

AGES & STAGES

5 years



The 5-year-old is cheerful, energetic, and enthusiastic. Fives enjoy planning and discussing who will do what. A “best friend” is very important, but hard to keep as social skills are not well developed yet.

5-YEAR-OLDS

Growing and Moving

WEIGHT: 31-57 pounds

HEIGHT: 39-48 inches

- sleeps 10-11 hours at night
- may begin to lose baby teeth
- uses a fork and knife well
- cuts on a line with scissors
- shows preference for using left or right hand
- able to dress self with little assistance
- jumps over low objects
- learns to skip
- throws ball overhead
- catches bounced balls
- rides a tricycle skillfully, may show interest in riding a bicycle with training wheels

Thinking and Learning

- knows basic colors like red, yellow, blue, green, orange
- has better memory skills; able to memorize address and favorite stories
- invents games with simple rules
- more likely now to draw pictures that represent animals, people and objects
- identifies a few numbers
- counts up to 10 objects accurately by touch
- begins to understand how to sort and classify: size, shape, or type
- understands more, less, and same, yesterday, today and tomorrow
- understands before and after, above and below, forward and backward
- is project minded—plans buildings, play scenarios, and drawings
- interested in cause and effect



TOYS



Toys

board games, card games, dominoes, puzzles (12 -15 pieces)

large and small blocks (plastic or wooden)

glue, scissors, paper, washable markers, crayons, water colors, playdough

puppets; doll clothes, dollhouse; dress-up clothes

trucks, cars, large cardboard, boxes (large appliance size)

child-size tools; camping equipment

Listening, Talking, and Reading

- has expanding vocabulary: uses 5-8 words in a sentence
- likes back-and-forth- conversations with adults
- understands that books are read from left to right, top to bottom
- understands that stories have a beginning, middle, and end
- enjoys telling stories, riddles, and jokes
- likes both fiction "story" books and non-fiction books about animals, butterflies, rocks
- identifies some letters of the alphabet
- enjoys tracing or copying letters and numbers

Feeling and Relating

- organizes other children and toys for pretend play
- likes to argue, reason and sometimes bargain
- still confuses fantasy with reality sometimes
- better at taking turns, but often excludes other children in play—best friends only
- likes to try new things, take risks and make own decisions
- notices when another child is angry or sad—more sensitive to feelings of others
- likes to feel grown up; boasts about self to younger less capable children
- enjoys testing strength and physical skill, but not emotionally ready for competition with others
- has a very basic understanding of right and wrong
- understands and respects rules—often asks permission
- understands and enjoys both giving and receiving
- enjoys collecting things
- likes to "hide-away" in a special place

LET'S TALK!

Ideas to help children build communication skills

Demonstrate and teach skills. Five-year-olds are eager to learn new skills and are willing helpers. Teach them the basics of how to properly set a table, how to write specific letters or numbers, how to use a broom, and how to pour juice from a pitcher. Talk with them as they practice each task and help them become confident in each new skill.





Books for Children

A Chair for My Mother
Vera Williams

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day
Judith Viorst

Bread and Jam for Frances
Russell Hoban and Lillian Hoban

Ira Sleeps Over
Bernard Waber

Imogene's Antlers
David Small

Harry and the Terrible Whatzit
Dick Gackenbach

Owl Moon
Jane Yolen

Snow Balls
Lois Ehlert

The Art Lesson
Tomie dePaola and Tony Johnston

The Kissing Hand
Audrey Penn

The Quilt Story
Tony Johnston and Tomie dePaola

The Very Lonely Firefly
Eric Carle

IDEAS TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT

- Help children fine-tune physical skills by playing follow the leader with skipping, galloping, hopping or tossing a ball at a target.
- Help children learn to use a pair of scissors by cutting out coupons or ads.
- Stop before the end of a familiar story and ask your five-year-old to create a new ending.
- Ask your child to tell you a story. Write it down and post it on the wall or refrigerator.
- Ask "what if" questions and explain why and how things happen. What if there were five little pigs instead of three? What if Goldilocks stayed home? Why do we have to put air in tires?
- Help your child be a good observer by using their senses: look, listen, touch, taste and smell.
- Involve children in writing "thank you" notes, holiday greeting cards, and letters. If your child likes to copy letters, let him or her dictate a short message and copy it from your writing.
- Give your child opportunities to sort, group, match, count, and sequence with real-life situations such as setting the table, counting the number of turns, and sorting out socks.
- Help children understand and cope with strong feelings by giving them words to use when they are angry. "I can see you are sad about going home, angry at your friend"
- Observe how your child plays with other children. Teach him or her to request, bargain, negotiate, and apologize.
- Be specific with your praise. Say, "I like the way you stacked the toys neatly on the shelf" rather than "You did a good job!"
- Provide a comfortable place to be alone. A large cardboard box makes a wonderful hideaway.

A Word on Development

Every child is unique. Each child's learning and growth rates may differ slightly from other children the same age. If, however, you notice a child is unable to do many of the skills listed for his or her age group, you may wish to talk with a health professional. In Iowa, you may request a free evaluation and assessment from **Early ACCESS** at 1-888-425-4371. www.iafamilysupportnetwork.org/early-access-iowa

If your child has special needs, early help can make a difference.

Resources

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

- Human Sciences www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences
- Extension Store store.extension.iastate.edu

Search "Ages and Stages" for information about specific development milestones.

The developmental information provided in this bulletin has been combined from a variety of professional resources to help you understand your child's overall growth. It is not a standardized measurement tool.

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Ages & Stages 5 Year-Olds is available online at: store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/5026.

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