

# THE CHILDREN'S CLINIC, P.C.

www.childrens-clinic.com

## PETERKORT

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### AGE FOUR YEARS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Wt: \_\_\_\_\_ lb \_\_\_\_\_ %

Ht: \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ %

BP: \_\_\_\_\_

Next physical appointment in 1 year: \_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions:

**DEVELOPMENT:** Your child will continue to seek independence, while still needing reassurance and guidance from you.

Your child can or soon will:

Jump forward, briefly stand on one foot, alternate feet when going down stairs, pedal a tricycle, copy a circle and +, dress and undress with supervision, be imaginative and extremely curious, ask "why, when, how", ask the meaning of words, name 3-4 colors, count or sing a song.

#### DIET:

- Continue to offer a balanced diet. Avoid junk foods and sugary drinks.
- Your child should be capable of feeding himself.
- Mealtimes should be a time for positive social and family interactions. Make sure to include your child in mealtime conversations. You could talk about the day, the weather, or the next day's plans. You could ask your child about the events of his day and whatever else he wants to talk about. Keep the television off during meal times.

#### DENTAL CARE:

- Parents should still assist with brushing teeth until about age 6, because a child is not able to brush his teeth well.
- Encourage teeth brushing twice a day.
- Your child should have a dental check-up every 6 months.
- Fluoride: 0.5 mg every day, if your water is not fluoridated. Fluoride is important for preventing cavities. To prevent overfluoridation (which causes permanent white stains on the teeth), limit toothpaste use. A small dab, rather than a ribbon, is enough. Consider leaving the fluoride supplement at home when vacationing or traveling, as the fluoride content in that water could be unknown.

#### SLEEP:

- Your child may discontinue her daily nap.
- A regular bedtime routine with restful activities prior to bed helps your child to get to sleep. Allow her to pick a book or favorite story.
- Preschool age children are struggling with issues relating to autonomy and self-control. Your child may have difficulties going to bed and staying in bed.
- Encourage your child to sleep in her own bed, if this arrangement is possible.
- Be calm and firm with your child's bedtime and where she sleeps.

#### TOILETING:

- Most 4-year olds are daytime potty trained by age 4. Many are still not dry through the night.
- Positive reinforcement for success rather than scolding for accidents is important.
- It is not uncommon for a child to continually withhold stools, have constipation, or leak liquid stool onto his underwear. If these occur, you may want to discuss them with your child's doctor.

**PRESCHOOL:** Preschool or daycare may be a part of your child's daily schedule. Daycare helps with the socialization of your child and can provide you with a break during the day. Guidelines to choosing quality care include:

- Is the facility licensed? Is the license current? Is the staff trained in first aid? Is safe transportation provided?
- Do they share the parent's child-rearing philosophy? Do they respect each child's unique background and interests?
- Do they welcome parents input? Do they hold regular parent/teacher conferences?
- Do the children seem happy, busy, and relaxed? Are there special places for quiet and for active play?
- Can parents visit unannounced?
- Do you have a good "gut feeling" about the place?

**PLAYTIME:**

Promote activities that require your child to "figure things out". Exploratory walks and outings to new places are good for encouraging "why, when, how" questions, which are important for your 4-year old's development. Check with your local Park and Recreation District for toddler classes and indoor parks.

**PARENTING PRACTICES:**

- Provide your child with an opportunity to talk about his or her day.
- Don't play the radio when you ride in a car with your child. Encourage talking.
- Try to have some special time alone each day with your child (or each of your children).
- Limit "screen time" (including television, video and computer) to less than 1 hour per day. Encourage reading and physical activity.
- Provide for opportunities for your child to interact with peers, if not in a preschool or daycare setting.
- Assign simple chores. Praise your child's efforts.
- Recognize that a child at this age can accept and keep an agreement.
- Read each day, and begin to use the library.
- Read to your young child to help develop his vocabulary, attention span and self-esteem.
- Continue to teach him how to behave. Provide appropriate and clear limits, be consistent, and use appropriate consequences for wrong behavior. Consequences that are not followed through are ineffective.
- Verbal abuse is never appropriate.
- Reprimand privately.
- Answer questions about sex factually and at a level of understanding appropriate for her age.

**SAFETY:** **Close supervision is still important at this age.**

- Oregon law now requires that a child must be in a child safety seat until he weighs 60 pounds and is at least 6 years old. Your child must meet both of these requirements before he may use a regular auto safety belt. Make sure he is properly secured with a child safety system that elevates him so that a safety belt or harness fits properly. The rear seat is the safest place in the car for your child.
- Store electrical tools, matches, poisons, and cleaners safely.
- Lock up firearms
- Wear helmets when biking (children and parents). Supervise your child when she rides a bike or plays near the street.
- Tell your child not to go with strangers or allow touching they do not like by other people. Teach him how to say "No" or "Stop, I don't like that."
- Always supervise your child near water (bathtub, wading pool, or swimming pool).
- Teach her what to do in case of fire.
- Some children this age can be taught how to write their name and memorize their address or phone number (in case they become lost).
- Advise your child to be careful around dogs and other animals, especially when the animal is eating.

**SUGGESTED READING:**

Caring For Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5 by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

What to Expect, the Toddler Years by Eisenberg, Murkoff, Hathaway.

Your Baby and Child by Penelope Leach.

Your Four-Year-Old by Ames and Ilg.

How To Get Your Child To Eat...But Not too Much by Ellyn Satter.

Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems by Richard Ferber.

The Parents' Book of Toilet Teaching by Joanna Cole.

The Magic Years by Selma Fraiberg.

Without Spanking or Spoiling by Elizabeth Crary.

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk by Faber and Mazlish.

Taking Care of Your Child: A Parent's Guide To Medical Care by Pantell, Fries, and Vickery.

Raising Your Spirited Child by Mary Sheedy Kurcinka, HarperPerennial 1992

