



Teaching All Children

Children are introduced to more-complex ideas and concepts as they progress in school. As catechists, we show our respect for God’s creation by accepting all children as they are and mentoring them as they grow in their personal relationships with God. We recognize that each child is unique. We know that developmental age does not always coincide with chronological age. Furthermore, we recognize that some children have special needs. *Finding God: Our Response to God’s Gifts* meets children where they are developmentally by using lessons and activities designed to appeal to different learning styles.

Getting to Know a Kindergartner (Ages 4–6)

Although no two children are alike, some general characteristics apply to many children ages four through six. This is a time of discovery. Children are active, love to play, and learn by doing. While they are growing more independent, children still need a strong sense of security in order to process what is taking place in their surroundings. They were welcomed into the Church at Baptism but may only be beginning to see themselves as being part of something larger than themselves and their families.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in kindergarten often

- ▶ learn well through experience and activity; enjoy play-based learning and dramatic storytelling.
- ▶ have an attention span of about 10 minutes; can listen and follow directions; can work energetically for short periods.
- ▶ can express thoughts through drawing; enjoy coloring, cutting, and pasting.
- ▶ process words and ideas literally.
- ▶ focus on detail or on one aspect of a situation.
- ▶ enjoy stories, activities, crafts, and exchanging ideas with other children.
- ▶ enjoy music, singing, dancing, and pantomime.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in kindergarten often

- ▶ appreciate God’s goodness and his personal love for them.
- ▶ sense that they are loved by important people in their lives.
- ▶ realize that there are good and bad choices.
- ▶ understand that it is not always easy to do what is right.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in kindergarten often

- ▶ need individual attention and affirmation; are shy (or act out) in unfamiliar situations.
- ▶ are self-sufficient and self-motivated; may not see effects of their actions on others.
- ▶ are friendly and seek attention from adults and other children.
- ▶ may become stubborn, blame others for their own wrongdoing, or use name-calling when angry.
- ▶ need a trusting, protective environment in which to make friends and develop social relationships.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in kindergarten often

- ▶ have a growing sense of identity and self-worth.
- ▶ need reassurance of God’s love as shown through adult concern and care.
- ▶ can understand that God wants them to show their love for him by being kind and caring to others.
- ▶ need to learn faith concepts in a warm, secure environment.
- ▶ can express simple prayers.