

TOP TIPS  
FOR  
PARENTS

## Ages & Stages (3-4 Years)



### Language & Communication Skills

#### They may be...

- Speaking in **longer**, more **complex** sentences
- Learning new words by **listening** to adults and from listening to stories
- Engaging in **pretend play**
- Asking for things, and asking **more questions** about things they enjoy
- Talking about **past experiences**

#### Key Milestones

- Able to use most speech sounds, but may distort some more difficult sounds such as **L, R, S, SH, CH, Y, V, Z, TH.**
- Attempts to describe objects
- Uses basic rules of **grammar** but makes frequent mistakes with tenses and plurals

#### Parents can...

- **Talk** about their interests
- Keep conversations going, taking turns
- **Read, read, read!** Books, magazines, even road signs!
- Help **understand** the word: What is it? What colour? Where does it come from?
- Clap the syllables—'po ....ta...to' to help with **phonics**

### Emotional Development

- Developing their **independence**, wanting to **explore** their world
- May be hesitant when facing new experiences
- **Temper tantrums** may continue as in especially stressful situations
- Some children may have trouble **being separated** from you & be upset about going to preschool, even if they like it!

- Beginning to understand **emotions**, both their own and others and may use **simple expressions** such as "I'm mad!", - "I'm sad!" - "I'm happy!" - to let you know how they feel
- Most pre-schoolers will still need a great deal of help and practice to **regulate their emotions**

- Build **emotional** vocabulary, making it easier for them to learn to use their own words to express themselves
- Use **feeling words** in your everyday conversation with your child, such as mad, sad, and happy
- Provide opportunities for your child to visit new places and try new things

## Social Development

- Demonstrating a preference to move away from parallel **play** (play near or next to each other) to **group and interactive play** (co-operate and play with others)
- Playing with others, which may bring a lot of **new challenges** for the pre-school child

- Begin to show **empathy** when another person is hurt or upset
- May be able to find simple ways to **solve arguments**
- They may still need support to help them share toys and take turns

- Play games that teach your child to **take turns** and encourage turn taking throughout the day
- Help them **accept rejection** from friends—maybe he doesn't want to play because he is shy, or wants to play by herself

## Physical Development

- Pre-school stage children have greater **gross motor skills** and are able to run, jump and climb
- Able to **push/pedal** on a trike or riding toy
- Developing upper body mobility so their **catching** and **throwing** skills are starting to emerge

### Gross Motor Skills

- Walk along a line, balance on a low beam, walk backwards.
- Can usually pedal a tricycle, catch a large ball and jump with two feet

### Fine Motor Skills

- Wash and dry their hands, make marks on paper and begin to dress themselves

- Provide plenty of opportunities to **run, climb** and **jump**
- Help develop **physical skills** & better balance and co-ordination
- Provide **arts and crafts** materials and blocks to develop fine motor skills

## Cognitive Development

- **Memories** are becoming stronger
- Often remember surprising details **imagnations** are developing
- Beginning to develop **problem solving** abilities
- **Attention skills** are improving and they are able to concentrate for short periods

- Engages in **imaginative play**, playing make believe with dolls, animals and vehicles.
- Can do simple puzzles.
- Enjoys **listening** to books and can turn pages
- Identifies **basic shapes** and **colours**

- Encourage **pretend play**, or ask them to tell you a story or tell you about their day
- Teach **simple songs** like "Incy Wincy Spider"
- Allow to help with simple chores
- **Count** everything!
- Give your child **simple choices**