

Your  
4 1/2 to 5  
Year-Old  
Child



School Readiness Program

Provided by the WIC Program and First 5 LA

## To Kindergarten and Beyond!



**Help me get ready for Kindergarten.** You are your child's best teacher.

**My curiosity is growing.** I want to know more about my body and why boys and girls are different.

**I have very powerful feelings and I really show them.** My feelings may change quickly.

**Read to me every day.** Take me to the library. Try to **limit T.V.** to one hour a day.

**Congratulations! Your child is graduating from the WIC Little By Little Program.**

We hope you have enjoyed the handouts and books that WIC has provided and that they have prepared your child for kindergarten and beyond. The best way to help your child do well in school is to keep reading with your child. **Read to your child every day.** Even when your child knows how to read, reading together for 15 minutes or more each day will help your child do better in school. And even when your child is in school, you are still your child's best teacher.

**Thank you for helping your child grow and develop...Little by Little!**

**QUESTION: My child is almost in Kindergarten. What do I need to do to get my child ready?**

**ANSWER:** Many children are a little scared of starting Kindergarten. They do not know what Kindergarten will be like. They may not have their best friends in their class and the school may seem big to them.

You can help your child feel excited about Kindergarten. Talk with your child about what Kindergarten will be like. Your child will make new friends, color, play and listen to stories. There are many books that will help your child know what to expect. Some schools invite 4 year-olds to visit a Kindergarten class. Ask the staff at your school when your child can visit. Don't worry if your child cries during the first few days of Kindergarten. Most children feel much better after a few days.

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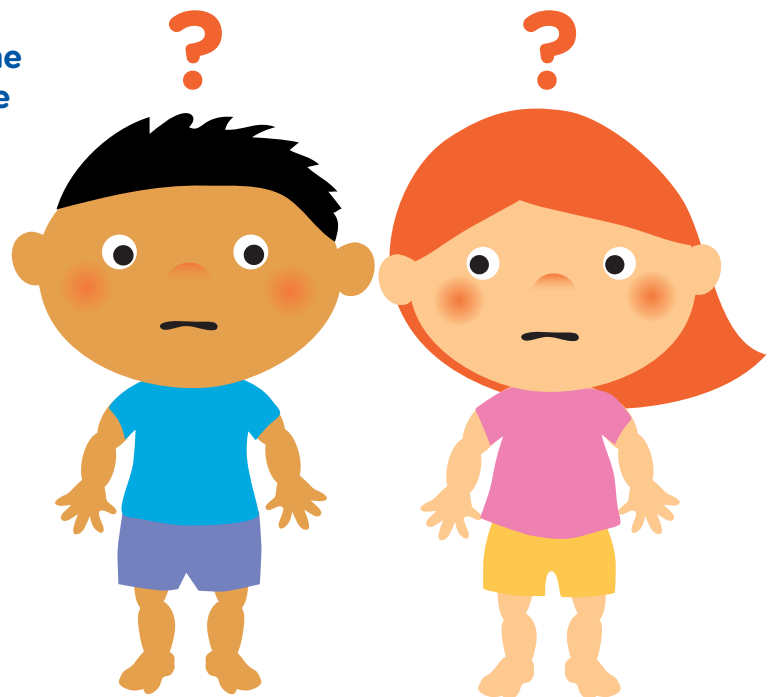
**QUESTION: How can I help my child learn letters and numbers?**

**ANSWER:** Your 4 year-old loves letters, numbers, books and talking. Practice counting with your child and help him or her recognize letters and their sounds. Most 4 year-olds learn the letters of their names first. You can make books and learning fun and exciting by reading to your child for 15 minutes each day!

**QUESTION: Help! My child is asking about the difference between boys and girls and where babies come from. What should I do?**

**ANSWER:** Explain the basic differences using simple words. Answer only what your child asks. Too much information may confuse them or be inappropriate for their age.

It is very important to help your child understand that “private parts” of his or her body should not be touched by any other person. Not even a close friend or relative should touch a child—except if a parent is helping their child take a bath or seeing why something hurts. A doctor may also check those parts of the body in a doctor’s office only if Mom or Dad is there.



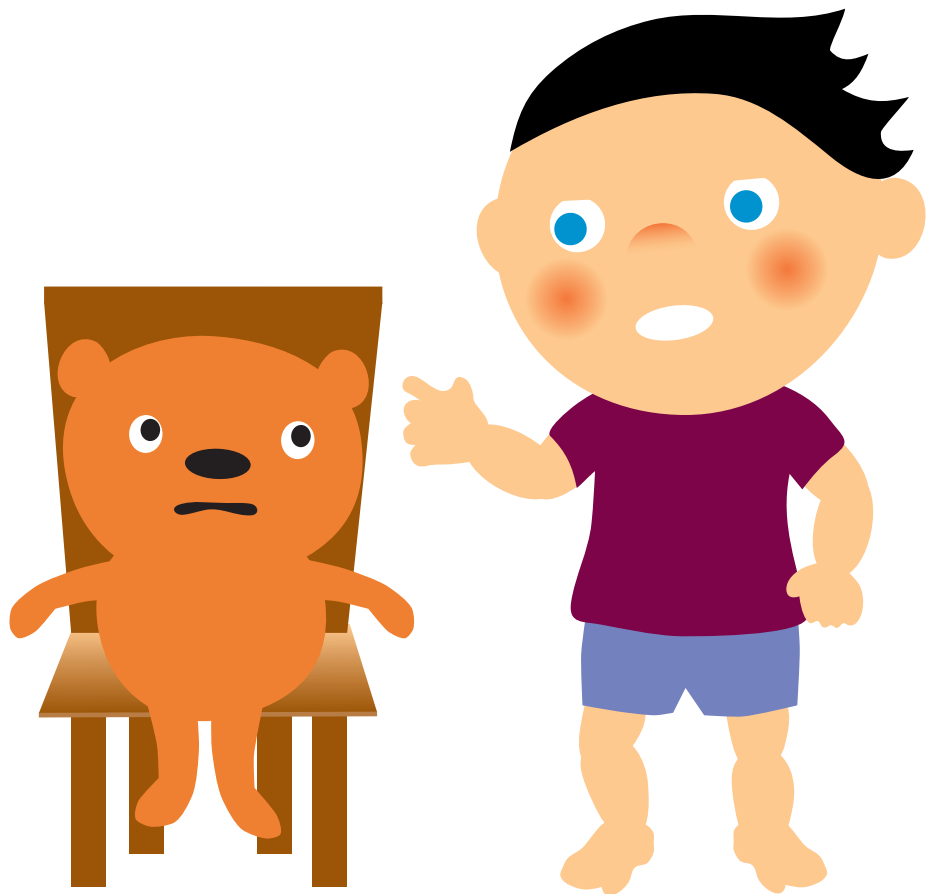
**QUESTION: My 4 year-old's feelings are so intense. It seems like he or she can go from smiling to crying within seconds. Is this normal?**

**ANSWER: Yes.** 4 year-olds have very powerful feelings and are not sure how to show them. When your child is feeling happy, there is no one in the world who could be happier. When your child is angry, he or she may say, "I hate you!" Your child needs you to help him or her find other words and other ways to talk about those angry feelings. Talking about feelings can help your child learn better ways to show those feelings.

4 year-olds are still learning that you can have two feelings at the same time. They may not understand that they can love you and be upset with you at the same time. Try to remind them that you still love them even when you are unhappy with their behavior. Remember, good children sometimes behave badly. This does not make them bad children.

**QUESTION: My child is so bossy. What can I do?**

**ANSWER:** Many 4 year-olds are bossy. Listen to how you talk to your child. Are you bossy? Try to use "please" and "thank you" when you are talking with your child. Hearing you use these polite words will help your child learn to be polite. When your child uses a polite word, show him or her how happy it makes you feel. Say, "I feel happy to do things for you when you say please!"



### Try this!

When you are reading a story or watching T.V. with your child, ask your child how the characters in the story might be feeling. Or, "How would you feel if the same thing happened to you?" Talk with your child about how you would feel. Read books about feelings with your child. Ask a librarian for book ideas.

**QUESTION: What are my child's friendships like?**

**ANSWER:** Friends are becoming more and more important to your child. Friends help your child learn how people treat each other. 4 year-olds want to make their friends happy. They also want to be like their friends and may want to have the same kinds of clothes. Your child is getting more cooperative, but still needs help learning to be kind to others.

## Before the First Day of School

- ✓ Call the school to find out when your child will begin Kindergarten.
- ✓ Ask for information to register your child.
- ✓ Ask to visit the kindergarten class with your child and meet the teacher before school begins.
- ✓ Find out about school breakfast and lunch programs.
- ✓ Show your child where the classroom, lunchroom, bathroom, and principal's office are located.
- ✓ Make sure your child is up-to-date on all immunizations.
- ✓ Review Traffic Safety rules with your child.
- ✓ Get the necessary school supplies (paper, pencils, notebook, backpack, etc...).
- ✓ Write your child's name on his or her backpack, lunch box and jacket.
- ✓ Continue reading to your child for 15 minutes or more every day.
- ✓ Visit your local library often.
- ✓ Keep practicing the following skills with your child:
  - Sounding out and recognizing letters
  - Counting numbers
  - Identifying shapes
  - Identifying opposites



## The Night Before the First Day of School

- ✓ Read a book together before bedtime about going to school.
- ✓ Put your child to bed early so he or she is well rested. (This should be for ALL school nights.)
- ✓ Prepare your child's school clothes.
- ✓ Prepare a well-balanced dinner for your child.

## Good nutrition and rest help children do better in school.

### The First Day of School

- ✓ Wake up early together so the morning is not rushed.
- ✓ Make sure your child eats a healthy breakfast.
- ✓ Dress your child appropriately and make sure hair is combed and face is clean.
- ✓ You may want to take some pictures.
- ✓ Arrive at school on time.
- ✓ Review where and when you will pick your child up after school.
- ✓ Give a final hug and kiss.



#### First 5 LA

First 5 LA is a child advocacy and grant making organization created by California voters to invest Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues in programs for improving the lives of children from prenatal through age 5 in Los Angeles County. First 5 LA champions health, education and safety causes concerning young children and families. For more information, please visit [www.first5la.org](http://www.first5la.org).



#### The WIC Program

WIC provides nutrition and health education services, breastfeeding support, referrals to community agencies and healthy food to eligible women, infants and children under age five. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For more information, please visit [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov).

## Safety Corner



It is important to have a conversation with your child about meeting strangers and avoiding potential dangers. Here are some ideas:

- **Talk openly about strangers.** Explain to your child that a stranger is anyone he does not know. He should never go anywhere or accept anything from strangers, even if the person seems friendly. Even though they are strangers, some people (for example, police officers) can be a source of help if the child is in danger.
- **Help your child identify places that can be trusted,** such as schools and homes of neighbors. Talk to your child about places to avoid, such as deserted areas and parking lots.
- **Discuss what your child should do if he is separated from you or his caregiver in a public place.** Make sure he knows he should go to a security guard or a store clerk and not leave the site. Teach your child your phone number; your child is now old enough to remember it.
- **Make safety part of your routine everyday life.** Practice what to do if a stranger approaches your child and asks for directions or asks for help in finding a lost pet. Talk to your child regularly to remind your child about safety.