

# your child: from 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 years

## From Observer to Explorer: The Most Important Developmental Achievements

### SOCIAL

#### Typically Can:

- Play cooperatively with 2-5 children
- Enjoy going visiting
- Be quite competitive
- Enjoy group play and circle time
- Become embarrassed to be seen nude
- Show social skills of giving, sharing and receiving
- Show concern for children in distress

#### Emerging Skills:

- Develop an interest in team sports and activities
- Has sleepovers with friends
- Begin to plan social times with friends



### LANGUAGE

#### Typically Can:

- Use a large vocabulary
- Enjoy using big words
- Remember name and address
- Use speech fluently and with grammatical correctness
- Use long and complex sentences
- Be 90% understandable to strangers

#### Emerging Skills:

- Remember birthday
- Understand left and right
- Understand top, middle and bottom
- Say most speech sounds accurately

### GROSS MOTOR

#### Typically Can:

- Use adult-like posture to throw and catch a ball
- Walk up and downstairs alternating feet without support, run on tiptoes
- Broad jump up to 3 feet
- Skip on both feet or gallop
- Walk along 2 inch balance beam
- Throw a small ball 19 feet
- Jump a 12 inch hurdle

- Balance on either foot

#### Emerging Skills:

- Hop distance of 50 feet
- Accompany music with body movement (e.g., slow, heavy, soft, like a bear)
- Touch toes without bending knees

# COGNITIVE

## Typically Can:

- Name a coin correctly
- Count objects past 10
- Attend to an activity for up to 20 minutes if interested
- Remember a play theme overnight
- Name 5 colours
- Remember stories & TV jingles
- Distinguish between 3 to 4 sizes
- Maintain mood of calm & quiet much of the time
- Sort objects by colour, shape, size

## Emerging Skills:

- Write number up to 5 and some letters
- Follow 3 simple instructions
- Understand calendar and clock
- Put things in categories
- Know days of week, months, seasons
- Remember past events more clearly

# EMOTIONAL

## Typically Can:

- Be industrious and enjoy being busy making things
- Exhibit more confidence and self-assurance than last year
- Accept authority, ask permission and respect rules
- Loves to giggle & tell jokes & riddles
- Is aware of rules & tells others
- Will integrate negative & positive views of self and others
- Will have bad dreams and nightmares

## Emerging Skills:

- Develop habits and mannerisms; biting nails, pulling clothes, blinking, etc.
- Have an imaginary friend

# FINE MOTOR

## Typically Can:

- Draw a person with most parts included
- Copy square, circle & rectangle
- Imitate building of 10 cube steps
- Do 7-8 piece puzzle
- Hold pencil between thumb & forefinger
- Use same hand consistently
- Draw letters & numbers, print name
- Cut & paste
- Wash hands & face, dress, but will take time
- Self-feed with little mess using fork & spoon

## Emerging Skills:

- Tie shoelaces & bows
- Do up buttons & fasteners
- Copy triangle

Adapted from INVEST in KIDS  
Language Portion by North Words

## For More Information

**Contact Your Local Northwestern Health Unit Office  
or Healthy Babies Healthy Children**

**Toll Free at 1-800-465-4377**