



Fabulous Five-Year-Olds

Cheerful, exciting, and lots of energy! These are good ways to describe five-year-olds. They love to plan and will take a lot of time to talk about who does what. They care about the feelings of others. It isn't as hard for them to wait for their turn or share as it is for younger children.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

Remember — every child is different. They may learn and grow at different rates.

DOING SKILLS

- Throws a ball overhead
- Uses a fork and knife
- Catches bounced ball
- Rides a tricycle easily
- Cuts on a line with scissors
- Skips and runs on tiptoe
- Jumps rope
- May be able to tie shoelaces

THINKING SKILLS

- Able to memorize address and telephone number
- Sorts objects by size
- Counts up to 10
- Understands that stories have a beginning, middle, and end
- Knows some letters of the alphabet and a few numbers

Five-year-olds are learning to wait and share. Pretend play is a favorite activity.

- Understands before and after; above and below; more, less, and same
- May confuse dreams with real life

TALKING SKILLS

- Likes to argue and reason
- Like to tell stories
- Enjoys riddles and jokes

SKILLS WITH OTHERS

- Makes up games with simple rules
- Likes to pretend play with other children
- Can be bossy at times
- Likes to have a best friend
- Often fears loud noises, the dark, animals, and some people
- Has an understanding of right and wrong
- Likes to feel grown up

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

- Play “Follow the Leader” with skipping, jumping, and hopping.
- Play games that can teach directions like “Hokey Pokey” and “Simon Says.”

- Have children practice using scissors by cutting out coupons.
- Stop before reading the end of a story and ask the child to make up an ending.
- Ask “what if” questions. What if there was a swimming pool in the back yard? What if there were five little pigs instead of three?
- Give children things to sort, group, match, and count, such as matching socks, setting the table, counting the number of turns, etc.
- Set out lots of props for pretend play.
- Read silly stories, rhymes and riddles, tell jokes.
- Give them old small appliances and other junk to take apart and put together.



Pennsylvania Pathways

Professional Development
for Child Caregivers

PENNSYLVANIA



Cooperative Extension
College of Agricultural Sciences

Developed by Lyn Horning, Better Kid Care Program

Dr. James E. Van Horn, Better Kid Care Program Director

Developed by Penn State Better Kid Care Program

253 Easterly Parkway, State College, PA 16801 • Phone: 1-800-452-9108 • Website: betterkidcare.psu.edu.

Sources: Ages and Stages — Five-Year-Olds, by Lesia Oesterreich; The Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care, by Diane Trister Dodge and Laura Colker

Supported by funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Pennsylvania Pathways Program.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the diversity of its work force.