

# Child Care Health Partnership Parent Handout – 4 year old

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

*You are your child's first teacher. Parents will be viewed as partners and treated with respect.*

- Your child will enjoy helping you with simple everyday tasks.
- Your child is almost ready for Kindergarten. If you have concerns about their readiness, be sure to share these concerns with your child's caregiver.
- Ask your child's caregiver for help in finding programs if your family needs support such as financial help, food assistance or other resources.

## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Four-year-olds best understand explanations that are short and to the point
- As they learn to manage intense emotions, your child's caregiver will encourage your child to use their words to talk about their feelings.
- Your child will be working on skills such as showing sympathy to others, problem solving, and smoothly joining group play situations.

## **Learning through Play**

- Four-year-olds pretend play is more complex and imaginative and can be sustained for longer periods of time.
- Your child's caregiver will provide activities, toys and games to encourage your child to try new experiences.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Your child has better control over the muscles in his body.
- Your child's caregiver will encourage your child to strengthen large muscles by giving them the opportunity to
  - walk on a line
  - hop on one foot
  - pedal and steer a tricycle
  - balance on one foot
  - catch, kick, throw and bounce a ball
- Your child's caregiver will encourage your child to strengthen small muscles by giving them the opportunity to
  - copy shapes, letters and numbers
  - do puzzles
  - play with toys that have small parts
  - dress and undress without assistance

## **Relationships**

- Your child's caregiver will model how to apologize and help your child to do so if they hurt someone's feelings.
- By listening and treating your child with respect, your child's caregiver is modeling how to treat others.

## **Language and Literacy**

- Your child will be able to sing a song from memory.
- Your child should be able to communicate their needs clearly at this age.
- Your child's caregiver will read books with the children everyday and ask questions to assess understanding.
- Be sure to ask your child about their day, friends and activities.
- As your child shows interest in words, your child's caregiver will engage your child by pointing out letters, playing with sounds, and making rhymes.
- Answers "what", "why" and "who" questions about the story that you have just read together.

## **Creative Arts**

- Your child will be exploring music; at this age they can identify changes in pitch, tempo, loudness and musical duration.
- Your child's art will be more realistic and may incorporate letters.
- Four-year-olds love to dance and are able to move rhythmically and smoothly.



## Healthy Active Living at Home

- Preschoolers love to do things themselves. Offer cleaned fresh fruit and vegetables in bowls where your preschooler can serve themselves to these healthy choices.
- Make meal times fun! Offer finger foods and dipping sauce. Make fun shapes with sandwiches or pasta. Make purple mashed potatoes!
- Teach your child about appropriate portion and serving sizes. Let your child practice using a measuring cup.
- Instead of letting your child eat directly out of a large bag or box, use a small cup or bowl instead.
- Praise good eating and avoid bribery. Getting your child to eat her peas by rewarding her with sweets may work in the short term, but it encourages unhealthy eating habits.
- Encourage your child to drink water if she is thirsty.
- If your child is sad or upset, offer to go on a walk, read a book, or sing songs together. This will teach your child healthy ways of coping rather than comforting himself with food.
- Food should not be used as a reward or punishment.
- Make sure that everyone who cares for your child gives healthy foods and avoids sweets.
- Make sure your family spends plenty of time being active together.
- Limit TV, video, video game time, and computer time to no more than 1-2 hours each day.
- Avoid placing a TV in your child's bedroom.
- Create opportunities for daily play and praise your child for being active.
- Be sure your child has easy access to balls, jump ropes, and other toys that encourage active play.
- Be a model for your child by exercising and being active. Children who regularly see their parents enjoying sports and physical activity are more likely to do so themselves.
- Playing games like hide and seek, kickball, freeze tag, hopscotch, and catch can help your child develop body confidence and prepare her for more advanced physical activities and school sports.
- This age is also a great time to expose preschoolers to organized sports like soccer or t-ball.

## Questions to Ask Your Child's Pediatrician

- "Is my child up-to-date with his immunizations?"
- "How do I know if my child is ready for school?"
- "What are appropriate portion sizes for my child?"



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