

AGES & STAGES

Your Preschooler at 4 to 5 Years

**Emotional
Development**

**Social
Development**

**Fine Motor
Development**

**Gross Motor
Development**

**Intellectual
Development**



Emotional Development

Typical Emotional Skills

- Uses pretend play to gain control of frustrating and frightening experiences
- Complies with requests from parents more often
- Keeps going on a difficult task for longer periods

Emerging Emotional Skills

- Shows ability to reflect on himself and his actions (e.g., "What I said wasn't nice.")
- Experiences and understands positive and negative feelings about another person
- Starts to show more interest in doing things for himself (e.g., cleaning room, eating)

Comfort

If you do this:

- Monitor and name things that may cause your child's experiences to be negative
- Allow your child to develop his strengths and talents

Your preschooler will:

- Experience lower stress levels and feel your love and support
- Learn to feel capable in difference areas (e.g., sports, music, drawing)

Play

If you do this:

- Provide drawing materials and encourage your child to talk about her pictures
- Encourage your child to act out situations and emotions by herself or using puppets

Your preschooler will:

- Use her creativity to express emotions and talk about personal events
- Identify and talk about feelings in an imaginative way

Teach

If you do this:

- Guide your child on how to handle challenging feelings
- Support your child when he wants to try new things or take risks in social situations

Your preschooler will:

- Learn how to express anger and frustration safely
- Learn that wanting to try out new things is ok and can bring success

Social Development

Typical Social Skills

- Plays games with simple rules
- Shows interest in gender differences, and may undress with other children
- Begins to grasp the concept of sharing

Emerging Social Skills

- Plays cooperatively in a group of 2 to 3 children
- Shows an understanding of right and wrong
- Listens while others are speaking

Comfort

If you do this:

- Provide opportunities for your child to draw or tell her own stories
- Tell her how proud you are of her abilities whenever she does something well

Your preschooler will:

- Start to represent her stories and share her thoughts
- Feel proud of what she's done, and have a strong sense of her capabilities

Play

If you do this:

- Encourage more sophisticated pretend play by providing props (e.g., grocery store)
- Provide many opportunities for social interactions with other preschoolers

Your preschooler will:

- Engage more in problem solving, making decisions and conversation
- Strengthen social skills while playing with friends

Teach

If you do this:

- Encourage your child not to give up on games or tasks when he plays with others
- Create the opportunity for your child to play with younger children

Your preschooler will:

- Learn to persist at a task, especially when others are counting on him
- Feel a sense of leadership

Fine Motor Development

Typical Fine Motor Skills

- Paints with a large brush on large paper
- Manipulates clay, playdough
- Draws lines, simple shapes and a few letters

Emerging Fine Motor Skills

- Carries a cup without spilling what's in it
- Cuts on a line or cuts out simple shapes along an outline with scissors
- Strings small beads to make a necklace

Comfort

If you do this:

- Provide sensory materials like sand or water along with containers, sieves and utensils
- Make playdough for your child, scented with spices (e.g. vanilla, mint) and food colouring

Your preschooler will:

- Enjoy the pleasurable feelings of the materials while learning about volume
- Learn about aromas and colours while manipulating the dough to make shapes

Play

If you do this:

- Make pencils, crayons and chalk available often
- Offer a variety of arts and craft materials for your child to make anything she wishes

Your preschooler will:

- Practice colouring, drawing or forming letters and numbers
- Use her imagination and fine motor skills to make her own creations

Teach

If you do this:

- Play board games that involve counting and moving player pieces
- Print your child's name using dots for each letter that he has to connect

Your preschooler will:

- Learn the concept of counting forward and backwards in order to win a game
- Begin to recognize and copy shapes of letters

Gross Motor Development

Typical Gross Motor Skills

- Rides a tricycle without bumping into things
- Bounces, throws and catches a large ball
- Climbs playground equipment without any difficulty

Emerging Gross Motor Skills

- Walks up and down stairs, alternating feet without support
- Skips for a distance
- Kicks a soccer ball

Comfort

If you do this:

- Support your child's exploration and curiosity about her physical environment
- Supervise play and safety (e.g., helmets for bike riding)

Your preschooler will:

- Use her motor skills to discover the physical characteristics of things
- Enjoy mastering skills without worry of injury

Play

If you do this:

- Take your child on a "bike hike" around the park or neighbourhood
- Arrange for playmates to come over to play outdoor games (e.g., hide-and-seek, tag)

Your preschooler will:

- Enjoy exploring and learning about places and people in his community
- Practice motor-coordination skills while learning games with rules

Teach

If you do this:

- Teach safety rules for walking or riding on streets (e.g., never ride on the road)
- Teach your child that when playing certain games, someone wins and someone loses

Your preschooler will:

- Slowly learn how to manage situations requiring safety precautions
- Learn how to cope with disappointments as well as successes

Intellectual Development (Language and Thinking Skills)

Typical Language Skills

- Loves to recite and chant jingles and rhymes
- Tells long stories about own past experiences
- Uses an average vocabulary of 1500 words

Emerging Language Skills

- Asks "how" and "why" questions and listens closely to explanations
- Uses "yesterday" and "tomorrow" correctly, incorporating past, present and future tenses of verbs
- Shows interest in written words and letters (e.g., reads own name and some words)

Typical Thinking Skills

- Understands how to sort and classify objects by characteristics
- Identifies and names different colours
- Understands the order of numbers

Emerging Thinking Skills

- Understands number concepts up to 10
- Understands different forms of measurement for weight, height, and length
- Plans and builds with simple tools

Comfort

If you do this:

- Tell your child stories without pictures
- Encourage your child to talk by asking open-ended questions (e.g., "Why do you think...?")

Your preschooler will:

- Enjoy time spent using his imagination and building his vocabulary
- Practice using reasoning skills as he converses with an interested and caring adult

Play

If you do this:

- Give your child simple problems to solve (e.g., "What can you build with only ten blocks?")
- Create a matching card game based on your child's interests (e.g., dinosaurs)

Your preschooler will:

- Use his creativity to think things out and stretch his imagination
- Learn to identify things that are the same and different

Teach

If you do this:

- Use household items to do simple addition and subtraction (e.g., "If you have 3 apples and eat one, how many are left?")
- Point out common words that he sees every day (e.g., stop sign, labels on cereal boxes)

Your preschooler will:

- Begin to understand concepts of "more" and "less" and explore basic math
- See a connection between spoken and printed words