

## **DEVELOPMENTAL PROFILE FOR PRE-K STUDENTS AGE 4**

### **Physical Development**

- Children usually relish outdoor play (sliding, tricycling, playing in water, running, swinging, etc.).
- Jungle gyms may be a passion.
- Vivid dramatic and imaginative play is common.
- Bowels are usually under control, though bed-wetting is still occurring for some.
- This is a noisy age and even when alone the child may converse with self. Imaginative play includes lots of verbalizations.
- Language is exciting for the child with plays on words, nursery rhymes, and silly word plays consuming much time and energy.
- Meals and food are often an issue at this age. Taking away all forms of junk food and serving small portions may help.

### **Emotional Development**

- Egocentrism (a belief that others are experiencing the world as they themselves are) is common.
- When the child does not wish to conform, there are frequent tantrums, eruptions, and verbal protests.
- This may be a very stormy age. Words like unrestrained and out-of-bounds describe the sort of energy a child of this age possesses.
- Words that describe this age may include enthusiastic, spontaneous, excited, happy, and combustible.
- Giving a child of this age choices works best as encouragement.
- Modeling appropriate behavior helps the child learn better behavior.
- Imaginative materials and ideas will help distract the child at those times when self-control flags.
- Children in this age group need routine rest and quiet time to help them cope better with emotional stress.

### **Philosophical/Moral Development**

- The child is pre-moral (does not understand intentions behind behaviors) and may talk about and think about God rather often.
- The difference between fantasy and reality is rather fuzzy for this age group.
- Lying is generally an effort not to get caught rather than an act of naughtiness. There is seldom a real awareness of lying until it is brought to the child's attention.
- Cheating is usually a reflection of the child's wish to compete and win.
- Losing a game is nearly beyond this age's ability to do with composure.
- Stubbornness, not meanness, is the cause of most disharmony.
- Taking things is common, but is seldom done with malice (meanness). The motive is usually because the child wonders and wishes for the object and that takes precedence over self-control.
- The fantasy world is quite compelling.

### **Social Development**

- Child loves to role play and be helpful.
- Interest in friends seems paramount and passionate.
- Bathroom privacy is often insisted upon.
- Encourage and model any behaviors desired, since this is an optimal time for learning through modeling. This would include sharing, helping, and controlling one's temper.
- Hero worship is common for this age group. It may help a child to act more appropriately if asked to behave as a favorite hero might or to get the job done as "Superman" would.
- Play can be extended and children need less supervision, but frequent adult checks are important as are nourishing snacks and short rest times. Doing these things may help the child feel more in control of self, and less frantic.

## Intellectual/Cognitive Development

- The child develops concrete constructs or object permanence (being able to think about an object even when it is not there).
- Language, word play and word usage are nearly a passion.
- For many children, talking is almost constant even when alone.
- Skill in manipulating other individuals increases.
- Love of music shows is great.
- TV may mesmerize.
- Overgeneralization as a way of classifying and thinking shows up in language (e.g., Dogs are brown.)
- Questions are at an all time high.
- Many can count.
- Sense of space is expanding.