

Your 4-year old is a conversationalist!

Your child can have a conversation with you and retell an event or story.

They are excellent communicators and speak clearly enough to be understood by strangers.

Expressive Language

- Uses more complex sentences with 5+ words.
- Uses some grammatical words correctly such as pronouns (he/him/his), past tense (he walked) and negatives (I don't like that), (will still make a few errors in grammar).
- Asks questions constantly – seems to be curious about everything.
- Can retell a story or memorable event ("Remember when we...").

Social Communication and Play

- Plays co-operatively with children their age and enjoys playdates.
- Pretends to be characters and acts out a story.
- Can be flexible to others' needs and can stay calm when something unexpected happens.

Speech Sounds and Clarity

- Speaks clearly and is understood by parents, friends and even strangers. There will be a few speech sounds that develop later (r, th) but your child is now using these sounds: p, b, w, h, y, t, d, k, g, f, s, s-clusters, sh.
- Between ages 4 and 5, expect l, ch, j, v and more consonant clusters (ex. ST as in "star", KS as in "books") to be emerging.

Receptive Language

- Understands more advanced grammar and concepts such as before/after, if... then (Example: after you put that in the garbage, please go and wash your hands).
- Understands questions How? When? and why?
- Understands longer stories and remembers the details.



If you have questions or concerns about your child's communication development, scan the QR code below to **contact your local health center** to see a Speech-Language Pathologist at no cost!



Interior Health



Your 4-year old is a conversationalist!

You are your child's best teacher. Try to make time everyday to talk, play, read and sing with your child. Engage your child in everyday chores. Your child will learn best from interaction with you rather than playing on a device or watching TV.

Tips and Strategies

When talking...

- Respond to what your child says, reinforcing their idea and adding more information and new ideas (e.g., Child: We have butterflies at preschool! You: Wow! It will soon be time for each butterfly to make a chrysalis—that's like a little house—and sleep inside for a few weeks.
- Add new words as you respond to your child – teach them new vocabulary. Example: “Wow, your picture is so intricate! That means it has lots of details.”
- Ask questions that help your child use their imagination and thinking skills. Example: “What do you think happened? How do you think he feels?”
- Repeat what your child says with correct sounds or grammar, but no need to get them to say it again.

When playing...

- Encourage more complex pretend play, such as acting out a familiar event (e.g., going to the doctor's office, restaurant).
- Introduce your child to board games or games with rules. These are good for learning numbers, using strategies and learning to cope with not being the winner every time!
- Help your child interact and play with other children their age. At the park is a good place to start. Help them take turns and share toys.

When reading...

Make time for book sharing, especially in the evening before bedtime.

- Get in the habit of letting your child choose 1-2 bedtime stories. As well as listening to you read, let your child tell you the story in their own words.
- Make up your own stories together. Children love to hear and make up stories about themselves.



Scan the QR code below for free help from a speech therapist at your local health center if you have any concerns or notice any of the following:

- Not responding to you or others – checking out of the interaction.
- Not playing with you or with other children their age.
- Not combining words into sentences
- Getting stuck playing the same way over and over.
- It's hard to understand their speech
- Frustration and tantrums are more frequent or intense than expected at this age.



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