



Fun Talk: 4 Year Olds

Four-year-olds will talk in at least four-to-five word sentences. They may still have trouble making some sounds. Correct the words he has trouble saying by repeating them correctly, not by telling him he's said them wrong. The child will still be asking many questions. He may like to talk about "pretend" things. You can help him learn new words and ideas in everyday ways. The time you spend talking to him is much more helpful than buying him expensive toys.

Things to try:

- If your child watches television, it is good to let him watch shows like "Sesame Street." These are shows which are fun to watch, but also teach new things. They can be seen on most Public Broadcast System (PBS) stations. Check the television listings for the channel and times they can be seen in your area.
- Teach colors and how to count to ten during everyday activities.
Example: "Here's your red shirt and your blue pants."
"There's a black car over there."
"Let's set the table. Here are four spoons: one, two, three, four."
- If you have a computer, Nick Jr. has a website that offers a variety of educational games. These games help teach pre-school age children early literacy, Spanish and math and much more.
Website: <http://www.nickjr.com/kids/>
- If you have a telephone, teach your child to use it – how to answer it politely and call an adult to the phone. Teach your child how to call for help in an emergency. If you do not have a phone, you can use a toy telephone to teach this. Your child also needs to know his parent's full names.
- Let your child make up stories as he looks at pictures in a book or magazine. Tell him stories as well. The public library has books you can borrow.
- Play word games that teach him to group things.
Example: "Let's name as many animals as we can. Let's name as many foods as we can." You could separate groceries – vegetables, meats, etc., as you put them away and talk about the various groups.
- Let the child help you plan things – what to have for supper, places for outings (park, swimming pool, library.)
There are many places to take your child that do not cost anything and are fun to visit. While there, your child may learn many new words
Example: A pet store – New words: names of animals (snake, parakeet, gerbil)
An airport – Opposites: fast/slow (airplanes move fast); loud/soft (airplanes make a loud sound at take off)
Other new words: passengers, runways, "taking off," landing

For more information contact Guilford County Department of Public Health at 336-641-7777 or www.myguilford.com