



# Did You Know AT FOUR YEARS OLD I CAN—

Full of energy and imagination best describes a 4-year-old. Your child is probably asking lots of questions, too. This is the time to help him or her learn and get ready for school.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

At this age, I can—

- weigh between 27-50 lbs.
- be 37-46 inches tall.
- sleep 10-12 hours each night.
- dress myself without much help.
- walk a straight line.
- hop on one foot.
- jump over objects 5-6 inches high.
- run, jump, hop, and skip around objects with ease.
- pedal a tricycle skillfully.
- stack 10 or more blocks.
- form shapes and objects out of clay or play dough.
- thread small beads on a string.
- catch, bounce, and throw a ball easily.
- use a spoon, fork, and dinner knife.

## INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

At this age, I can—

- place objects in a line from largest to smallest.
- recognize some letters if taught, and may be able to print my own name.
- understand the concepts of tallest, biggest, same, more, on, in, under, and above.
- learn my name, address, and phone number if taught.

- understand the order of daily routines such as breakfast, lunch, dinner, and bedtime.
- speak in a complete sentence.
- ask many questions, including ones on birth and death.
- enjoy simple songs and nonsense words.
- continue an activity for 10-15 minutes.
- name 6-8 colors and 3 shapes.
- follow 2 unrelated directions: "Please put your milk on the table and get your coat on."
- understand basic concepts related to number, size, weight, colors, textures, distance, position, and time.
- understand immediate passage of time as in what happened yesterday, but I do not understand calendar time.
- understand and remember my own accomplishments.
- sometimes add "ed" to words - "I goed to the door and putted the cat outdoors. He hurt-ed me."

## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Did You Know

At 4 years old I can—

- enjoy playing with other children.
- take turns and share most of the time; but I may still be bossy.
- seek out adult approval.
- understand and obey simple rules.
- change the rules of a game as it goes.
- carry on elaborate conversations.
- feel jealousy.
- persistently ask "why" questions.

- brag and boast.
- be fearful of the dark and monsters.
- understand danger - and at times can be quite fearful.
- have difficulty separating make-believe from reality.
- "name" call and tattle freely.
- lie sometimes to protect friends and myself, but I don't truly understand the concept of lying as my imagination often gets in the way.
- shock others by using "forbidden" words.
- express anger verbally rather than physically, most of the time.
- still throw tantrums when frustrated.
- imitate parent of the same sex.
- tell jokes that may not make sense to adults.
- have a vivid imagination and playmates.
- "pretend" in more elaborate settings like fire station, ice cream shop, or jungle.

## IDEAS FOR PARENTS

You can help me learn and grow! You can—

- read aloud to me each day and encourage me to retell the story.
- show me that words are everywhere: grocery store labels, restaurant menus, department stores, road signs, etc.
- encourage me to play with words on old coupons, newspaper ads, or cereal boxes.
- say nursery rhymes and finger plays with me.
- play follow the leader with me.
- give me chores like sorting and counting silverware, socks, and other household objects.
- teach me correct use of the telephone.
- ask me to deliver short messages to family members.
- let me help you plan activities and make lists for groceries, shopping, and errands.
- talk to me about things being in, on, under, behind, and beside

## Toys That Teach

- Matching games, 12-15 piece puzzles, board games, dominoes, play money, toy cash register
- Plastic blocks and balls (all sizes)
- Glue, crayons, paint, scissors, paper, washable markers, colored chalk, play dough
- Trucks and cars, bicycle with training wheels, dress-up clothes
- Puppets, books, beanbags, dolls with clothes

## READING WITH YOUR 4-YEAR-OLD

Since 4-year-olds are beginning to show an interest in reading, look for books that emphasize:

**Predicting** - helps children guess how stories work. Ask, "What do you think will happen next?"

**Knowing Letters** - is important to being ready to read. Look for books with capital and lowercase letters.

**Sound Sensitivity** - helps children think about how letters and sounds work together.

**Rhyming** - is a way children learn that words are to sound out words to read. Look for books with rhymes and songs.

**Repetition** - helps children learn how stories work by renaming words and phrases.

**Narrative Skills and Summarizing** - helps children understand stories. Ask them to tell you what happens in the book.

## Suggested Books:

- "Ants in My Pants" by Wendy Mould
- "Clara Caterpillar" by Pamela Duncan
- "Cordoroy" by Don Freeman
- "Happy Birthday Moon" by Frank Asch
- "House That Jack Built" by Simms Taback
- "If You Give A Mouse A Cookie" by Laura Joffe Numeroff
- "Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?" by Bill Martin
- "Swimmy" by Leo Lionni
- "The Mitten" by Jan Brett
- "What Do You Do With A Kangaroo?" by Mercer Mayer
- "Where The Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak
- "26 Letters And 99 Cents" by Tana Hoban

## GETTING READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

### Before Kindergarten begins:

- Make an appointment with a doctor early in the year your child will start school to get all shots up to date.
- Visit your local school to register for kindergarten before school closes for the summer.
- Visit the school with your child and practice walking or driving to school.
- Practice questions with your child such as "Where is the bathroom?" or "May I have more snack, please?"
- Give your child practice separating from you by having play dates with friends and family or participating in play groups.

### PROVIDE A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT AT HOME:

- Feed your child healthy meals.
- Make sure they get plenty of sleep every night.
- Develop routines for your child such as story time before bed, snack time after nap, and cleaning up after play.
- Help your child learn how to take care of her/himself: getting dressed, tying shoes, and going to the bathroom.
- Talk to your child about safety rules such as crossing the street at a crosswalk and not talking to strangers.
- Provide your child with paper, pencils, and crayons so she/he can draw and write about things she/he thinks and feels.
- Show you value education by your words and actions.

## SONGS LIKED BY 4-YEAR-OLDS

### Many Things

Sung to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"

Birds fly high and bees fly low,  
Caterpillars crawl and rivers flow,  
Cats meow and cows go 'moo'.  
Puppies bark and babies 'coo'.  
So many things to see and hear,  
I use my eyes and I use my ears.

### Purple Pickle

Sung to the tune of "Yankee Doodle"

If I had a purple penny  
Or a purple nickel,  
I'd go to a purple store  
And buy a purple pickle.  
Purple pickles  
Purple peas  
Purple macaroni  
Purple pudding  
Purple pie  
Purple pepperoni

### Old McDonald Had a Band

Variation with the same tune

Old McDonald had a band, E-I-E-I-O  
And in this band he had some drums,  
E-I-E-I-O  
With a boom, boom here,  
And a boom, boom there  
Here a boom, there a boom  
Everywhere a boom, boom  
Old McDonald had a band, E-I-E-I-O

Triangle - ring, ring  
Maracas - shake, shake  
Sticks -tap, tap

### Bingo

A classic tune

There was a farmer had a dog and Bingo was his name - O  
B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O and  
Bingo was his name - O

Sing verse through one time. The second time, substitute a clap for the letter "B" (clap, I-N-G-O). In each succeeding verse, substitute a clap for the next letter until the fifth time around, then you will have 5 claps replacing 5 letters

## A WORD ON DEVELOPMENT

Your child is unique. The way he or she learns and grows will be different from other children the same age. If your child is unable to do many of the things listed for this age group, you may wish to talk to an early childhood specialist in your child's preschool, Head Start, Health Department, or local school district. A parent is a child's first teacher and will likely notice developmental problems first. If your child has special needs, early help can make a difference.

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Written by **Karen Benson**, Child & Family Development Agent, Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Distributed by **Louise E. Davis, Ph.D.**, Extension Professor, Child & Family Development, Mississippi State University Extension Service.

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