



ZERO TO THREE
Early connections last a lifetime



Why So Many “Whys”?

Understanding Your Preschooler’s Questions

If your child asks “why” all day, you are not alone. It can be fun at first, but it can also be exhausting! It’s important to remember that all the “whys” mean your child is learning.

Why children ask “why”

Between ages 3 and 5, children start to see that things happen for a reason. They want to know those reasons.

Asking “why” helps them:

- Understand the world
- Figure out cause and effect
- Practice talking back and forth
- Learn how to have conversations in the future

Research shows that kids who ask lots of questions learn more words and think better. They also love learning more. Questions show curiosity. And curiosity helps kids keep learning their whole lives.

When it feels like too much

Sometimes the questions feel endless. That is normal too. Your child is trying to understand a big world with a very small set of tools. Try saying “What do you think?” once in a while. This helps your child think through their own ideas — and gives you a break.



Questions about differences

Preschoolers also ask questions about people. Why someone looks different or uses a wheelchair, or why they speak another language. These questions can feel awkward. But children are not trying to be rude. They are just noticing the world around them. Give a simple, calm answer: “They use a wheelchair to help them move around. Their legs don’t work the same as ours. Wheelchairs are really helpful tools!” This teaches your child to be kind and curious.

What helps

Keep your answers short and simple. Long answers can be hard for young children to follow. If you do not know the answer, it is okay to say so. You can look it up together. This shows your child that finding answers is an adventure.

Most of all, **stay curious with your child.** When they see you ask questions, they see that learning never stops. Visiting local museums, nature centers, and community events also helps your child learn and continue being curious about the world!

Have more questions? Talk to your child’s healthcare provider or one of the professionals supporting your family.

Text **SPARKS** to 274 448

Receive messages like this on your phone

©2026 by the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. All rights reserved.