

Your 4 – Year – Old



— Goldsboro —
Pediatrics P. A.

Call our office:

- If your child has a fever over 104° orally after immunizations, or is extremely lethargic or irritable.
- If you have any questions or concerning your child's behavior or development
- If you have concerns involving school or social issues.

Developmental Issues

- Most 4 – year – olds should be able to hop on one foot, balance on one foot and walk up and down steps with alternating gait.
- Your 4 – year – old may be able to draw a circle, a cross, a person with several body parts and cut with scissors.
- Some 4 – year – olds have an imaginary friend and may not know the difference between reality and fantasy. They may think dreams really happen.
- Your 4 – year – old may ask why and when often. Their speech should be easily understood by everyone and in full sentences using at least 6 words.
- Most 4 – year – olds should be able to play board or card games, wait their turn and be able to share.
- Children at this age should be able to dress themselves, brush their teeth, eat with utensils and be toilet trained for both urine and bowel movements.
- Read to your child every day!

Nutrition

- Eating habits your child develops now will probably stay with them the rest of their life.
- Parents should make at least one meal a day special and a pleasant family time.
- Here are some suggestions to help make sure your child begins to develop good eating habits.
 1. Offer your child small portions with seconds only if they ask.
 2. Parents can help minimize the risk of cavities and excess calories by limiting snacks to healthy foods twice a day. Some examples of healthy foods are fruit and fruit juices, carrot, celery or cucumber sticks, yogurt, toast or crackers, oatmeal cookies, bran muffins or cheese.
 3. Do not use food as a reward for good behavior.
 4. Do not use food as a pacifier. If your child needs attention talk and play with them.
 5. Do not allow your child to eat while watching T.V., playing or listening to stories. Children will eat past the point of being full which leads to over eating.
 6. Monitor how many high calorie foods your child eats on an average day. Average calories intake per day should be about 40 calories per pound of body weight or 900-1800 calories. Avoid sweets.
 7. Your child's activity level may affect their appetite. Today they may eat everything in sight and tomorrow they may refuse everything. Do not force your child to eat. They will not starve. However, if a major decrease in appetite is present with other signs of illness such as fever, nausea, diarrhea or weight loss consult your health care provider.
 8. Four – year – olds need approximately one pint (16 ounces) of milk a day to meet calcium requirements.

Sleeping

- Most 4 – year – olds respond to a calm bedtime ritual such as reading a story.
- Nightmares and night terrors are common at this age. If your child experiences this temporary sleep disturbance reassure him: "You're fine, mommy and daddy are here." Help him settle down by holding him, talking about the dream (if he remembers) and staying with him until he is calm.
- Parents should make sure their children are not frightened by books, movies or T.V. shows

The following information may help parents better deal with T.V. and its influence on children.

- T.V. violence can and does lead to real life violence.
- T.V. characters, both good and bad use violence to solve problems.
- Some children learn to fight and become victims by watching violence on T.V.

- Many children see violence as painless and funny and encourage friends to fight
- Parents should limit their child's T.V. watching to 2 hours a day or less.
- Know what your child is watching. Do not put a T.V. in your child's room and use a blocking device if necessary to stop unauthorized viewing.
- Watch T.V. with your child. Ask question such as: Is this real or pretend? Is this the way to solve a problem?

Parenting

- Educate your 4 year old about social rules and limits on their behaviors.
- Give clearly stated limits and consequences if rules are broken.
- Reprimand children for bad behavior in private.
- Time out or isolation is an effective means to discipline a 4 year old.
- Praise, encouragement and respect are powerful in bringing about acceptable behavior in children.

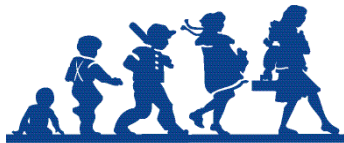
Safety Tips

Four – year – olds can jump, run, pedal a tricycle and move at lightening speed. They may fall off play equipment, out of windows, down stairs and off things they have climbed on.

- Lock the doors to any dangerous area
- Use gates at the top and bottom of staircases.
- Use window guards on windows above the first floor.
- Fence in the play yard.
- If your child has a serious fall, call our office.
- Hot surfaces such as irons, curling irons, wall heaters and kitchen appliances are real dangers to your child long after you have finished using them.
- While parents are preparing meals, children should stay out of the kitchen. Hot liquids, foods and grease spilled or splattered can cause serious burns. Reduce the temperature of your hot water to 120° - 130° F.
- If your child receives a burn, put cold water on the area and cover loosely with a bandage or clean cloth.
- Keep household products and medicines safely capped and out of sight & reach.
N.C. Poison control #1-800-848-6946
- Use an appropriate car safety seat and seat belt every time your child is in the car.

Car Safety

- All children who weigh more than 40 lbs. should be in an adult seatbelt when they are automobile passengers.
- Children over 55 inches in height should use the combination shoulder and lap belt.
- Heavy loose objects should be placed in the trunk or on the roof rack to prevent injuring the passengers in the event of an accident.
- Keep all doors locked while the car is in motion.
- Prohibit children and other passengers from extending their heads or limbs outside the car window.
- Never leave children unattended in the car.



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