

## 4 year Check-up

Normal Development Your child may...

Social:

- Describe features of himself, including gender, age, interests, and strengths
- Be responsive or withdrawn
- Be friendly or hostile/aggressive
- Be cooperative or defiant
- Act appropriately for the community's or family's cultural values

Motor skills:

- Hop on one foot
- Balance on one foot for 2 seconds
- Build a tower of 8 blocks
- Copy a cross
- Draw a person with 2 body parts (head and one other part)

Sleep:

- A 4 year old sleeps about 9-10 hours a day. About 50% of 4 year olds still nap.
- Nightmares and night terrors are common at this age.
- Create a calm bedtime ritual that includes reading or telling stories to promote language development and pre-reading skills and to help your child sleep peacefully.
- Many children this age are still wet at night. This should become less and less frequent.

Diet:

- A poor appetite or limited food preference is not a major concern if your child's growth rate has been normal. Create a pleasant atmosphere at mealtimes by turning off the TV and having table conversation that includes your child.
- If your child has a balanced diet, there is no need to add vitamins or iron.

Hygiene:

- Your child should brush his teeth twice a day with a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste. He should spit out the toothpaste after brushing, but not rinse his mouth with water. Supervise tooth brushing each time.

Stimulation:

- Because children this age ask many questions, it is easy to offer too much information. It is best to keep answers short, simple, and factual.
- Model apologizing if you are wrong or have hurt someone's feelings. Help your child apologize for hurting others' feelings, too. Praise her when she demonstrates sensitivity to the feelings of others.
- Read interactively with your child. Reading with your child is important to help her like reading and be ready for school.
- As your child shows interest in words, engage her by pointing out letters, particularly the ones that begins her name ("It's a T like in Taylor!"), and playing with sounds by making rhymes of real and nonsense words ("oodles and boodles of noodles and foodles").
- Enlarge your child's experiences through trips and visits to parks and other places of interest. Take her often to the library. Ask whether she can get a library card and let her choose books that interest her.
- Consider some type of structured learning environment for your child, whether in Head Start, preschool, Sunday school, or a community program or child care center.

- Brush own teeth
- Dress self, including buttons

Language/Communication:

- Give first and last name
- Sing a song or says a poem from memory
- Know what to do if cold, tired, or hungry
- Be clearly understandable with most speech efforts

Cognitive:

- Name 4 colors
- Be aware of gender (of self and others)
- Play board/card games
- Draw a person with 3 parts
- Tell you what he thinks is going to happen next in a book

- Children may show some lack of fluency (stuttering) when speaking. As children develop speech and language skills, they often experience normal disfluencies such as repetitions of whole words, and false starts and revisions in sentences. Most children outgrow stuttering.
- Allow children to finish sentences and thoughts, do not interrupt, speak in a relaxed tone, and pause before responding.
- If you let your child watch TV, watch together and talk about what you see.
- Children should spend less than 2 hours total a day watching any type of media. They should not have a TV in their bedroom.
- Anticipate your child's normal curiosity about his body and the differences between boys and girls. Use correct terms for all body parts, including genitals. Explain to your child that certain parts of the body (those areas normally covered by a bathing suit) are private and should not be touched by others without his permission.

### Safety

- Around this age, most children will transition to a belt-positioning booster seat.
- Continue to use a size-appropriate forward-facing car seat that is properly installed in the back seat according to the manufacturer's instructions and the vehicle owner's manual until your child reaches the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer, her shoulders are above the top harness slots, or her ears come to the top of the car safety seat. When she reaches one of these limits, consider whether she is mature enough for the greater flexibility of movement allowed by a belt-positioning booster seat. If not, use a forward-facing seat with a harness with a higher weight limit or a travel vest
- We used to be worried about strangers. Now we know that abusers are often a person the child should be able to trust. Teach your child rules for how to be safe with other adults, using these 3 principles: (1) no adult should tell a child to keep secrets from parents, (2) no adult should express interest in private parts, and (3) no adult should ask a child for help with his or her own private parts.
- Never leave your child alone in the car, house, or yard, and do not expect young brothers or sister to watch over your child.
- Supervise all play near streets or driveways. Your child is not ready to cross the street alone.
- Many young children are excellent climbers. To prevent children from falling out of windows, keep furniture away from windows and install operable window guards on second- and higher-story windows.
- Young children simply do not understand how dangerous guns can be, despite your warnings. The best way to keep your child safe from injury or death from guns is to never have a gun in the home. If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, it should be stored unloaded and locked, with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.
- Children this age are naturally curious and will get into everything! Remove poisons and toxic household products from your home or keep them high and out of reach in locked cabinets. Have safety caps on all medications and lock them away.
- Keep the Poison Control Center number handy 1-800-222-1222. Do not make your child vomit.
- Be sure that your child wears a helmet when riding on a tricycle or in a seat on an adult's bicycle. Wear a helmet yourself. Make sure everyone's helmets properly fit according to the manufacturer's instructions.

### Health Maintenance

- Immunizations- See immunization handout.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol): Please go to [www.vapg.com](http://www.vapg.com) and click on "Medicine Dosages" for correct dose of tylenol.
- Your child's next check up is at 5 years age.