

Ages & Stages for Caregivers

5 years

Cheerful, energetic, and enthusiastic are words that may describe the five-year-olds in your care. Fives enjoy planning and discussing who will do what. A “best friend” is very important, but hard to keep as social skills are not well developed yet.

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SIGNS OF DEVELOPMENT —5 years

(individual development varies)

Developing Body

- Weighs 31-57 pounds
- Stands 39-48 inches in height
- May begin to lose baby teeth
- Learns to skip
- Is able to dress self with little assistance
- Throws ball overhead
- Catches bounced balls
- Uses a fork and knife well
- Cuts on a line with scissors
- Hand dominance is established

Developing Mind

- Knows basic colors like red, yellow, blue, green, and orange
- Understands that stories have a beginning, middle, and end
- Understands that books are read from left to right, top to bottom
- Draws pictures that represent animals, people, and objects

Developing Communication

- Enjoys telling his or her own stories
- Enjoys riddles and jokes
- Identifies some letters of the alphabet and few numbers

Developing Self

- Can take turns and share but doesn't always want to
- Often excludes other children in play—best friends only
- Likes to try new things and take risks
- Likes to make own decisions
- Notices when another child is angry or sad—more sensitive to feelings of others
- Likes to feel grown up; boasts about self to younger less capable children

HOW YOU CAN HELP Encourage five-year-olds' physical development.

Play follow the leader with skipping, galloping, and hopping.

You may also:

- Help your child learn to use a pair of scissors by asking him or her to help you cut out coupons.
- Have jumping contest. Five-year-olds can jump over low objects.

Build on five-year-olds' curiosity and drive to understand their world.

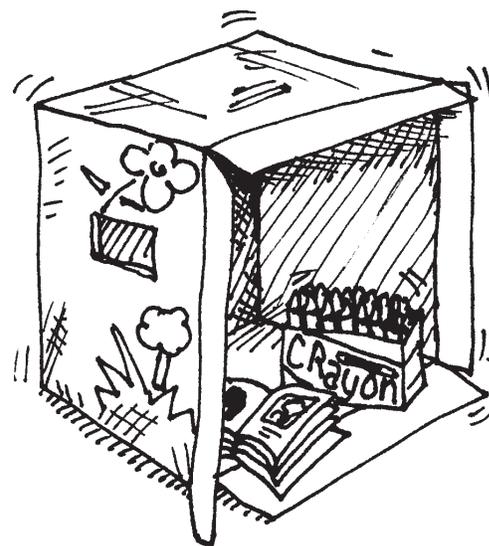
Ask “what-if” questions. What if there were five little pigs instead of three? What if Goldilocks stayed home?

Children will use great creativity to share their thoughts on how these stories might have taken place.

Stimulate ...

Provide a comfortable place alone. A large cardboard box makes a wonderful hide-away for older children who need a break from their younger playmates.

If you place books or paper and pencils in the box, it will encourage these young ones to read and write for fun.





A Great Place to Grow

Toys and Materials

- Board games, card games, dominoes, puzzles (12-15 pieces)
- Blocks (plastic or wooden); play dough
- Glue, scissors, paper, washable markers, crayons, water colors
- Child-size tools and camping equipment

Safety Tips

- Store all cleaning products and chemicals in a locked cabinet out of children's reach. Young children like to "help out," and access to these products can be dangerous.
- Teach children the areas in the kitchen that they cannot enter. For example, a child near a stove can be in danger as oven doors and pots on the burners can cause instant burns.

HELP!

I have a five-year-old who seems to be reverting back into preschool habits. He is having a tough time separating from Dad in the morning. How can I help him through this?

Has this five-year-old recently begun attending kindergarten? As a child begins school, he may face "separation anxiety" again. This is a big change in routine for young children and may be the reason for this difficulty in saying good-bye to Dad. This five-year-old is meeting a lot of new people and his schedule has been altered. Even though he may be enjoying school, the change in daily routine may be a bit traumatic. You can help this child by keeping his routine as similar as possible while he is in your care. Also, because five-year-olds like to be in control, you might give him some responsibilities to take care of each morning when he arrives. If he focuses on what "only" he can do for you, he may focus less on his Dad leaving.

Working with Parents

Keep children's schedules clear. Talk with parents about transportation to school and other needs. Perhaps homework or reading times need to be implemented. Write down an agreement about how communication will be shared among teachers, parents, and caregivers.

What to do if you are concerned about a child's development

Child care providers are often in a position to be the first to notice when a young child has a developmental delay, chronic illness, or disability. If you suspect a child's behavior is indicating a problem:

- Talk with parents in a calm way, being careful to say that there probably isn't a problem, but that it would be worth checking out.
- Work with parents, comparing what you have seen in child care with what they have seen at home and talking together about what to do next.
- Suggest resources, community professionals, articles to read.
- Be a compassionate listener; hearing that there may be something wrong with your baby is very tough.

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Reference: Berk, L. (2000). *Child Development* (5th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.