Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

**BABIES**

**Spiritual**
- develop a sense of trust as needs are met consistently
- sense attitudes and expressions of love
- learn to associate God’s name with love and trust
- sense importance associated with Jesus and the Bible
- may point to the Bible and pictures of Jesus

**Social/Emotional**
- show alertness when talked to
- smile broadly at others
- begin to initiate social interchange
- become quiet in unfamiliar settings
- make eye contact
- are interested in other children

**Mental**
- use senses to learn
- cry to signal pain or distress
- recognize principle caregivers
- use vocal and non-vocal communication
- react differently to familiar and unfamiliar
- know and respond to name

**Physical**
- use many complex reflexes
- begin to reach toward objects
- hold up their heads
- sit without support
- roll over and crawl
- look for dropped toys
Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

ONES

Spiritual
- begin to make simple choices
- continue to grow in trust of adults
- begin to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior
- begin to recognize simple pictures of Jesus

Social/Emotional
- experience stranger anxiety
- play simple games
- can practice taking turns
- like to exert control
- recognize others’ emotions
- imitate household actions

Mental
- remember simple events
- begin to grasp familiar objects
- use trial and error in learning
- can label body parts
- understand and use words for items
- try to make self understood

Physical
- sit well in chairs
- climb
- love to explore
- use markers on paper
- carry objects from place to place
- move constantly
Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

TWOS

Spiritual
• can sing simple songs about God and Jesus
• can say thank-you to God
• can listen to Bible stories

Social/Emotional
• take interest in family
• try to help
• initiate play with peers
• can be loving and affectionate
• are responsive to others’ moods
• use imagination
• strongly assert independence

Mental
• use 5 to 300 words
• begin using sentences
• identify self by gender
• follow simple directions in order
• match, compare, group, and sort items
• enjoy repetition
• begin using numbers
• repeat songs
• know colors

Physical
• develop preference for right or left hand
• stand on one foot and balance
• jump on tiptoes
• walk between parallel lines
• have better gross-motor coordination
• have difficulty relaxing
• help undress self
Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

THREES

Spiritual
• can sing simple songs about God and Jesus
• can say thank-you to God
• can listen to Bible stories

Social/Emotional
• take interest in family
• try to help
• initiate play with peers
• can be loving and affectionate
• are responsive to others’ moods
• use imagination
• strongly assert independence

Mental
• use 5 to 300 words
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Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

FOURS

Spiritual
- like to retell Bible stories
- enjoy Bible-verse games
- recognize that God and Jesus love people and help people in special ways
- accept responsibility for helping people
- exhibit a conscience

Social/Emotional
- have total confidence in own abilities
- are bossy; show great independence
- tattle frequently
- focus on cooperative play and take turns
- like to be helpers if they initiate the idea
- respond to reason, humor, and firmness

Mental
- can remember name and address
- have increased attention span
- can do two things at once
- are highly imaginative; cannot separate fact and fantasy
- show a curiosity about life cycle
- understand time concepts better
- use 500 to 2000 words
- enjoy being silly

Physical
- show good large muscle coordination
- develop a longer, leaner body
- develop fine motor control for cutting with scissors, painting, and drawing
- walk backward
- need a high level of physical activity
Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

PRE-KINDERGARTNERS

Spiritual
• begin to ask questions about God
• express love for God and Jesus
• can recall simple Bible stories
• can make life application of Bible verses
• may show concern for others
• can sing songs about Jesus
• continue to develop a conscience

Social/Emotional
• play cooperatively with other children
• enjoy imitating adults
• begin to distinguish truth from lies
• enjoy competition
• are learning to share and take turns
• can accept responsibility

Mental
• are challenged by new tasks
• seek explanations concerning why and how
• begin to recognize basic reading words
• enjoy classification, sequencing, and sorting
• use many words without knowing their meanings
• use a vocabulary of 2000 plus words

Physical
• have good eye-hand coordination
• dress self
• exhibit right and left handedness
• can control their large muscles
• enjoy building materials with parts to assemble
• develop appetites for favorite foods
• are learning to print and copy words
Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

KINDERGARTNERS

Spiritual
- remember and like to tell Bible stories
- use the Bible and like to find Bible phrases/verses
- like to know they are doing what the Bible says
- sing songs about God and Jesus
- try to help and love other people
- like to take care of God’s world
- continue developing a conscience
- express guilt for misbehavior

Social/Emotional
- get along well in small groups
- comfort friends who are upset
- have best friends, but change friends often
- like to please adults
- may be prone to self-criticism and guilt
- enjoy group play
- play easy games with a friend, following rules
- may continue to express fears

Mental
- can print name, but not too clearly
- know colors and shapes
- can name most uppercase letters
- can read a few words
- utilize a vocabulary of 2000 plus words
- say numbers from 1 to 100
- know morning from afternoon
- hear the beginning sounds of words

Physical
- skip well; hop in a straight line
- display good eye-hand coordination
- cut well with scissors
- exhibit well-established right or left handedness
- begin cutting permanent teeth
- dress and undress well alone
- girls may display more maturity than boys
Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

FIRST AND SECOND GRADERS

Spiritual
- like learning from the Bible
- are interested in God’s wonders in nature
- are making conclusions about God and regard Jesus as a friend
- are learning right from wrong
- can take some responsibility for own actions
- understand truth and honesty

Social/Emotional
- can be self-critical
- evaluate own conduct based on the conduct of others
- may cry easily when scolded
- are sensitive to what others think, and want approval
- use own experiences to understand others
- fight with words and like to brag
- need frequent reassurance
- may avoid new or difficult situations
- are often talkative
- need to succeed in challenging situations

Mental
- have a good memory
- cannot think abstractly
- can follow directions
- enjoy reading and being read to
- are creative and enjoy creative play
- frequently ask teachers for help
- want work to be perfect and are afraid to fail
- can become deeply absorbed in activities
- are beginning to understand money and the benefits of an allowance
- want to be independent but do not want to make mistakes
- like all kinds of games

Physical
- are developing small muscles
- are active using entire body
- have difficulty sitting for long periods of time and may tire easily
- like using hands
- do not have well-developed eye-hand coordination
Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

THIRD AND FOURTH GRADERS

Spiritual
• ask serious questions about religion
• are often beginning to feel the need for a Savior
• are developing values
• can be truthful and honest
• are growing conscious of self and of sin
• have difficulty making decisions
• want to do things the right way and may feel ashamed when wrong
• think in terms of right and wrong more than good and evil

Social/Emotional
• need to be able to let off steam and may take out feelings on others
• like peers of the same sex and dislike the opposite sex
• are eager to please and want to be liked by peers and adults
• are interested in own community and country
• are beginning to feel that the group is as important as self
• boys shout; girls giggle and whisper
• are great talkers and need to be allowed to talk
• change moods quickly
• worship heroes
• like to work with others

Mental
• attention spans are lengthening
• are able to be involved in experiences that deal with feelings and thinking
• like to experiment and find out how things are made
• vary with peers in reading ability
• value money
• accept carefully worded criticism
• are beginning to think abstractly
• are eager to learn

Physical
• have good eye-hand coordination
• may overdo it with physical activities and have trouble calming down
• like to draw and sketch
• have slow, steady growth and good muscle control; girls usually developing more quickly than boys
Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

PRETEENS

Spiritual
• have concepts of love and trust
• have formed concepts of personal worth
• feel deeply about own experiences; can be sensitive to others
• beginning to adopt a religious belief system of their own
• are ready for spiritual answers and directions
• are developing a conscience and a value system
• can make many choices, but may not follow through on long-term commitments

Social/Emotional
• are motivated most by own interest and think of self, using own experiences
• are aware of sex roles; have changing attitudes toward the opposite sex
• can accept rules, organizations, responsibilities, and leader-follower roles
• can operate comfortably within a group
• have deep need for companionship and approval of peers
• like to win and improve on achievements
• like acceptance and encouragement; can become easily discouraged
• recognize and appreciate individual differences
• are ready for responsibilities and opportunities for self-direction
• are easily influenced emotionally and can cope with some feelings

Mental
• are beginning to think abstractly
• are capable of deep thoughts
• are imaginative, creative, and curious
• can distinguish between fact and fiction
• have developed basic reading and writing skills
• can accept and work toward short-term goals
• can cope with success and failure
• can concentrate when interested
• think quickly and memorize easily
• can discern time and space relationships
• can express ideas, understand cause and effect, solve problems, and plan

Physical
• like to use abundant energy and physical skills
• are approaching puberty; girls are usually ahead of boys
• have good coordination and muscle skills