

# Your Child at 5 Years

Talk with your child's doctor at every visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next.

## What children do at this age



### Social/Emotional

- Wants to please friends
- Wants to be like friends
- More likely to agree with rules
- Likes to sing, dance, and act
- Is aware of gender
- Can tell what's real and what's make-believe
- Shows more independence (for example, may visit a next-door neighbor by himself [adult supervision is still needed])
- Is sometimes demanding and sometimes very cooperative

### Language/Communication

- Speaks very clearly
- Tells a simple story using full sentences
- Uses future tense; for example, "Grandma will be here."
- Says name and address

### How you can help your child's development

- Continue to arrange play dates, trips to the park, or play groups. Give your child more freedom to choose activities to play with friends, and let your child work out problems on her own.
- Your child might start to talk back or use profanity (swear words) as a way to feel independent. Do not give a lot of attention to this talk, other than a brief time out. Instead, praise your child when he asks for things nicely and calmly takes "no" for an answer.
- This is a good time to talk to your child about safe touch. No one should touch "private parts" except doctors or nurses during an exam or parents when they are trying to keep the child clean.
- Teach your child her address and phone number.
- When reading to your child, ask him to predict what will happen next in the story.
- Encourage your child to "read" by looking at the pictures and telling the story.

**Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)**

- Counts 10 or more things
- Can draw a person with at least 6 body parts
- Copies a triangle and other shapes
- Can print some letters or numbers
- Knows about things used every day, like money and food

**Movement/Physical Development**

- Stands on one foot for 10 seconds or longer
- Hops; may be able to skip
- Can do a somersault
- Uses a fork and spoon and sometimes a table knife
- Can use the toilet on her own
- Swings and climbs

**Act early by talking to your child's doctor if your child:**

- Doesn't show a wide range of emotions
- Shows extreme behavior (unusually fearful, aggressive, shy, or sad)
- Unusually withdrawn and not active
- Is easily distracted, has trouble focusing on one activity for more than 5 minutes
- Doesn't respond to people, or responds only superficially
- Can't tell what's real and what's make-believe
- Doesn't play a variety of games and activities
- Can't give first and last name
- Doesn't draw pictures

**How you can help your child's development**

- Teach your child time concepts like morning, afternoon, evening, today, tomorrow, and yesterday. Start teaching the days of the week.
- Explore your child's interests in your community. For example, if your child loves animals, visit the zoo or petting farm. Go to the library or look on the Internet to learn about these topics.
- Keep a handy box of crayons, paper, paint, child scissors, and paste. Encourage your child to draw and make art projects with different supplies.
- Play with toys that encourage your child to put things together.
- Teach your child how to pump her legs back and forth on a swing.
- Help your child climb on the monkey bars.
- Go on walks with your child, do a scavenger hunt in your neighborhood or park, help him ride a bike with training wheels (wearing a helmet).

- Doesn't talk about daily activities or experiences
- Doesn't use plurals or past tense properly
- Can't brush teeth, wash and dry hands, or get undressed without help
- Loses skills he once had

**Tell your child's doctor or nurse if you notice any of these signs of possible developmental delay for this age, and talk with someone in your community who is familiar with services for young children in your area, such as your local public school. For more information, go to [www.cdc.gov/concerned](http://www.cdc.gov/concerned).**