

# The physical and psychological needs of a three year old child

Psychology



Children have needs that need to be fulfilled to remain healthy. The WHO definition of health is a “ state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity” (MCI undated c pp1). This essay will look at how Early child care settings can fulfil specific physical needs of exercise, rest, nutrition and health and safety of a three year old. It will also look at how settings can fulfil the psychological needs of a three year old including attachment, self esteem, self worth and friendship. Lastly the essay will look at how the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS), 2012 can be implemented in order to maintain the health and safety of a setting.

The basic physical needs of a human are defined by as; nutritious food to eat, shelter from the environment, clean air to breath, and clean water to drink (MCI undated c pp2). To allow for a healthy development more complex physical needs such as; opportunities for active movement, or exercise, the need for regular rest and sleep, and the protection from illness and danger must also be considered (MCI undated c pp2).

At three years of age a child needs plenty of active play; outdoors, dancing, or group games; where they can practise moving their bodies in a range of ways (BAECE 2012). They also need the chance to be able to manipulate different equipment; pencils, scissors, and puzzles; to develop their fine motor skills (BAECE 2012). Because young children tend to only have short bursts of energy it is important to be aware that they may require rest in the form of quiet activities or even a short nap (BAECE 2012).

A child at age three requires a well balanced diet with the correct mix of nutrients to help the body, grow, repair itself and fight off disease (MCI <https://assignbuster.com/the-physical-and-psychological-needs-of-a-three-year-old-child/>

undated c Ch4). Children are learning about basic hygiene; taking care of themselves, toileting, hand washing, and the basics of dressing themselves (BAECE 2012).

For a carer to fulfil the physical needs of a child they need to prepare both an indoor and outdoor environment in which a child can move freely around and choose stimulating activities without fear for their safety (MCI undated b pp5). Carers must ensure they either schedule time for children to undergo physical activity. Carers should support children by acknowledging any attempt at physical development whether successful or not and encourage children to develop their physical skills at a pace they are comfortable with (MCI undated b pp5). In allowing children to move freely around the environment the setting needs to be free of any danger and carers need to undertake regular risk assessments to ensure this (BAECE 2012).

A carer must provide an environment in which children are able to care for themselves safely. An example of this is access to child sized bathrooms and sinks (BAECE 2012). Carers should model and teach children when and how to use equipment correctly then encourage children to take responsibility for their own needs (MCI undated b pp5). Carers should talk about how and why we look after our bodies, highlighting consequences for not doing so (BAECE 2012). Carers should also ensure that classrooms are correctly ventilated and that all children have sufficient fresh air and wear appropriate clothing to allow for comfort during physical activities (MCI undated c pp10).

To fulfil the nutritional needs of children a carer needs to be aware of what makes up a healthy diet. To do this carers should be aware of the main nutrient groups and should endeavour to include food from each group when <https://assignbuster.com/the-physical-and-psychological-needs-of-a-three-year-old-child/>

plaining meals and snacks (MCI undated c pp 36-44). Carers should also be aware of any allergies, intolerances, and cultural or religious dietary restrictions within the children in their care and be able to plan healthy meals and snacks around these (Macleod-Brudenell, L & Kay, J. 2008 pp243-247 ). The EYFS (DfE 2012) encourage making meal time a social experience; an opportunity to further children's motor, and social skills whilst highlighting the importance of healthy eating.

Psychological needs are the inherent motivation of a human to interact with the environment in order to undertake challenges that are interesting and enjoyable (Reeve 2009 pg 142-143). Bowlby suggests that in order to survive infants use innate attachment behaviours to remain close to caregivers (MCI undated a ch3). In order to belong and participate children must learn through social interaction a range of emotions, and skills to manage these emotions in a socially acceptable way (MCI undated a pp125). Children must also have a positive view of themselves in order to develop high self esteem; which allows the child to become a competent member of a group (Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp111).

According to Anisworth (Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp99-104) children of age three need a secure base or attachment to their main caregiver/s from which they can explore their environment without fear of being abandoned. Children of age three are likely to show behaviours such as “ social referencing” (Hornik&Guannar in Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp97), “ separation anxiety” (MCI undated a pp28), and “ following and clinging” (MCI undated a pp28) to maintain proximity to their caregivers.

At three children are beginning to enter the second stage of their emotional and personality development. According to Freud (Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp93-94) the child is entering the “ phallic” stage and Eriksson (Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp93-94) the “ initiative vs guilt” stage. Children now need caregivers to strive for a balance between doing it for the child and allowing the child to strive for independence.

Children of three are also developing a “ personal identity” (Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp110) to evaluate decisions they make and are beginning to make friends. They are now learning about social conventions and appropriate emotional responses in a social group that is wider than their families. Children also need help in developing a positive view of themselves to develop high self esteem (MCI undated b pp 34).

To fulfil a three year olds psychological needs their care must be consistent and predictable. MCI (undated c ch3) suggests that routines should be established to allow for a smooth transfer of care from the child’s home routine to the setting's routine. MCI (undated c ch3) also suggest that settings remain predictable with both the environment and the staffing to remain constant. This allows children to know where everything is and who is looking after them, which in turns allows a child to feel secure in the setting. Any change to either the environment or carer should be done slowly over a period of time allowing the child to remain comfortable.

According to MCI (undated b pp 35) children of age three are eager to learn. A carer should encourage children to be involved in activities that allow for the development of; new skills, confidence and self esteem. All caregivers should be aware of Merton's (Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp115) “ self  
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fulfilling prophecy” and not label children bad or naughty. Furthermore all caregivers should give children “ unconditional positive regard” (Rogers in Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp114) such that children always feel a valued part of the group even if their behaviour is not.

Children should be taught how to co-operate and respect other people in order to feel like they are part of a group (Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp117). Carers provide a model of how a child should behave and react to others around them. It is important for caregivers to realise that children use social referencing to make decisions about new situations; so the way in which a carer approaches a situation will guide the reaction of the children. MCI (undated c pp34) suggests settings to have a policy regarding how people are to be treated. This allows for children to develop a sense of what is the right and wrong way to treat people.

To further emotional development children should be encouraged to solve practical problems and encouraged to share their emotional responses to different situations (Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp93-95). Caregivers should be striving for a balance between helping a child develop new skills and allowing a child the freedom to choose activities that allow them to demonstrate their independence.

Settings should encourage a smooth transition into their care. The EYFS (DeF 2012) suggests having a 'key person' in charge of a child's overall care to help children and parents feel secure in the new environment. Macleod-Brudenell&Kay (2008 pp108) suggests a centre can also support the transition from home by conducting home visits, and inviting parents to information sessions; so expectations can be shared. Furthermore children  
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can be gradually transitioned into settings by gradually building up the time spent in care, and/or having parents allowed to stay for activities at the beginning of the session.

It is important to ensure children feel secure and comfortable in any setting in order to reduce any separation anxiety. Macleod-Brudenell&Kay (2008 pp106) suggests in order to do this the child's key person should greet them and have a spot with the child's name for their belongings; so they feel part of the group. Furthermore carers should inform and occupy the children as their parents leave. Carers should allow the use of 'transitional objects'(Winnicott 1953) for as long as needed to allow children to remain connected to their parents throughout the day. Carers should also reassure children that their parents will return.

Health and safety policies of an setting should include all needed procedures to ensure that the health and safety of children in the setting are met. In order to do this settings are required to fulfil the National Standards for Child Care 2001 and the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, (EYFS) 2012.

To ensure safety of a setting EYFS sets up what facilities each child requires, and emergency procedures in case of fire or natural disaster (DeF 2012). According to DeF (2012) a risk assessment should also be carried out. This should focus on the security of the setting, how to ensure the children remain on the premises, and how to monitor adults that are allowed into the premises whilst the children are there. A risk assessment should also identify and remove any hazards (Macleod-Brudenell&Kay 2008 pp253-254), these

would include poisonous plants, unsafe play equipment, and any other unsafe items.

To ensure adequate supervision and to reduce the chance of accidents, the ratio of caregivers to children, and the qualifications the caregivers hold is set out in the EYFS (DeF 2012). The Office For Standards in Education (Ofsted) will run background checks to see if the staff members are suitable and appropriate. Settings are required to make sure these are carried out on every member of staff that will have regular contact with the children. Settings are also required to ensure that there are staff members trained in both first aid and in the recognition of children who are being abused (DeF 2012).

To ensure the health of the children in their care settings are required to have hygiene practices in place to reduce the spread of infection and keep the setting clean (DeF 2012). This includes policies and or procedures about; smoking, food handling, medicine use and the maintenance of play areas, such as sandpits; sick children, infectious disease, and what medicines are allowed to be administered by the setting (Macleod-Brudenell & Kay 2008 pp254).

In conclusion settings must consider the physical and psychological needs of children carefully. In order to fulfil a child's physical needs a setting needs to have a safe environment that allows for children to move their bodies and rest in a variety of ways with as much or little support as they need. The setting must also promote a healthy approach to nutrition and a healthy environment in order to fulfil a child's physical needs, and physiological a setting must consider how to make the child feel secure and attached to his <https://assignbuster.com/the-physical-and-psychological-needs-of-a-three-year-old-child/>



or her carers. One way of doing this is the key person system, and promote self esteem and friendship through a variety of ways, being aware that the children will use the way carers approach situations to guide their own response to future interactions. By carrying out risk assessment regularly and setting up the policies and procedures that are highlighted in EYFS, settings are able to make sure that the health and safety of children in their care is maintained.