Your Child at 4 Years

Child's Name _____ Child's Age _____ Today's Date _____

Milestones matter! How your child plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves offers important clues about his or her development. Check the milestones your child has reached by age 4. Take this with you and talk with your child's doctor at every well-child visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next.

What Most Children Do by this Age:

Social/Emotional

- ☐ Enjoys doing new things
- ☐ Plays "Mom" and "Dad"
- ☐ Is more and more creative with make-believe play
- ☐ Would rather play with other children than by himself
- ☐ Cooperates with other children
- ☐ Often can't tell what's real and what's make-believe
- ☐ Talks about what she likes and what she is interested in

Language/Communication

- ☐ Knows some basic rules of grammar, such as correctly using "he" and "she"
- ☐ Sings a song or says a poem from memory such as the "Itsy Bitsy Spider" or the "Wheels on the Bus"
- ☐ Tells stories
- ☐ Can say first and last name

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- ☐ Names some colors and some numbers
- ☐ Understands the idea of counting
- ☐ Starts to understand time
- ☐ Remembers parts of a story
- ☐ Understands the idea of "same" and "different"
- ☐ Draws a person with 2 to 4 body parts
- ☐ Uses scissors
- ☐ Starts to copy some capital letters
- ☐ Plays board or card games
- ☐ Tells you what he thinks is going to happen next in a book

Movement/Physical Development

- ☐ Hops and stands on one foot up to 2 seconds
- ☐ Catches a bounced ball most of the time
- ☐ Pours, cuts with supervision, and mashes own food

You Know Your Child Best.

Act early if you have concerns about the way your child plays, learns, speaks, acts, or moves, or if your child:

- ☐ Is missing milestones
- ☐ Can't jump in place
- ☐ Has trouble scribbling
- ☐ Shows no interest in interactive games or make-believe
- ☐ Ignores other children or doesn't respond to people outside the family
- ☐ Resists dressing, sleeping, and using the toilet
- ☐ Can't retell a favorite story
- ☐ Doesn't follow 3-part commands
- ☐ Doesn't understand "same" and "different"
- ☐ Doesn't use "me" and "you" correctly
- ☐ Speaks unclearly
- ☐ Loses skills he once had

Tell your child's doctor or nurse if you notice any of these signs of possible developmental delay and ask for a developmental screening.

If you or the doctor is still concerned

1. Ask for a referral to a specialist and,
2. Call any local public elementary school for a free evaluation to find out if your child can get services to help.

For more information, go to **cdc.gov/Concerned**.

DON'T WAIT.
Acting early can make a real difference!

Help Your Child Learn and Grow

You can help your child learn and grow. Talk, read, sing, and play together every day. Below are some activities to enjoy with your 4-year-old child today.

What You Can Do for Your 4-Year-Old:

- ☐ Play make-believe with your child. Let her be the leader and copy what she is doing.
- ☐ Suggest your child pretend play an upcoming event that might make him nervous, like going to preschool or staying overnight at a grandparent's house.
- ☐ Give your child simple choices whenever you can. Let your child choose what to wear, play, or eat for a snack. Limit choices to 2 or 3.
- ☐ During play dates, let your child solve her own problems with friends, but be nearby to help out if needed.
- ☐ Encourage your child to use words, share toys, and take turns playing games of one another's choice.
- ☐ Give your child toys to build imagination, like dress-up clothes, kitchen sets, and blocks.
- ☐ Use good grammar when speaking to your child. Instead of "Mommy wants you to come here," say, "I want you to come here."
- ☐ Use words like "first," "second," and "finally" when talking about everyday activities. This will help your child learn about sequence of events.
- ☐ Take time to answer your child's "why" questions. If you don't know the answer, say "I don't know," or help your child find the answer in a book, on the Internet, or from another adult.
- ☐ When you read with your child, ask him to tell you what happened in the story as you go.
- ☐ Say colors in books, pictures, and things at home. Count common items, like the number of snack crackers, stairs, or toy trains.
- ☐ Teach your child to play outdoor games like tag, follow the leader, and duck, duck, goose.
- ☐ Play your child's favorite music and dance with your child. Take turns copying each other's moves.

Milestones adapted from CARING FOR YOUR BABY AND YOUNG CHILD: BIRTH TO AGE 5, Fifth Edition, edited by Steven Shelov and Tanya Remer Altmann © 1991, 1993, 1998, 2004, 2009 by the American Academy of Pediatrics and BRIGHT FUTURES: GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH SUPERVISION OF INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND ADOLESCENTS, Third Edition, edited by Joseph Hagan, Jr., Judith S. Shaw, and Paula M. Duncan, 2008, Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics.

This milestone checklist is not a substitute for a standardized, validated developmental screening tool.