

3 years

Your child may:

- Take turns in games, and understand the idea of “mine,” “his,” “hers,” etc.
- Show a wide range of emotions.
- Play make-believe with dolls, animals, and people.
- Follow instructions with 2 or 3 steps.
- Talk well enough for strangers to understand most of the time. Use 2 to 3 sentences in conversations.
- Understand what “two” means.
- Climb and run.
- Walk up and down stairs with one foot on each step.

To encourage development:

- › Take him to places where there are other children, and encourage getting along with others.
- › Talk about feelings. (Say, “I can tell you feel mad because you threw the toy.”)
- › Encourage pretend play,
- › Give instructions with 2 or 3 steps. (Say “Go to your room, and get your shoes and coat.”)
- › Read to him every day. Ask him to point to pictures and repeat words after you.
- › Play counting games by counting body parts, stairs, and other things you see every day.
- › Play outside with her. Give her time for free play when she can make up her own activities.
- › Hold his hand when going up and down stairs.

4 years

Your child may:

- Rather play with other children than alone and usually cooperate with others.
- Say his first and last name. Talk about his interests and things he likes.
- Sing a song or say a poem from memory.
- Name some colors and numbers and understand the idea of counting.
- Understand “same” and “different.”
- Draw people with 2 to 4 body parts.
- Tell what she thinks will happen next in books.
- Catch a bounced ball and hop.

To encourage development:

- › Let her solve her own problems with friends, but be nearby to help if needed.
- › Encourage him to use his words, share toys, and take turns.
- › Play her favorite music and dance together.
- › Say colors of things he sees. Count things like crackers, stairs, or toys.
- › Play matching games by asking him to find objects in books or around the house that are the same.
- › Give her an “activity box” with paper, crayons, and coloring books. Color and draw shapes with her.
- › When reading together, ask her to tell you what is happening in the story.
- › Teach her to play outdoor games like four square.

5 years

Your child may:

- Want to please friends and be like them.
- Show more independence, such as using the toilet by herself.
- Be able to tell what’s real and what’s make-believe.
- Speak very clearly and tell simple stories using full sentences.
- Know his address.
- Count 10 or more things.
- Draw a person with 6 or more body parts.
- Do somersaults, hop, swing, and climb.

To encourage development:

- › Continue to arrange play dates, trips to the park, or play groups.
- › Talk to her about safety and privacy.
- › When reading to him, ask him to predict what will happen next in the story.
- › Ask her to pretend she is reading a book by looking at pictures and telling stories.
- › Teach him your address and phone number.
- › Count common items, like the number of crackers, stairs, or toys.
- › Encourage him to use art supplies like scissors, paint, and glue.
- › Take her to the park and let her play freely. Teach her to pump her legs back and forth on a swing. Help her climb on the monkey bars.