

PLAIN TALK

FOR PARENTS

About Your Five- to Six-Year-Old Child

Every Child and Parent is Unique.

This brochure highlights some general patterns of growth and development that apply to most children.

As you watch, listen to, and play with your child, you will discover when she or he is ready for new activities and skills. You will find your own ways to use old and new ideas, to fit your individual personality, your family life, and your child's needs.

General Traits:

- Enjoys jump rope, riding toys, and throwing balls
- Likes to be helpful
- Enjoys increasingly complicated jigsaw puzzles
- Loves to cut, trace, draw, paste, string beads
- Beginning to understand right and wrong; is interested in the ideas of fairness and justice
- May be able to print first name, the first letter of last name, and write two or three numbers recognizably
- Likes to talk, talk, talk
- Frightening dreams are frequent
- Eats very adequately but manners are still far short of adult standards
- Beginning to play games with rules (such as tag)



What a Parent Can Do

- Encourage pride in successes and pay more attention to them than to mistakes.
- Encourage activities with an adult such as sports, cooking, shopping.
- Be clear about the things you expect: "Please take out the trash bag now."
- Set firm limits. Indicate disapproval of fighting, hitting and teasing, or using bad language. Children learn by watching their parents, so avoid shouting and name-calling.
- Be sympathetic of failure and help your child express disappointment.
- Children need help understanding the difference between truth and fantasy, fooling and lying.
- Give your child a chance to take on new responsibilities.

Toys for the 5- to 6-year-old

- Scraps of material, paper to paste
- Play dough
- Puzzles with 14-16 pieces
- Felt-tip pens
- Blocks in various sizes
- Large bats and balls
- Cars, trucks, small animals and people
- Costume box: hats, scarves, jewelry, old clothes
- Crayons and colored pencils, scissors, paste
- Beads and large buttons to string
- Books, magazines to read, cut and paste
- Simple card and board games
- Paper, brushes and watercolors
- Lego or other connecting blocks

- Prepare your child for kindergarten. Visit the school with your child and be positive about school experiences. Accept fearfulness about school as normal. Talk with the teacher often about how your child is doing, likes and dislikes, and school activities.
- Accept mistakes and try not to take over the job.
- Break tasks down into small, easy-to-follow steps.

This information was adapted from St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center Guide to Health with their permission.

For additional copies, contact the Child Care Information Center 1.800.362.7353 or visit www.ccic.wi.gov



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