



School Readiness Program
Provided by the WIC Program and First 5 LA

Listen to Me!

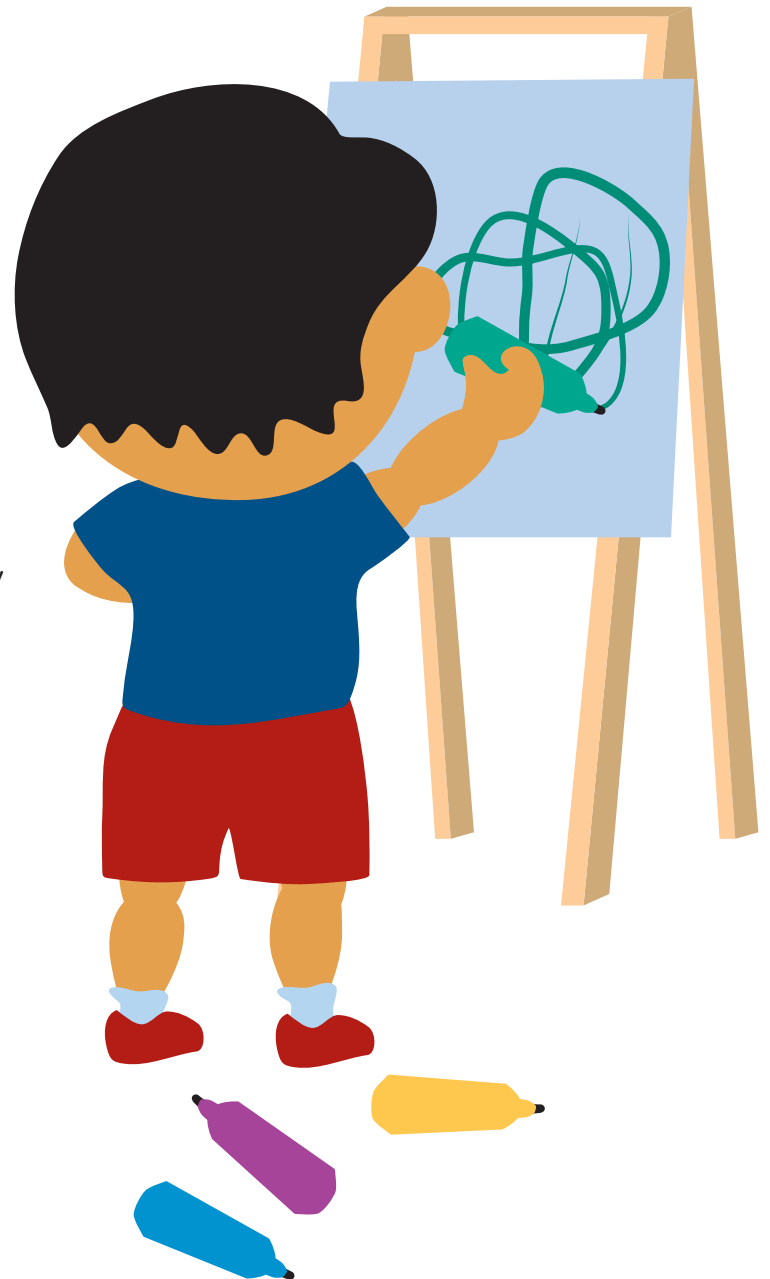
Listen to me. Your child is getting better at communicating. Communication includes talking and listening. Your 2½ to 3 year-old child understands and says more words and puts words together to make sentences.

I am learning right from wrong. Your child will learn to behave appropriately with your help. This kind of teaching is called **discipline**.

I may be ready to use the toilet. Many girls are ready when they are about 2 years old. Boys usually are ready later when they are about 2½ years old.

I can build, draw, kick a ball, and climb. Your 2½ to 3 year-old is able to do more and more things with his or her hands and body.

My imagination is growing. Your child is starting to pretend more and more.



Read, read, read! I love when you read to me. Reading to your child every day also helps your child learn to communicate. The more you read and talk with your child, the easier it will be for your child to be ready for Kindergarten.

QUESTION: How can I help my child learn to communicate better?

ANSWER: You probably know how important it is to **talk** to your child. Talking to your child helps your child learn more words and how to put words together into sentences. It is also important to **listen** to your child. When you listen to your child, you are teaching him that he is worth listening to. Listening shows respect. You are showing your child how to have a conversation.

Try this!

Pay attention to **WHAT** you say to your child and **WHEN** you say it. You may be surprised to find out how many orders you give your child. Do you let your child finish a sentence before you talk? Do you interrupt your child? If you want to teach your child not to interrupt, show them how. Stop talking after you ask a question. Wait and listen to your child's answer.



Try this!

What's in the Bag? Collect objects from around the house like a comb, brush, toothbrush, sock, ball, pen, spoon or anything else that your child knows the word for. Have your child cover his or her eyes. Put one of the objects into a bag. Have your child put a hand inside the bag and guess what is inside by feeling it. Help your child guess by asking, "Is it hard or soft? Is it long or short? Is it round or straight? Is it rough or smooth?"

Your child will like this game even more if you take a turn guessing. Have your child put an object into the bag when you are not looking. Feel in the bag. Say what you are thinking out loud so that your child can hear. For example, if you feel a spoon, you could say things like, "Hmmm, this feels hard. One part is straight and one part is round. I know, it's a spoon!" The more excited you are, the more fun your child will have.

QUESTION: I hear my child talking in bed, even when no one else is in the room. Do I need to teach my child that it is time to be quiet?

ANSWER: Probably not. Young children often talk to themselves. That is part of learning to talk and part of pretending. Listen to what your child is saying. You may hear a story about what happened during the day. You may hear your child putting a stuffed animal to bed using the same words that you use. As long as the talking is quiet, it may actually help your child fall asleep.

Try this!

Take your child's sock and say, "I need to put this sock on my ear, right?" Give your child a chance to laugh and tell you, "No!"

Try to put it on your ear. Say, "Oh no, it doesn't fit! I know, I put this sock on my hand, right?" She will laugh because she now understands the words. You can add words to help your child learn even more.

Say the color of the sock, or add body parts like elbows and knees.

QUESTION: My child says “pweeze” instead of “please.” How can I teach my child to say words correctly?

ANSWER: Some sounds are very hard to learn to say. Even many five-year-olds still have trouble with the “L” sound and “R” sound. By hearing you speak correctly, your child will learn how to speak correctly over time. If your child says “pweeze,” you can respond by saying, “Thank you for saying PLEASE. I appreciate it.” This way you are teaching your child that you understand and you are also teaching your child how to say the word correctly.

Try this!

Use “please” and “thank you” when you are talking with your child. Hearing you use these polite words will help your child learn to be polite. When your child uses a polite word, show your child how happy it makes you feel. Remember that it takes time for children to learn to be polite. Keep encouraging them.



QUESTION: How can I teach my child right from wrong? How can I teach my child to behave appropriately?

ANSWER: Being a parent of a 2 year-old can be very hard. Your child is trying to learn limits. Here are some helpful ideas.

Try to say “yes” as much as possible, and save “no” for safety. Saying “no” tells your child to stop, but does not tell your child what to do instead.

Make a safe area where your child can play. Put play things in that area. Life will be easier for you if your child cannot reach the things you don’t want your child to touch.

Distract your child. When your child reaches for something breakable, give your child something safe.

Move your child away from things you don’t want touched.

Tell your child why you are moving him or her. You can combine these ways of helping your child learn. For example, say, “No, please don’t touch the stove. The stove is hot. You can play here.”

QUESTION: How do I teach my child to use the toilet?

ANSWER: Children learn to use the toilet most easily when they want to be independent AND they want to please their parents. It usually takes about six months to learn to use the toilet.

- 1) Start by letting your child sit on the toilet (or potty seat) in diapers and clothes while you explain what a toilet is for and how to use it. You can empty the bowel movement (BM) from a dirty diaper into the toilet to show your child where it belongs.
- 2) Once your child is comfortable with sitting on the toilet, take off their diaper. Let your child sit on the toilet several times each day. If you can tell when your child is having a bowel movement, ask if your child wants to sit on the toilet to finish. Ask several times each day if your child wants to sit on the toilet to try to pee.
- 3) When your child has used the toilet correctly a few times, you can try training pants. Having accidents is part of learning. If you punish your child for accidents, learning to use the toilet may become stressful for your child and may take longer. Instead, encourage your child when they use the toilet successfully.
- 4) Many children do not stay dry at night until they are at least 3 years-old. Be patient.

Try this!

RUN EVERY DAY

Your 2 1/2 to 3 year-old needs a chance to climb and run every day. This helps your child grow strong and healthy. Try to find somewhere safe for your child to run. If you can't go outside, turn on some music and dance and dance and dance!



Try this!

PLAY CATCH

Your child is very interested in throwing and catching. Take a ball to the park with you. You can throw, kick, catch, and roll it.

QUESTION: Why does my child pretend so much?

ANSWER: Pretending is one of the best ways that children learn. Now your child is becoming even more imaginative. A block may turn into an airplane in your child's play. You can pretend with your child, too. Make a sock puppet. Put your hand in a sock and make a mouth with your fingers. Then bark like a dog and make the puppet look like it is barking. Your child will have fun and pretend with you.

Both boys and girls pretend to be mommy. By pretending to be you, your child practices taking care of stuffed animals or toys the way you take care of them. Children this age pretend to be the people they see around them. By pretending, they are learning about social relationships and friends. When you pretend with them, you are helping your child learn to talk and to understand the world around them. You are also helping your child learn about feelings and about how other people act. Pretend play is one of the most important parts of growing up!

For children ages 2-5 years, it is recommended to limit screen time to no more than 1 hour per day of educational media.

Parents should co-view media with children to help them understand what they are seeing and apply it to the world around them. Parents who keep the TV on or focus on their phones miss opportunities to interact with their children and help them learn. **HINT: Put down your phone.**



Safety Corner



Car Safety

- Never text while driving.
- Car crashes can cause severe injuries or death. To prevent these injuries, use a car seat every time your child rides in the car. The safest place for your child to ride is in the car seat in the back seat.
- Children left in a car can die of heat stroke because temperatures inside the car can reach very high levels in minutes.
- Children left in a car can be injured by power windows or knock the vehicle into gear.
- Children left alone around the car can be hit as they may not be seen in the rearview mirror or backup camera. Always walk behind your car to be sure your child is not there before you back out of your driveway.



First 5 LA

First 5 LA is a child advocacy and grant making organization created by California voters to invest Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues in programs for improving the lives of children from prenatal through age 5 in Los Angeles County. First 5 LA champions health, education and safety causes concerning young children and families. For more information, please visit www.first5la.org.



The WIC Program

WIC provides nutrition and health education services, breastfeeding support, referrals to community agencies and healthy food to eligible women, infants and children under age five. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For more information, please visit www.wicworks.ca.gov.