

## PLAY SETTINGS

By providing interesting material and excitedly supporting children's attempts to explore and solve problems, parents, teachers, and child care providers are key to supporting the social, emotional and physical growth of their children. Playing with your child builds the his sense of pride in his own abilities which in turn encourages him to find out more about how his world works.

The following are examples of healthy play settings:

**Movement and physical activity:** music and space to dance and run, balls, jump ropes, hula hoops, games such as Simon Says, Green light, red light and musical chairs.

**Creative outlets:** building blocks, legos, art projects, play dough, dress-up, music and place to dance.

**Language, memory and reasoning development:** books, paper and crayons/pencils for writing, and drawing, listening to tapes of stories, games such as memory and checkers.

**Water play activities:** When it comes to play materials, children don't mind getting messy or wet. Individual water tubs at a table make great activity centers. Begin with water only, then add spoons, move on to sponges and measuring tools. Children love to "paint" with water on outdoor pavement with buckets and brushes. Older children may paint the letters of their names. Younger children will be happy making back and forth strokes. Either way, a few minutes in sunlight, and watch it evaporate.

## RESOURCES

**Bright Futures:** National Center for Education in Maternal and Child's Health, Georgetown University's Public policy institute, visit [www.brightfutures.org](http://www.brightfutures.org).



**Center for Disease Control and Prevention Department of Health and Human Services,** visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

**CASEL** (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning), Department of Psychology, university of Illinois at Chicago, visit [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org).

**National Association for the Education of Young Children,** visit [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).



**Questions or Comments:  
Contact School Counselor**

Washington County Partnership for Student Success

## SNAPSHOTS OF YOUR CHILD'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

### PRE K



*"Committed to accessible services for the mental health and well-being of all students in our community."*

## IDEAS FOR PARENTS

**Parents and primary caregivers are critical to a child's social and emotional development. You can support your child's future success by providing:**

- Caring, steady, loving, and encouraging relationships. Show your child what it means to get along with others.
- A language-rich setting for reading, singing, listening and talking.
- Opportunities to encourage listening skills and cooperative play.
- Nutritious food choices.
- Routines that support going to school, long before school starts, including quiet time and eating and sleeping schedules.
- Learning opportunities to develop new skills (e.g. running, jumping, throwing/bouncing balls)
- Daily outings for learning, for example a visit to the bank is a time to practice taking turns and being polite.
- Materials that encourage curiosity and exploration.
- An interest in your child's education. Get involved and meet the teachers, staff, and care providers. Find out what is being taught and practice those skills at home.

## SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL MILESTONES

Children develop at their own unique pace, so it's impossible to tell exactly when yours will learn a given skill. The growth targets below will give you a general idea of the changes you can expect as your child gets older, but don't be alarmed if your child takes a slightly different course.

### **By the age of four:**

- children become much more independent;
- can dress and undress themselves;
- are able to work together with other children; can find ways to settle arguments;
- are interested in new experiences and creative "fantasy" play; often cannot tell the difference between what is real and what is not;

### **By the age of five:**

- children show more independence;
- like to sing, dance or act;
- are more likely to agree with rules; want to please and be like their friends;
- are aware of their gender;
- are able to tell between fantasy and reality;
- can be demanding and eagerly cooperative.

## EARLY CARE AND SCHOOL PRO-

Parents are a child's first teachers, but early childhood education programs are also important, with the growing number of families with one parent, and families where both parents work full-time. When considering a program you may want to ask about the following:

- What activities do the children participate in and are they appropriate for your child's age and needs?
- What is the teachers training and background. The staff should have the educational background to promote your child's learning and growth?
- How long have the teachers and staff have been with the program?
- What is child-to-teacher ratio? For example, there should be one adult for every ten 4-year olds.
- Is the program licensed by the state?
- Does the program have policies and practices to help keep children safe from preventable illness and injuries?
- Is the program a good fit for your child? Consider watching the children and adults interact and introduce your child to the program's staff and children before signing-up.