2007. pp. 3-5. ISBN 978-80-7262-438-6.
2. LANGMEIER, Josef – KREJČÍŘOVÁ, Dana. *Vývojová psychologie*. 2. edition. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2006. 368 pp. pp. 87-103. ISBN 978-80-247-1284-0.
3. LEBL, Jan – PROVAZNÍK, Kamil – HEJCMANOVÁ, Ludmila. *Preklinická pediatrie*. 2. edition. Praha : Galén, 2007. pp. 48-71. ISBN 978-80-7262-438-6.
4. BENEŠ, Jiří. *Studijní materiály* [online]. ©2007. [cit. 2009]. <<http://www.jirben.wz.cz/>>.