



Chapter  
18

# The Preschool Child

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- Ellen and 4 year old boy

5:49

## General Characteristics

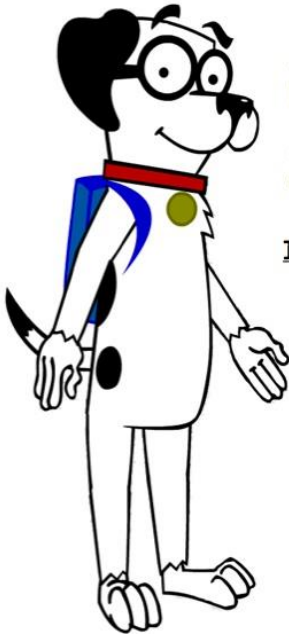
- Preschool
  - Age 3 to 5 years
  - Slowing of physical growth
  - Mastering and refining motor, social, and cognitive abilities



## General Characteristics

- Major tasks of a preschool-age child
  - Preparation to enter school
  - Development of a cooperative-type play
  - Control of body functions
  - Acceptance of separation
  - Increase in communication skills
  - Memory
  - Attention span





A normal child can concentrate for 2-5 minutes per year old they are.

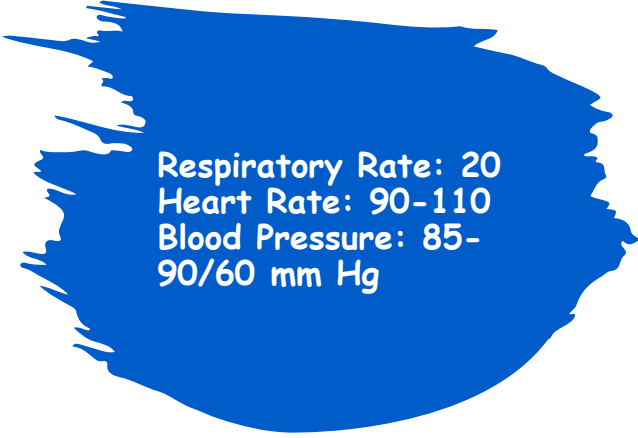
So the time your child should be able to focus on the same task is:

If your child is: They should be able to focus:

2	4-10 minutes
3	6-15 minutes
4	8-20 minutes
5	10-25 minutes
6	12-30 minutes
7	14-35 minutes
8	16-40 minutes
9	18-45 minutes
10	20-50 minutes

## Physical Development


- Preschooler
  - Doubles the 1-year-old weight by 5 years of age
  - Between 3 and 6 years of age, grows taller and loses chubbiness from toddler age
  - All 20 primary teeth have erupted
  - 20/20 visual acuity
  - Has good control of muscles
  - Hand preference develops by 3 years of age
  - More adept at using old skills as each year passes



Respiratory Rate: 20  
Heart Rate: 90-110  
Blood Pressure: 85-  
90/60 mm Hg



## Cognitive Development

- 
- Erikson's
    - Initiative vs guilt
  - Piaget Preoperational Phase
    - Preconceptual stage
      - 2- to 4-year-old child
    - Intuitive thought
      - 5- to 7-year-old



- Symbolic functioning
- Egocentrism
- Animism
- Artificialism
- Centering



## Effects of Cultural Practices



A Nikkei family

- Can influence the development of a sense of initiative
- Parents and older siblings model language and development

## Language Development



- Preschooler
  - The number of words a child speaks in sentences equal their age
  - Delays or problems can be caused by
    - Physiological
    - Psychological
    - Environmental stressors
  - Includes both receptive and expressive language

## Not Talking: A Clinical Classification



Articulation disorder



Expressive language delay



Global language delay



Language disorder



Language loss

## Development of Play



- Preschooler
  - Associative or Cooperative Play
  - Play activities increase in complexities
  - Enables the child to experience multiple roles and emotional outlets
  - Appealing to a child's magical thinking is the best approach to communicating with a preschooler



## Spiritual Development

- Learn religious beliefs and practices at home
- Cannot understand abstract concepts
- In the hospitalized preschooler, observing religious traditions practiced in the home may be calming for the child



## Sexual Curiosity

- Preschooler
  - Nurses should use the following principles of teaching and learning:
    - Assess knowledge base of child
    - Assess what specific information the child is seeking
    - Be honest and accurate
    - Use correct terminology
    - Provide sex education at the time the child asks the questions
  - Parent must understand that sexual curiosity starts as an inquiry into anatomical differences and indicates a normal curiosity about sexuality

# Immunizations

- Varicella
- DTaP
  - Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis
- IPV
  - Inactivated poliovirus
- MMR
  - Measles, mumps, and rubella



## Physical, Mental, Emotional and Social Development

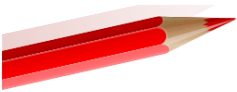




## The Three-Year-Old Child



- Is helpful and can assist in household chores
- Has temper tantrums less frequently
- Can help dress themselves, use the toilet, wash their hands, and eat independently
- Play with toys that imitate ADL of the parents



## The Three-Year-Old Child



Talks in longer sentences

Can express thoughts and ask questions

Participates in highly imaginative play

Begins to lose interest in mother and prestige of the father begins

Identifies with the parent of the same gender

Resents being disturbed during play

Is sensitive and has feelings that are easily hurt

Fear of bodily harm



## The Four-Year-Old Child

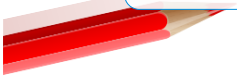


Is more aggressive, shows off

Is eager to let others know that they are superior

Picks on playmates

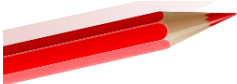
Is boisterous, tattles on others



## The Four-Year-Old Child



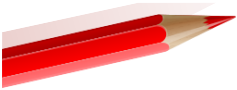
- Can use scissors with success
- Can tie his or her shoes
- Has a vocabulary of about 1500 words
- Begins to prefer playing with friends of the same gender



## The Four-Year-Old Child



- Has a concept of death
  - Begins to wonder about death and dying
  - Realizes others die, but does not relate death to himself or herself
  - Parents should reassure the child that people do not generally die until they have lived a long time
  - Parents should encourage questions as they appear and should help the child accept the truth about death without fear



## The Five-Year-Old Child



- Is more responsible
- Enjoys doing what is expected of them
- Has more patience
- Tends to want to finish what he or she has started
- Talks constantly
- Is inquisitive
- 2000-word vocabulary and uses 6-8-word sentences with pronouns



# The Five-Year-Old Child

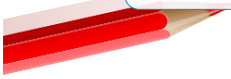


Plays games governed by rules

Is less fearful of the environment

Has worries that are less profound

May begin losing deciduous teeth



## Guidance: Discipline and Limit-Setting

Children need limits for their behavior.

Teach and gradually shift control from parents to child.

Self-discipline or self-control

Timing the time-out

- 1 minute per year of age; no interaction or eye contact during

Reward

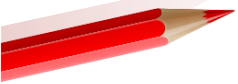
- Don't confuse with bribes.
- Encourage positive behavior.

Consistency and modeling significantly influence behaviors.

## Jealousy



- Preschooler
  - Normal response to actual, supposed, or threatened loss of affection
  - Jealousy of a new sibling is strongest in children younger than 5 years
  - May revert to behaviors seen at an earlier age
  - May be aggressive, bite, or pinch
  - Tends to be seen less in an “only” child
  - Children should feel they are helping with the care of their sibling



## Thumb Sucking



- Preschooler
  - Instinctual behavioral pattern
  - Finger or thumb sucking will not have a detrimental effect on the teeth if the habit is discontinued before the permanent teeth erupt
  - The child who is trying to stop thumb sucking is given praise and encouragement
    - May regress during periods of stress or fatigue



## Enuresis: "Bed Wetting"



- Preschooler
  - Primary
    - The child has never been dry
  - Secondary
    - Bedwetting recurrence in a child who has been dry for a period of 1 year or more
- More common in boys than in girls

## Enuresis: "Bed Wetting"

- Organic causes
  - UTI
  - DM
  - DI
  - Seizures
  - Obstructive uropathy
  - Constipation
- Abnormalities of urinary tract
  - Small bladder
- Sleep disorders



## Enuresis: "Bed Wetting"

- Child needs to be center of management program
  - Liquids should be limited after dinner
  - Child should void before going to bed
- Treatment options
    - Counseling
    - Hypnosis
    - Behavior modification
    - Pharmacotherapy
    - Bladder training exercises to stretch and increase the bladder size

## Preschool

- Preschool programs
  - Structured activities
  - Foster group cooperation
  - The development of coping skills
- Child gains
  - Self-confidence
  - Positive self-esteem if in a good program

## Daily Care

- Preschooler

- The preschool-aged child does not require extensive physical care but still needs to bathe each day and shampoo hair at least twice per week
- Clothing should be loose enough to prevent restriction of movement and should be washable
- Shoes should be sturdy and supportive
- Enjoy finger foods

## Accident Prevention

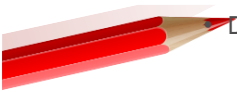
- Preschooler

- Accidents are a major threat for the 3- to 5-year-old child
  - Falls tend to be more common in this age-group
- Car safety is essential
  - Including car seats and how to play safely in their neighborhood
- Burns occur due to child's experimentation with matches/lighters
- Poisoning can occur due to their increased freedom and access to items within their environment
- Child should be taught about the dangers of talking to or getting in the car with strangers as well as the dangers of playing in secluded areas
- Indirect supervision is necessary due to their immature judgment

## Play in Health and Illness



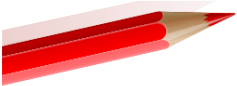
- Value of Play
  - Important to physical, mental, emotional, and social development
- The Nurse's Role
  - Include play in the child's plan of care
  - Factors to consider
    - State of health
    - Overstimulation and fatigue
  - Diagnosis should be considered when choosing toys for the child



## Types of Play



- Therapeutic
- Play therapy
- Art therapy
- Overall, play
  - Should be noncompetitive
  - Helps the child adjust to an expanding world and increases independence



## Play and the Child with a Neurodevelopmental, Sensory, or Motor disorder



A child who is mentally impaired needs more stimulation through play than the child who is not impaired

Consider mental and not chronological age

Play needs to be supervised due to poorer judgment and the potential for aggressive behavior

Repetition of play experiences is necessary

Should maximize child's capabilities

## Nursing Implications of Preschool Growth and Development

- Hospitalization can be frightening
  - The child may perceive hospitalization as a form of punishment
  - The child may feel abandoned
  - Separation anxiety is manifested by stages of protest, despair, detachment, and regression to earlier behaviors
- Provide parental guidance concerning the changing behavior patterns of the preschool-age child
  - The use of time outs and alternative methods of discipline should be stressed. One minute for each year of the child's age.
    - Example: 2 years old=2 minutes of time out.

