

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF FIVE YEAR OLDS

Summarized below are some of the common social and emotional characteristics of five year olds. It is important to caution that these are generalizations and they may not apply exactly to all children but they are trends or barometers which have been gleaned from the research and they give us a rudimentary idea of what we can expect when we are looking at children of this age.

- Likes to help: cooperative. wants to be "good" and to please others.
- Likes rules and routines.
- Needs approval and praise.
- Dependent on authority: wants to be told what to do. but finds it difficult to see things from another perspective.
- Content to live in the here and now.
- Calm and friendly.
- Does not like to make mistakes. tries what he can accomplish and accomplishes what he tries.
- Mother tends to be the center of his world. He likes to do things for her and to obey her.
- School entrance can cause a temporary increase in tensional outlets such as stuttering, nail biting and thumb sucking.
- Less fearful than at other ages: more concrete fears: bodily harm, falling, dogs, Mom not returning, the dark.
- Usually protective and kind towards younger children.
- Very literal. may believe that there is only one way to do things.
- Gives life to inanimate objects.
- Often does not communicate about school at home.
- Thinks out loud.
- Enjoys repetitive behavior to maximize learning.
- Can work at quiet, sitting activities for 15-20 minutes at a time.
- Needs teacher direction to begin next task.
- Enjoys clear and consistent guidelines to feel safe.
- Expresses thoughts through action such as dramatic play.

