

Physical Development and Health: 3-5 Years

Children begin to understand their bodies and how they function. 1

a Use their senses (hearing, vision, taste, touch, smell) and their voices to perceive and respond to the world around them. 1A

1a. 3 Years 3.1A

- 1 Smell smoke from a bonfire outside and tell a familiar adult about it. 3.1A.1
- 2 Take a drink of milk and recognize that it tastes bad and tell a familiar adult. 3.1A.2
- 3 Feel a bump on their arm and tell a familiar adult it is itchy. 3.1A.3
- 4 Identify smells (like spices or familiar smells) from smelling jars. 3.1A.4

1a. 4 Years 4.1A

- 1 Smell food being delivered for lunch and say, "That smells like chicken!" 4.1A.1
- 2 Taste different foods and decide if they like them or not. 4.1A.2
- 3 Close their eyes and identify different animal noises being played through a speaker. 4.1A.3

1a. 5 Years 5.1A

- 1 Describe and sort foods based on their senses, such as sorting foods by color or by texture. 5.1A.1
- 2 Participate in a group activity to create a book with lists and/or illustrations of ways they used each of their senses that day. 5.1A.2

b Recognize parts of the human body and how their body helps them engage with their environment. 1B

1b. 3 Years 3.1B

- 1 Use their foot to open a garbage can with a foot lever. 3.1B.1
- 2 Use their head and elbows while playing soccer. 3.1B.2
- 3 Point to the correct body parts when dancing to “Head Shoulders Knees and Toes.” 3.1B.3

1b. 4 Years 4.1B

- 1 Identify their pinky finger while giving a “pinky promise.” 4.1B.1
- 2 Wrap a pipe cleaner around their finger to make it spiral. 4.1B.2
- 3 Hold up the correct number of fingers when a familiar adult says, “Show me 5 fingers!” 4.1B.3

1b. 5 years 5.1B

- 1 Use the correct body parts when dancing to “The Hokey Pokey.” 5.1B.1
- 2 Demonstrates to a peer how to do the pinch and zoom gestures with their finger and thumb on an iPad. 5.1B.2

c Explore and begin to perceive depth, distance, size, and the relationship between their own body and the space around them. 1C

1c. 3 Years 3.1C

- 1 Notice that they have grown taller than a toy slide they used to play on. 3.1C.1
- 2 Move through a simple obstacle course without knocking things over. 3.1C.2
- 3 Use distance vocabulary, such as near and far. 3.1C.3

1c. 4 Years 4.1C

- 1 Toss or roll a ball to another child with increasing accuracy. 4.1C.1
- 2 Stretch out on the floor to compare their height to another child’s height. 4.1C.2
- 3 Explore how their bodies fit into different spaces, such as whether a tunnel is too small for their shoulders to fit through or if their body will fit into a cardboard box. 4.1C.3
- 4 Dodge around other children when running, most of the time. 4.1C.4

1c. 5 years 5.1C

- 1 Adjust their speed and strength when throwing a ball at targets that are closer or farther away. 5.1C.1
- 2 Duck their head when walking under the slide. 5.1C.2
- 3 Move through an obstacle course, most of the time. 5.1C.3

d Coordinate movements across and on both sides of the body. 1D

1d. 3 Years 3.1D

- 1 Use both hands to touch their body parts during “Heads Shoulders Knees and Toes.” 3.1D.1
- 2 Reach across their body to pick up a crayon. 3.1D.2

1d. 4 Years 4.1D

- 1 Attempt to tie their shoes. 4.1D.1
- 2 Ride a tricycle during recess. 4.1D.2
- 3 Begin to show preference for a dominant hand (left/right handedness). 4.1D.3

1d. 5 Years 5.1D

- 1 March in place while touching their right elbow to their left knee as it rises, and their left elbow to their right knee when it comes up. 5.1D.1
- 2 Copy dance moves from another person or from a video. 5.1D.2

e Explore and stretch the boundaries of their current physical abilities. 1E

1e. 3 Years 3.1E

- 1 Try to walk the length of a balance beam or curb, over and over. 3.1E.1
- 2 Ride a balance bike or scooter. 3.1E.2

1e. 4 Years 4.1E

- 1 Ride a bike with training wheels. 4.1E.1
- 2 Climb to a higher spot on a climbing wall. 4.1E.2
- 3 Try to climb monkey bars independently. 4.1E.3

1e. 5 Years 5.1E

- 1 Ride a bike without training wheels. 5.1E.1
- 2 Ask a familiar adult how long it takes to run around the playground and then try to beat that time. 5.1E.2
- 3 Develop their own challenges, such as putting bean bags on a balance beam and avoiding the bean bags when crossing the balance beam. 5.1E.3

f Recognize and show respect for the varying physical skills and abilities of themselves and others. 1F

1f. 3 Years 3.1F

- 1 Help another child find their sleeve when putting on their coat. 3.1F.1
- 2 Work with another child to stack blocks into a tower. 3.1F.2

1f. 4 Years 4.1F

- 1 Help a friend on the swing by pushing their back. 4.1F.1
- 2 Help a classmate zip their coat. 4.1F.2

1f. 5 Years 5.1F

- 1 Show a classmate how to pedal a bike. 5.1F.1
 - 2 High-five a classmate after racing them. 5.1F.2
 - 3 Ask a friend for help tying their shoes. 5.1F.3
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Children explore and begin to develop skill in using their large muscles. 2

a Develop strength and stamina in their large muscles through repeated use. 2A

2a. 3 Years 3.2A

- 1 Run races with friends. 3.2A.1
- 2 Climb on large motor equipment faster and with more confidence. 3.2A.2
- 3 Pedal a tricycle as fast as they can. 3.2A.3
- 4 Hang from the monkey bars. 3.2A.4

2a. 4 Years 4.2A

- 1 Pedal a bike faster after using it every day during recess. 4.2A.1
- 2 Throw a ball farther than before. 4.2A.2
- 3 Begin to move across the monkey bars. 4.2A.3

2a. 5 Years 5.2A

- 1 Measure the distance they jump and try to jump farther. 5.2A.1
- 2 Practice to increase the number of times they can dribble a basketball or soccer ball. 5.2A.2
- 3 Move all the way across a set of monkey bars. 5.2A.3

b Explore and develop more precise control over their large muscle movements, including moving in rhythmic patterns as well as using their muscles to move objects in their environment with increasing coordination. 2B

2b. 3 Years 3.2B

- 1 Practice kicking a ball into a net from varying distances. 3.2B.1
- 2 Shake and turn a parachute to the directions in a song. 3.2B.2
- 3 Move through a simple obstacle course. 3.2B.3

2b. 4 Years 4.2B

- 1 Toss a ball to another child with more accuracy. 4.2B.1
- 2 Follow the directions in a movement song. 4.2B.2
- 3 Tap a pattern with rhythm sticks. 4.2B.3

2b. 5 Years 5.2B

- 1 Dribble a soccer ball with their feet. 5.2B.1
- 2 Skip with coordination and alternating foot and arm movements. 5.2B.2

c Use their large muscles for stationary and traveling movements, such as sitting upright, walking, climbing, rolling a wheelchair or walker, etc. 2C

2c. 3 Years 3.2C

- 1 Roll themselves up a ramp in their wheelchair. 3.2C.1
- 2 Practice dribbling a basketball. 3.2C.2
- 3 Climb on a short rock wall. 3.2C.3

2c. 4 Years 4.2C

- 1 Run across the playground without falling. 4.2C.1
- 2 Balance while sitting on a yoga ball. 4.2C.2

2c. 5 Years 5.2C

- 1 Walk across a balance beam. 5.2C.1
 - 2 Balance on one foot. 5.2C.2
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Children explore and begin to develop skill in using their small muscles. 3

a Explore and develop more precise control over the movements of their tongue and facial muscles. 3A

3a. 3 Years 3.3A

- 1 Use a straw to blow a feather across the table. 3.3A.1
- 2 Use a straw to drink. 3.3A.2
- 3 Make happy, sad, angry, and surprised faces while looking at themselves in a mirror. 3.3A.3
- 4 “Blow” their nose when a familiar adult holds a tissue (both nostrils at once). 3.3A.4

3a. 4 Years 4.3A

- 1 Attempt to wink. 4.3A.1
- 2 Try to roll their tongue after seeing someone else do it. 4.3A.2
- 3 Make different faces when a familiar adult asks them “What does mad/sad/happy/etc. look like?” 4.3A.3
- 4 Say most sounds correctly. (l, s, r, v, z, ch, sh, and th may still be challenging.) 4.3A.4

3a. 5 Years 5.3A

- 1 Say more complex sounds (e.g., alveolar sounds – t, d, n). 5.3A.1
- 2 Wink, wiggle their ears, and other facial “tricks.” 5.3A.2
- 3 “Blow” their nose independently (one nostril at a time). 5.3A.3

b Explore and develop more strength and precise control over their hands and fingers. 3B

3b. 3 Years 3.3B

- 1 Use scissors to snip paper, and later cut in a line. 3.3B.1
- 2 Squeeze and roll playdough. 3.3B.2
- 3 Unzip their coat and finish zipping when someone else gets it started. 3.3B.3

3b. 4 Years 4.3B

- 1 Manipulate playdough into different shapes. 4.3B.1
- 2 Squeeze a hole puncher until it successfully punches a hole in paper. 4.3B.2
- 3 Cut purposefully with scissors. 4.3B.3
- 4 Begin to follow a predefined path when cutting. 4.3B.4
- 5 Hold a pencil with full control. 4.3B.5
- 6 Begin to zip their coat independently. 4.3B.6

3b. 5 Years 5.3B

- 1 Tighten nuts onto bolts with their fingers. 5.3B.1
- 2 Stretch small rubber bands around a tongue depressor several times. 5.3B.2
- 3 Stretch rubber bands across a pegboard to make shapes. 5.3B.3

c Develop more precise hand-eye coordination. 3C

3c. 3 Years 3.3C

- 1 Place small pegs in a pegboard. 3.3C.1
- 2 Sort small rocks by size. 3.3C.2
- 3 Thread a shoelace or thick string through lacing cards. 3.3C.3
- 4 String big wooden beads onto shoelaces or pipe cleaners. 3.3C.4

3c. 4 Years 4.3C

- 1 String smaller beads onto a pipe cleaner. 4.3C.1
- 2 Stacking small cubes in a tower. 4.3C.2
- 3 Use a mouse to control the cursor on a computer screen. 4.3C.3
- 4 Continue to use lacing cards with thinner string and more complex designs. 4.3C.4
- 5 Use child-safe tweezers to move pom-poms from one bowl to another. 4.3C.5
- 6 Follow a magnetic maze with a magnet stick. 4.3C.6

3c. 5 Years 5.3C

- 1 Catch a ball. 5.3C.1
 - 2 Practice tying their shoes. 5.3C.2
 - 3 Hit a ball with a paddle or a bat. 5.3C.3
 - 4 Color in a circle they have drawn. 5.3C.4
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Children recognize and practice the ways they can support and advocate for their own needs and the safety of themselves and others. 4

a Begin to understand the connections between physical activity, hygiene, nutrition, emotional wellness, and physical health. 4A

4a. 3 Years 3.4A

- 1 Pick up a box and announce, "I'm so strong!" 3.4A.1
- 2 Run around the playground after having a disagreement with another child. 3.4A.2
- 3 With prompting, wash their hands independently, before and after meals, after toileting, and after outdoor times. 3.4A.3

4a. 4 Years 4.4A

- 1 Ask a familiar adult, "Is this healthy for me?" 4.4A.1
- 2 Say, "I'm going to be tired!" after running around at recess. 4.4A.2
- 3 Follow handwashing routines independently and without prompting, sometimes. 4.4A.3

4a. 5 Years 5.4A

- 1 Eat the healthy part of lunch first and save dessert for last. 5.4A.1
- 2 Communicate why they are upset and brainstorm solutions with a familiar adult. 5.4A.2
- 3 Follow handwashing routines independently and without prompting, most of the time. 5.4A.3

b Become aware of ways they can prevent the spread of germs and illnesses, and begin to identify and manage some symptoms of illness. 4B

4b. 3 Years 3.4B

- 1 With reminders, cough, and sneeze into their elbows 3.4B.1
- 2 Tell a familiar adult they have a runny nose and need a tissue or, sometimes, feel their nose running and grab a tissue on their own. 3.4B.2
- 3 With prompting, wash their hands independently, before and after meals, after toileting, and after outdoor times. 3.4B.3

4b. 4 Years 4.4B

- 1 Get a tissue for another child with a runny nose. 4.4B.1
- 2 Tell someone not to touch them after seeing them lick their hand. 4.4B.2
- 3 Cough and sneeze into their elbow. 4.4B.3
- 4 Follow handwashing routines independently and without prompting, sometimes. 4.4B.4

4b. 5 years 5.4B

- 1 Follow handwashing routines independently and without prompting, most of the time. 5.4B.1
- 2 Sing the alphabet song when they wash their hands. 5.4B.2
- 3 Approach a familiar adult to announce that they are sick or “don’t feel good” when they are coughing, have a runny nose, or feel feverish. 5.4B.3

c Demonstrate increasing awareness of safe boundaries and safety routines. 4C

4c. 3 Years 3.4C

- 1 With reminders, line up at the door as the fire alarm is going off. 3.4C.1
- 2 Move away from others at large group time so they have more space. 3.4C.2
- 3 Move away from a child who is kicking blocks over. 3.4C.3
- 4 Say, “look both ways” before crossing the street with an adult. 3.4C.4

4c. 4 Years 4.4C

- 1 Put their hands up to block a child from hitting them. 4.4C.1
- 2 Walk with scissors held in a fist grasp. 4.4C.2
- 3 Participate in a group discussion of how to be safe and give examples such as walking when they are inside, respecting others’ bodies and personal space, and staying with their group. 4.4C.3
- 4 Tell other children to come to the door and line up when the fire alarm goes off. 4.4C.4

4c. 5 Years 5.4C

- 1 Wait at a sidewalk intersection until the “WALK” signal lights up, then look both ways before continuing. 5.4C.1
- 2 Independently put on a bike helmet before getting on their bike. 5.4C.2
- 3 Ask for help getting down if they are too high on a climber. 5.4C.3
- 4 Identify areas of the playground that are off-limits for children. 5.4C.4
- 5 Explain to another child where to go during fire or tornado drills. 5.4C.5

d Show increasing ability to perform self-care routines and tasks. 4D

4d. 3 Years 3.4D

- 1 Put the end of their zipper in but not yet pull it up. 3.4D.1
- 2 Start using the bathroom without assistance. 3.4D.2
- 3 Put things in their backpack to go home but forget to close it. 3.4D.3
- 4 Drink independently from an open cup. 3.4D.4
- 5 Pass out cups to each child at snack time. 3.4D.5

4d. 4 Years 4.4D

- 1 Ask for a bandage when they are bleeding. 4.4D.1
- 2 Attempt to dress themselves for the weather before going outside. 4.4D.2
- 3 Count plates and cups to make sure there is enough for everyone to eat snack. 4.4D.3

4d. 5 Years 5.4D

- 1 Follow routines in the learning environment independently, such as putting library books in a bin, making lunch choices, and hanging up their coat, most of the time. 5.4D.1
- 2 Use scissors to open a package of crackers instead of asking for adult support. 5.4D.2

Children experience and become aware of the ways foods and drinks affect their bodies. 5

a Become aware of and respond to feelings of thirst, hunger, and fullness. 5A

5a. 3 Years 3.5A

- 1 Get their water bottle when they are thirsty. 3.5A.1
- 2 Ask for their water cup to be refilled for a drink. 3.5A.2
- 3 Make observations during an experiment with plants where one gets water, and one doesn't. 3.5A.3
- 4 Drink independently from an open cup. 3.5A.4
- 5 Forget to drink water when busy with an activity. 3.5A.5

5a. 4 Years 4.5A

- 1 Say, "I'm full," before throwing away the trash from their lunch. 4.5A.1
- 2 Tell a familiar adult that their belly is growling. 4.5A.2

5a. 5 Years 5.5A

- 1 Independently refill their water bottle. 5.5A.1
- 2 Get their own snack and sit down to eat it. 5.5A.2
- 3 Fill their own water bottle when it is empty. 5.5A.3
- 4 Ask for water with a meal. 5.5A.4

b Show interest in new or different tastes, smells, and foods. 5B

5b. 3 Years 3.5B

- 1 Sample a variety of apple types. 3.5B.1
- 2 Ask a familiar adult about what someone else is eating, when it is a food, they aren't familiar with. 3.5B.2
- 3 With modeling and guidance, respond to other children eating unfamiliar foods as a normal situation, most of the time. 3.5B.3

5b. 4 Years 4.5B

- 1 Try a new food after watching a familiar adult eat it. 4.5B.1
- 2 With modeling and support, ask another child about the unfamiliar food they are eating—what it tastes like, what's in it, etc.—sometimes. 4.5B.2
- 3 Ask, "What's that smell?" when lunch is delivered. 4.5B.3

5b. 5 Years 5.5B

- 1 Sort scented markers in groups of smells they like or do not like. 5.5B.1
- 2 Taste test different fruits they have not eaten before. 5.5B.2
- 3 Ask another child about the unfamiliar food they are eating—what it tastes like, what's in it, etc.—most of the time. 5.5B.3

c Develop an awareness of how foods look, feel, taste, and smell different; how different foods affect their bodies; and how foods are sorted into food groups. 5C

5c. 3 Years 3.5C

- 1 Separate play foods into “anytime foods” and “sometimes foods.” 3.5C.1
- 2 Help a familiar adult pass out cheese and crackers. 3.5C.2
- 3 Say, “I can’t eat strawberries because they make my belly feel yucky.” 3.5C.3
- 4 Remind a familiar adult to also grab the ‘special’ milk for them. 3.5C.4
- 5 Identify a variety of foods and livestock that typically come from farms/ranches. 3.5C.5

5c. 4 Years 4.5C

- 1 Tell another child that carrots are good for eyesight. 4.5C.1
- 2 After washing hands, help prepare snack by counting how many people are eating and making sure there is enough for everyone. 4.5C.2
- 3 Ask if a food is a fruit or vegetable. 4.5C.3
- 4 Tell another child or familiar adult that they are allergic to (or “can’t have”) peanuts. 4.5C.4
- 5 Remind a familiar adult that they can’t have pork sausages. 4.5C.5
- 6 Tell a familiar adult that drinking water is good for their bodies and brains. 4.5C.6

5c. 5 Years 5.5C

- 1 Sort food by food groups—fruit, vegetable, grain, protein, and dairy. 5.5C.1
- 2 Help a familiar adult measure and mix to prepare a fruit salad. 5.5C.2
- 3 Ask a familiar adult if their snack or lunch contains something they are allergic to. 5.5C.3
- 4 Point out that yogurt is made from milk, which comes from a cow. 5.5C.4
- 5 Sort photos of foods into a Venn diagram with categories such as “foods that are grown in the ground,” “foods that come from animals,” and “both.” 5.5C.5
- 6 Point out that people need water to live, just like animals and plants. 5.5C.6