

motor development

between 4-5 years, most children:

- ▶ Walk heel-to-toe and balance;
- ▶ Can aim objects when throwing;
- ▶ Catch balls or beanbags;
- ▶ Peddle and steer tricycles;
- ▶ Can balance on one foot;
- ▶ Use small muscles to perform tasks: cutting, tearing, gluing;
- ▶ Use scissors with control;
- ▶ Grasp writing tools with fingers rather than fists.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Use balance beams, climbing ropes and monkey bars to challenge coordination and balance;
- ▶ Begin to play organized games like kickball, catch and tag;
- ▶ Talk longer walks to local parks or points of interest;
- ▶ Put together collages using pictures, scissors, glue and other media;
- ▶ String beads together or make plastic bead collages;
- ▶ Build using small and large blocks and Legos®, Lincoln Logs®, etc.;
- ▶ Do supervised woodworking projects depending on individual children's dexterity and safety skills.

guidance

at Gretchen's House we:

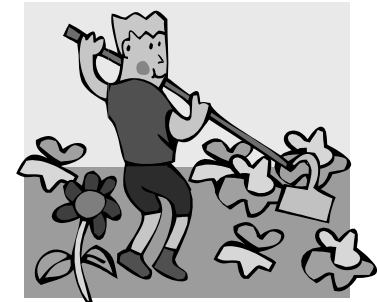
- ▶ Deputize children — give them responsibilities for classroom management such as collecting scissors or choosing leaders;
- ▶ Use natural consequences and if/then statements to empower children to manage their own behavior;
- ▶ Address physical acting out in a swift and firm manner — time away, loss of privileges, and conferences with parents to make behavior management plans;
- ▶ Make children responsible for their own belongings;
- ▶ Allow children to propose reasonable alternatives in challenging situations;
- ▶ Use field trips to practice going out in society and meeting new people.

easy ways to make a 4-year-old feel powerful:

- ▶ Let them lead groups: walking, singing, dancing;
- ▶ Have them help plan upcoming activities;
- ▶ Expect them to choose their own clothing;
- ▶ Keep them in small groups so they don't feel outnumbered or overwhelmed;
- ▶ Let them do "real work:" sort recycling, take out garbage, etc.;
- ▶ Help them understand the difference between tattling and asking for help;
- ▶ Acknowledge successes publicly.

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Gretchen's House at 734.761.2576

Active Learning at Gretchen's House



your child at 4-5 years:

**-helper-
-observer-
-friend-**

cognitive development

between 4-5 years, most children:

- ▶ Begin to show interest in letters and numbers;
- ▶ Recognize their own first names when written;
- ▶ Create **representational art**;
- ▶ Follow 2- and 3- step directions;
- ▶ Categorize objects;
- ▶ Relate their own ideas and experiences with understanding;
- ▶ Recognize many shapes.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Label classroom objects and belongings;
- ▶ Ask children to label their own work with their name;
- ▶ Sort objects by shape, size, color and texture; function, size, etc.
- ▶ Have pre-writing tools available for free choice: paper, pencils, magazines for cutting pictures out, etc.;
- ▶ Use a variety of art media daily;
- ▶ Use sensory materials to explore concepts like quantity, weight, and study properties of matter;
- ▶ Begin basic math tasks such as sets and counting.

language development

between 4-5 years, most children:

- ▶ Speak in complete sentences;
- ▶ Are easily understood when speaking;
- ▶ Recall songs and fingerplays;
- ▶ Begin to show interest in letters, words;
- ▶ Ask and answer questions;
- ▶ Recognize their own written first name and perhaps those in their family;
- ▶ Use words to articulate their feelings;
- ▶ Can put story events in correct sequence;
- ▶ Imitate letters by scribbling;
- ▶ Recognize some letters by sight.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen's House we:

- Use daily circle time to tell and listen to children's stories, read books, and practice listening skills;
- Use journals to scribble, draw, or practice letters, depending on children's interests;
- Talk about sounds that letters make and look for things that begin with those sounds;
- Have children tell stories and transcribe their words;
- Listen to books on tape during rest time or during interest center activities;
- Make rebus stories with children to demonstrate that words represent things.

social-emotional development

between 4-5 years, most children:

- ▶ Understand rules and remind others of them;
- ▶ **Separate** easily from parents;
- ▶ Play well by self and with others;
- ▶ Show consideration of others (inconsistently);
- ▶ Follow routines and schedules;
- ▶ Develop skills for calming themselves when frustrated;
- ▶ Use words rather than physical means of expressing frustration.

to support these developing skills, at Gretchen's House we:

- ▶ Encourage children to work through their own disputes (with coaching, if needed);
- ▶ Model **empathic behavior**;
- ▶ Allow children to choose their own playmates, as long as choices do not hurt other children;
- ▶ Coach skills for joining groups in progress: Help children say "That looks fun, can I play?"
- ▶ Set goals for positive behavior and reward cooperation with privileges;
- ▶ Provide rest time for children to re-group and do quiet, individual activities;
- ▶ Work in small groups on daily and weekly projects like bulletin boards or building volcanoes, for example;
- ▶ Insist on polite words and behavior.