

PRE CAMP (3-5 Year Olds)



A three-year-old child is a being who gets almost as much fun out of a fifty-six dollar dollar set of swings as it does out of finding a small green worm.

-Robert Fulghum

Developmental Snapshot

Social:

3 year olds: Parallel play, enjoys being by others, takes turns, knows if he is a boy or girl, enjoys brief group activities requiring no skill, likes to "help" in small ways-- responds to verbal guidance.

4 year olds: Cooperative play, enjoys other children's company, highly social, may play loosely organized group games - tag, duck-duck-goose, talkative, versatile.

5 year olds: Highly cooperative play, has special "friends", highly organized, enjoys simple table games requiring turns and observing rules, "school", feels pride in accomplishments, eager to carry out some responsibility.

Emotional:

3 year olds: Likes to conform, easy going attitude, not so resistive to change, more secure, greater sense of personal identity, beginning to be adventuresome, enjoys music.

4 year olds: Seems sure of himself, out-of bounds behavior, often negative, may be defiant, seems to be testing himself out, needs controlled freedom.

5 year olds: Self-assured, stable, well-adjusted, home-centered, likes to associate with mother, capable, of some self-criticism, enjoys responsibility. Likes to follow the rules.

What They Need From You:

3 year olds: Patience; 1 and 2 minute "warnings" prior to transitions; prompts to repeat back instructions; simple songs and routines built around activity stations

4 year olds: Stated boundaries and expectations; noticing of desired behavior; choices built around desired behavior (ie "Should we walk like ducks or fly like birds in our single file line as we hike to the fort?"); lots of physical activity, patience, transition warnings

5 year olds: Opportunities to go first, to lead and to be in charge; acknowledgement of difficult situations followed by gentle challenging to handle it (ie "you wanted to go first, right? I know. Can you be 4th? We'll stand together."; complex activities and games; help making friends

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE AT OUTPOST:

3-5 year olds are in the midst of learning about everything! Even in a short, 4-hour half day program, you'll see a wide variety of behaviors from your campers directly related to their emerging abilities to handle different situations.

You can **EXPECT** to see:

- **DIFFICULTY WITH TRANSITION.** It can be very hard for preschool children to stop, start, stop and start activities. 3-5 year-olds often run on a "different clock" than older children and adults. Expect a range of related behaviors from mild complaining to full-speed-ahead tantrums.
- **FOCUS ON THEMSELVES.** Especially for 3s and young 4s, in their world, they want to go first and have as long a turn as they want. Control over their immediate environment is important, and when it is lost (sharing, turn-taking, stopping, etc) 3-5s can struggle.