
YOUR CHILD AT 4 YEARS

I. DIET/SLEEP

- A. Four year olds can be picky eaters. Letting your child help "cook" and set the table will encourage them to try new foods that they helped prepare. Eating together as a family is important. They often have trouble sitting still and quite frequently tend to interrupt the meal by getting up and moving around. Establishing simple rules of what behaviors will be tolerated will help mealtimes not become a source of tension.
- B. Your child should have 3-4 servings per day of milk, cheese, yogurt or orange juice with calcium in order for adequate bone growth.
- C. **SLEEP:** It is important that your child get enough sleep at night since naps have often ended by this age. Sleeping 10-12 hours/night is common at this age. Your child may develop night terrors at this age; they require gentle reassurance.

II. DEVELOPMENT

- A. Developmental milestones at this age include imitating drawing a square, counting 4 objects, skipping on one foot, washing and drying their hands and face and brushing their teeth. They are able to play cooperatively with other children, dress and undress with supervision, sing a song, and throw a ball overhand. When they draw a person, it usually consists of just a head, arms, and legs.
- B. Reading with her every day greatly assists language development and comprehension.
- C. By this age, you should be able to understand all of his speech.
- D. Help strengthen your child's self esteem by celebrating their successes, being respectful of their wishes, and letting your child feel important. Don't forget, however, that you are the parent.

III. SAFETY

- A. Daily routines are important. Remember to reinforce limits. Limit television, video, and computer time.
- B. Your child may use a booster seat at 40 pounds (not necessarily at 4 years of age). Booster seats with high backs are the preferred type to help protect your child's neck.
- C. Teach your child about safety while playing outside, never cross streets alone or play outside alone without known adult supervision.
- D. Teeth should be brushed twice daily with a pea sized amount of toothpaste and she should be seen by the dentist twice a year. Limit juice and sugary snacks, especially sticky snacks. This is especially important before bedtime to prevent cavities.
- E. Always use bike helmets. Limit sun exposure and apply sunscreen (SPF 30) routinely.
- F. If you have any weapons, they should be kept unloaded and in a locked cabinet.
- G. All poisons and medications should be kept out of reach of children. The number for **Poison Control** is 1-800-222-1222.

IV. OTHER

- A. The child's next office visit will be at age 5 years.
- B. Preschool booster doses of DtaP and Polio will be given at this time. Should your child sustain any dirty wounds, they will have Tetanus protection for the next 5 years.