

Welcome to Group Care!



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
Health

Head Start and other programs that serve infants and toddlers provide your child a safe environment to learn. We believe you are your child's first teacher. Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers are viewed as partners. We promise to...

- Value individual culture, beliefs, and traditions in raising children
- Listen to any concerns you have as your child gets ready for kindergarten
- Support and encourage you through your child's enrollment
- Provide you with daily reports on how your child is doing

Social and Emotional Development

Now that your child is 4 years of age, he is working on managing his emotions and developing skills such as showing sympathy, problem solving, and smoothly joining group play.

- We help your child use his words to talk about feelings
- He enjoys being helpful
- We allow children to help with meal setting and transitions
- When your son asks, "Why...?" we explain in short and simple ways

Learning through Play

Children with positive experiences in dramatic, pretend play are better able to cope with change later in life.

- We provide activities, toys, and games to encourage him to try new things
- His pretend play is more complex and imaginative, and he can pretend play for longer periods of time
- You can provide time for him to pretend play at home



Physical Development

Your child has better control over muscles in his body. He also has muscle strength to perform challenging activities such as turning somersaults and doing a standing broad jump.

Gross motor development

- He strengthens his gross motor development when he
 - Walks on a line
 - Hops on one foot
 - Pedals and steers a tricycle
 - Balances on one foot
 - Catches, kicks, throws, and bounces a ball

School readiness begins with health!

Fine motor development

- He strengthens his fine motor development when he
 - Copies shapes, letters, and numbers
 - Works on puzzles
 - Plays with toys that have small parts
 - Dresses and undresses without help
- Enjoy time as a family hopping, jumping, and playing catch
- He is ready for simple responsibilities, so give him time to dress and undress by himself

Relationships

By 4 years of age, he is beginning to learn what it means to be a friend. He will have fun times as well as arguments and hurt feelings.

- We will model how to apologize and help him apologize if he hurts someone's feelings
- We will model how your child should treat others
- We will listen to him and treat him with respect
- You can be a great model at home too!

Language and Literacy

Many people believe that children learn to read and write in kindergarten or first grade. However, basics for literacy start well before children enter school.

- Reading and writing skills develop as
 - Your child can sing a song from memory
 - He can communicate his needs clearly
 - He shows interest in words
- We read books every day! We ask questions to find out what your child understands

- Four-year-olds can answer what, why, and who questions about stories that have been read to them. Ask your child what, why, and who questions
- We point out letters, play with sounds, and make rhymes
- Be sure to ask your child about his day

Creative Arts

Your child has more control over his hand and finger movements. Arts and crafts are becoming more exciting for him now. His favorite activities may include writing, drawing, painting, playing card games, and building blocks. He will be exploring music. At this age, he will notice changes in pitch, tempo, loudness, and musical duration.

- We turn on music so he can dance and move
- His art will be more realistic. It may include letters
- You can turn up music and dance with your child
- You can ask your child about his artwork

Questions to Ask Your Baby's Pediatrician

- “Is my child up-to-date with his immunizations?”
- “How do I know if my child is ready for school?”
- “What are appropriate portion sizes for my child?”