



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR DEVELOPMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN

At 60 months (5 years) . . .

- Your child likes to play best with one or two other children at a time.
- He likes to choose his own friends and may have a best friend.
- Your child now plays simple table games like Candy Land and Lotto.
- Your child likes to play in small groups at the park or at school and may play with most of the children in her class.
- He understands and can follow simple rules at home and at school.
- Your child is showing a variety of emotions. She may be jealous of other children at times, especially of a younger brother or sister who is getting attention.
- Your child is now very independent and likes to make his own choices about clothes, foods to eat, and activities.
- Your child is sensitive to other children's feelings and can identify feelings in others: "He's sad."
- Your child likes to talk with familiar adults and children.
- Your child understands how to take turns and share at home and at school, but she may not want to all of the time.
- Your child is beginning to understand the meaning of right and wrong. He doesn't always do what is right, though.
- Adult approval is very important to your child. Your child looks to adults for recognition and acknowledgment.
- Your child is showing some self-control in group situations and can wait for her turn or stand in a line.
- Your child is usually able to respond to requests such as "Use your quiet voice" or "Inside is for walking."
- Your child's attention span is increasing. He is able to focus his attention for a necessary length of time such as when directions are being given or when a story is being read.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN 60 MONTHS OLD (5 YEARS OLD)

Tell simple jokes and riddles. Your child will love it when you laugh at her jokes. The sillier, the better.	Gather old shirts, skirts, hats, and so forth from friends or a thrift store. Encourage dramatic play—acting out stories, songs, and scenes from the neighborhood.	Encourage your child to make choices as often as possible. Let him choose between two or three different shirts when dressing, or give choices of foods for lunch.	Most of the time, your child will feel good about doing small jobs around the house.* Give her a lot of praise when she does a good job, and tell her what a big help she is.
Your child may need some help resolving conflicts, especially with his friends. Let him know he should use his words but can come to you for help.	Make sure your child has plenty of rest and quiet and alone time when she needs it.	When your child has friends over, encourage them to play games that require working together. Building a tent out of old blankets or playing balls are examples.	Tell your child a favorite nursery rhyme that involves the idea of “right” and “wrong,” and discuss what kinds of choices the characters made in the story.
Let your child know how special she is. Give her a lot of love, praise, and hugs every day.	Show your child pictures cut out from magazines of people from different cultures. Talk about things that are the same or different between your family and other families.	Ask your child his birthday, telephone number, and first and last name. Practice what he would do if he got separated from you at the store.	Play games with your child. Board games or card games that have three or more rules are great. Go Fish, Checkers, or Candy Land are examples.
Have a special time for reading each day. Snuggle up and get close. Before bedtime is a great time to read together.	Using hand-drawn pictures or pictures cut out from a magazine, talk about real dangers (fire, guns, cars) and make-believe dangers (monsters under the bed, the dark).	Build a store, house, puppet stage, or fire truck out of old boxes. Your child can invite a friend over to play store or house, have a puppet show, or be firefighters.	Encourage your child to talk about the different rules at home and at school. Talk about why we have rules.

*Be sure to review safety guidelines with your health care provider at each new age level.