

# PLAIN

# TALK

# FOR PARENTS

## About Your Four- to Five-Year-Old Child

### *Every Child and Parent is Unique.*

This brochure highlights some general patterns of growth and development that apply to most children.

As you watch, listen to, and play with your child, you will discover when she or he is ready for new activities and skills.

You will find your own ways to use old and new ideas, to fit your individual personality, your family life, and your child's needs.

### **General Traits:**

- Begins to play and share with other children
- Sexual exploration and curiosity are shown through play
- Likes dressing up for fun and entertaining others
- Can learn to count three objects and print one or two recognizable letters
- Knows own name and age, the number of brothers and sisters in the family and their names
- May dress and undress without much help and can unbutton some buttons
- Enjoys active games
- Imaginary playmates are common
- May boast, lie, and swear
- Has a "Why?" for every occasion
- Toileting is now an established routine for most children
- Beginning to draw faces and stick people

### **What a Parent Can Do**

- Give your child lots of opportunities to climb and crawl, run and tumble.
- Exercise as a family with walks, ball playing, trips to the playground.
- Be patient in answering questions - even the same one repeatedly.
- Be aware of your child's need to spend time with an adult of the opposite sex.
- Praise your child's accomplishments. "I like the way you put your toys away."
- Supervise and when possible share TV viewing and other electronic "screen time".
- Provide opportunities for group play. Consider a preschool or Head Start program.
- Take your child to the library and let him or her choose books to take home.
- Set aside time for just you and your child to read or talk about events of the day.
- Help your child begin to learn colors, shapes, letters and numbers.

### **Toys for the 4- to 5-year-old**

- Costume box (hats, purses, shoes, scarves, dresses, suit coats, wallets, ties)
- Sand toys (spoons, scoops, pails, sifters)
- Blocks in a variety of sizes
- Colored paper, paste, blunt scissors
- Books and magazines
- Play dough
- Finger paints, crayons, markers
- Connecting blocks and other table-construction toys
- Cars, trucks, boats, trains
- Puzzles with 10-12 pieces
- Dolls (preferably rubber for water play)
- Broom, mops, dust cloth, toy dishes and pans
- Packing boxes (large and sturdy for a child to climb on)



This information was adapted from St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center Guide to Health with their permission.

**For additional copies, contact the Child Care Information Center 1.800.362.7353 or visit [www.ccic.wi.gov](http://www.ccic.wi.gov)**



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
Division of Early Care and Education  
PO Box 8916, Madison WI 53708-8916

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