

# Back to Basics



## How it feels to be a preschooler

### 3 years old

- I love to run, jump, and climb.
- I can feed myself.
- I'm fascinated with my body and want to know what each part is for.
- I know the difference between one and two and "lots of."
- I can point to red, yellow, green, blue, black, brown, and white.
- I like hearing the same story over and over.
- I know what my scribbles mean even if you don't.
- I'm starting to let one thing stand for something else—a box for a telephone, for example.
- Sometimes I play with an imaginary friend.
- When Mom and Dad leave, I can handle it better but I still don't like it.
- I can be mad and hurtful one minute and happy and kind the next.
- When I'm afraid or upset, I sometimes go back to sucking my thumb, wetting my pants, or talking like a baby.
- I love getting hugs and kisses and climbing into your lap.

### 4 years old

- I can skip, turn somersaults, and catch a ball.
- I can dress myself. I know how to use zippers, buttons, and snaps.
- I'm beginning to recognize letters and numbers, especially on road signs for gas stations and fast-food restaurants.
- I'm learning to count, and that 4 stands for four things.
- I ask a lot of questions. I want to know things like: Where does it come from? Why does that happen? How does it work? What happens when you die?
- I'm learning the difference between what is real and not real.
- I draw pictures that are starting to look like the real thing.
- I like to help, especially when it's a grown-up job like setting the table.
- I'm beginning to understand rules, but I need to know why we have them.
- I play a lot with other children and am learning what it takes to get along.
- I can make up stories and games.
- I like to collect things.

- Since I know more, I may be scared of more things—like the dark.
- I need your approval and may ask for it in lots of small ways.

### 5 years old

- I can ride a tricycle easily and pump myself when swinging.
- I can lace my shoes and am learning to tie a bow.
- I can pronounce most letter sounds like s, g, and k.
- I can say my full name, address, and phone number.
- I like working puzzles.
- I love hearing stories, singing songs, and playing dress-up.
- I'm beginning to develop a sense of humor.
- I'm still self-centered, but I'm beginning to realize that other people have feelings.
- I'm starting to work out my own problems.
- I like being the leader.
- I'm starting to compete and compare myself to other children.
- I get hurt or upset if I'm ignored or teased.



## TO MY CHILDCARE PROVIDER,

### Thank you for:

- ☺ Having a cubby with my name, where I can keep my blankey, teddy bear and treasures I may make during the day. It makes me feel like I belong here.
- ☺ Providing consistency in routines such as toileting, eating, and nap times. It makes me feel safe.
- ☺ Having furniture that is my size. It lets me know that this is a place where children are welcome.
- ☺ Storing materials on low shelves where I can get them easily. This gives me ideas for play.
- ☺ Putting picture labels on the shelves so I know where each toy belongs. This makes clean-up easy for me.
- ☺ Making a small quiet cozy area with soft pillows. This lets me take a break when I need a quiet time alone.
- ☺ Setting up the room so that the blocks are in a protected area so that the things I work so hard to build stay safe.
- ☺ Rotating the toys each week so that there is always something new to play with so I don't get bored.
- ☺ Putting fun happy pictures on the wall at my eye level so I don't have to always kink my neck and look up.
- ☺ Letting me play outside everyday and having fun materials and activities that let me use my muscles to run and jump and climb.
- ☺ Always speaking to me in a gentle voice, even when I make mistakes.
- ☺ Reading me a story everyday and never getting tired when I ask you to read the same story over and over. This is preparing me to be a good reader some day.
- ☺ Remembering that I am a beginner and not expecting me to do everything perfectly.
- ☺ Providing fun activities for me like these:

### **Come Out to Play!**

Stand in a corner of the play yard. The children call, "Cindy, Cindy come out to play." Respond that you can't because you are "Taking a bath" then act it out. The children call again and again and each time you give a different response: "I'm eating a snack, reading a book, brushing my teeth." Finally you say, "Okay" and chase the children until you catch one. That person is the next "It."

### **Jungle Hunt!**

Hide plastic jungle animals in your outdoor play area. Give each child a container to "capture" the wild animals and then turn them loose to go "hunting". Do a wild jungle dance when all the animals are "captured."

### **Dig It!**

Conceal small objects in the sandbox. Give each child a safe digging tool and a card with the picture of the item they are to find. After they find the item on their card they bury it again and trade cards with someone else.

Love from,  
your pre-school age child