

**Development**

Your child should be able to hop and skip, walk on tiptoes, wash and dry their hands, brush their teeth with assistance, cut and paste, identify coins, count to 10, name 4 or 5 colors, copy a triangle and square, have a mature pencil grasp, and draw a person with 6 different body parts. They can tell a simple story, has good articulation, defines at least one word such as “ball” or “shoe”, and uses proper pronouns. They should begin to understand right from wrong, fair from unfair, and the concept that games have rules. Encourage competence, independence, and self-responsibility by having her participate in household chores such as setting and clearing the table, tidying up her own room, and dressing themselves. Support your child in helping others and continue to demonstrate good behaviors for them to model. Teach right from wrong and help your child to treat others as they want to be treated. Set the goal for discipline to teach appropriate behaviors and self-control, not including physical punishment. Remember to show affection toward your child and praise them appropriately and liberally which may shape behavior more than restrictions or discipline.

Inappropriate or excessive media use has been associated with attention problems, impaired sleep, school difficulties, vision changes, and obesity. Any media exposure should be limited to 60 minutes per day and be of good quality. Watch and discuss programs or apps with your child when possible. Check out [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org) for recommendations. Do not use TV, phone or iPad as a substitute for interaction with your child. Turn off devices during meals and use this time every day to talk with your child. Read to your child every day and ask her about the stories. Keep them active, striving for at least 1 hour of physical activity every day. Be a role model by being physically active yourself and find activities the family can enjoy together. Engage in guided, interactive play with your child several times a day, but also encourage free time play.

**Behavior**

When their child turns five, many parents wonder, “Is my child ready to start school?” Consider the social, emotional, and academic realms. Children ready for kindergarten should play well with peers, take turns, follow simple directions, conform to simple rules regarding behavior, feed and dress themselves, and be able to separate from home for at least half a day. Having a successful experience in preschool is helpful. Academically, they should know their letters and numbers, print their name, and know their phone number and address. Your child’s preschool teacher is best able to judge their readiness. If your child meets most of these guidelines, they should be ready to enroll in kindergarten.

**Diet**

At this age children begin to broaden their experiences of eating outside the home and are expected to make their own choices about what to eat. This is a good time to talk with your child about appropriate food choices. Ensure adequate calcium and Vitamin D intake, which may be difficult if they do not want to continue dairy products. 12–16 oz of low fat or fat free milk each day plus an additional low-fat yogurt or cheese should meet these requirements. If your child does not consume dairy, consider supplementing with fortified orange juice, pea milk, or fortified cereals. Please check labels as some “milks” are not fortified with either.

Eat together as a family as much as possible. Water should always be available and should be regularly offered to children. Try not to offer drinks that have sugar such as sodas, fruit juices, and sports drinks. Offer a variety of healthy foods to your child, including fruits, vegetables, and protein sources. Trust

your child to determine when they are hungry or full and never encourage them to eat calories not asked for. Do not fall into the trap of making a separate meal if they refuse what you have prepared. This only encourages picky eating. Instead, have healthy snacks on hand when your child determines they are hungry. Some examples of healthy snacks include: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean protein, beans, legumes, nuts and seeds, and low fat & non-fat dairy.

### Oral health

Use a soft toothbrush with a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste twice a day. Allow them to try brushing on occasion to avoid conflict, but children at this age do not have the dexterity to brush effectively. Aim for 2 minutes per day with flossing once a day. Your child should be seeing a dentist regularly and should have fluoride applied every 6 months. Limit their consumption of sweetened beverages and snacks with sugar. Discuss the importance of taking care of their teeth.

### Safety

Keep firearms stored unloaded and locked in a safe with ammunition stored separately. It's important to keep your car, home, and other places where your child spends time, free of tobacco smoke and E-cigarette vapor. Move dangerous chemicals out of your child's reach. If your child ingests anything potentially poisonous, **call Poison Control at 800-222-1222**. Kitchen safety includes turning pot handles towards the back of the stove, making sure your child cannot reach the microwave, and not leaving hot liquids or heavy objects on a table that they may pull down.

The current car seat recommendations are to keep your child in a forward-facing car seat until they have exceeded the seat's height or weight limits. The longer they remain in a 5-point harness the safer they will be. Once they have outgrown those limits you can use a high back or belt-positioning booster seat. Your own safe driving behaviors are important as well. Use a seat belt. Do not drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and do not text or use mobile devices while driving. Never leave your child in the car unattended. Teach your child safe street habits, like stopping at the curb and looking left, right, and then left again before crossing. Children should use a properly fitted, approved helmet every time when riding a bike or skating.

It is important to supervise your child around any body of water. If you have a pool, it should be fully enclosed and equipped with self-closing gates. A supervising adult should be within an arm's length, providing "touch supervision" whenever children are in or around water. Even for better swimmers, one parent should be assigned as "water watcher," whose eyes and attention do not leave the swimmer. Never leave a child in charge of other children and have clear hand-offs between "water watchers." **REMEMBER, IT ONLY TAKES SECONDS TO DROWN.** Parents and children should learn to swim, and parents should know CPR. When outside, protective clothing should be worn, and sunscreen should be applied. See the [sunscreen](#) page in the parent information section of our website.

### What to expect at this visit

A developmental screen should be completed before this visit. We ask parents to complete a screening for social determinants of health form to provide the best care for your child. We will check your child's hearing and vision today. Please let us know if your child has any exposure to lead or you're worried about the iron in their diet. No immunizations are scheduled for this visit, though flu and COVID vaccines may be given, if in season. See our [Medication Dosing Guide](#) for dosing of acetaminophen and ibuprofen.

Influenza injection



Nasal Influenza



COVID

