

Welcome to Our Program!



Our Commitment to Your Family

Early Head Start, Head Start, and other programs that serve young children offer your child a safe place to learn. We know you are your child's first teacher and want to work with you to care for him. As your partner in your child's education and care, we are dedicated to:

- Valuing your culture, beliefs, and traditions in raising your children.
- Listening to your concerns and share ideas on healthy child development.
- Supporting and encouraging you throughout your child's time in our program.
- Sharing your child's progress in our program through daily reports.
- Helping you find community resources, such as those for food, housing, and medical care.
- Contacting you in case of an emergency. You can help us by keeping your child's emergency contact phone numbers updated.

Our Commitment to Your Child

We care for your 3-year-old child by meeting their physical needs, but also following health and safety guidelines, supporting him in meeting milestones, and creating strong bonds between your child and her caregivers. We encourage you to do these things at home, too. We are always available to answer any questions you may have.

Guidance

Setting limits and being consistent is key. Guiding your child to follow simple rules will help her understand and follow the rules on her own. In our program, we work to provide a consistent, stable environment for your child.

- We prepare her for transitions between activities during the day. For example, we say, “You have one song before it is time to clean up.”
- We praise her efforts and successes by telling her what she did right and reinforcing positive behavior right away.
- We provide routines for her each day, which helps her feel secure and comfortable.



AT HOME TIP!

Tell your child when he is being good and remind him what you love about him. Your praise is a powerful reward.

Social and Emotional Development

As a 3-year-old grows, he practices decision-making, uses his imagination, and becomes more independent. He is beginning to learn how to get along with others—how to play together, share, and be kind. While in our program, your child will have many opportunities to develop his social emotional skills.

- We create moments that help him develop a sense of humor, laugh, and repeat silly words.
- We use simple games that encourage children to play together. For example, playing make-believe encourages your child to play with others and try out different roles.
- We spend time every day doing things your child enjoys. We read, walk, talk, and play games together. We help him become more confident about all of the things he can do.
- We work with your child to find words to express feelings of anger and frustration. We don't allow hitting, biting, or kicking. If we are worried about your child's behavior, we talk with you to find out what works at home.



AT HOME TIP!

Offer your child simple chores at home to help him learn about cooperation and helping others. Ask him to wipe the table, empty trash, or clean up toys.

Language and Literacy

Many 3-year-olds seem to talk all the time. They enjoy repeating words and sounds, over and over. Your child may also pretend to read and write. She may enjoy books, particularly those of different sizes, shapes, and textures. She's curious about everything and often asks “Why?” Our programs nurture this curiosity in many ways.

- We encourage reading and writing by sharing words in books, on signs, and on packages.
- We talk with your child about things that interest her.
- We sing songs and read books with simple stories about everyday life. We let her “tell” part of the story.



AT HOME TIP!

Keep your child excited about reading by finding and labeling words in your neighborhood and home. Celebrate when your child is familiar with words she's seen and remembers.

Learning through Play

- Your child uses play to learn about math and science concepts. Throughout the day, he will be provided many opportunities to learn and explore.
- We teach him to count items that he is playing with, such as blocks, toys, and cups.
- We help him name similarities and differences in objects.
- We do simple science activities, like using magnets, planting seeds, and flying kites.
- We reinforce colors and teach new words when we talk.



AT HOME TIP!

Engage your child in healthy active living. Try going to the grocery store together to pick out healthy food, going on a walk in the neighborhood, or growing a plant.

Toilet Training

Many children will be toilet trained by this age. However, each child is unique and learns to use the toilet at her own rate.

- We pay careful attention to your child's signals about needing to go to the bathroom.
- We take your child to the bathroom often during the day and make sure she knows what to do.



AT HOME TIP!

Even when your child is toilet trained during the day, she may not be ready to give up the nighttime diaper. Follow your child's lead in nighttime toilet training.

Oral Health and Nutrition

Tooth decay can develop when your child snacks frequently, does not have her teeth brushed twice each day, and/or doesn't drink water with fluoride in it or use fluoride toothpaste. Being aware and building good oral health habits is important.

- We help him brush his teeth every day, using a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. He should spit out the toothpaste after brushing, but not rinse his mouth with water.

- We provide healthy meals and regularly scheduled snacks that are low in sugar. We avoid sticky, sugary foods and juice.
- We offer fluoridated water when he is thirsty.
- We help you identify a dental home for your child, if needed.

Staying Healthy and Safe

We provide a clean and safe environment for your child. We follow a consistent daily routine to help her grow and develop in healthy ways:

- We practice good hand washing throughout the day, especially around mealtimes and toileting.
- We include quiet rest times every day as part of the daily schedule. For children who no longer take naps, we provide quiet activities.
- We support you in working with your child's doctor or nurse to make sure your child is up to date on all her immunizations (shots).

[The Health Tips for Families Series](#) from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness offers valuable information on a variety of health topics.

Questions to ask your health care professional at your child's 3-year check-up:

- How can I help my child share and play well with other children?
- How can I help my child learn new words?
- How can I support my child through toilet training?
- What are things we can do to stay active as a family?
- How can I keep my child safe at home and outside?

Use the [Well-Visit Planner](#) to help get organized and learn more about what to expect at your baby's well-visit! For strategies to keep your baby safe on the road and in the car, read [Keeping Children Safe in Vehicles](#) and explore the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) website.

Adapted from *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, 4th Edition, Copyright 2017. Published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.