



Tips on Parenting a Preschooler

A preschooler is a child between the ages of 3 to 5 years old. And whether you're a novice or a veteran parent, raising a preschooler can get overwhelming. There might be times where you even question your ability as a parent, especially when you see no changes in your child's behavior. What could be wrong?

What is a Typical Preschooler Behavior?

Compared to much younger children, preschoolers have a better grasp of their physical skills. Therefore, it's normal for them to try new things since they are just learning how to control their bodies. You can also expect them to be more active, so you have to enforce safety rules such as using a [car seat for 4-year-old](#) in every drive. And make sure that the safety reinforcement you're using is age-appropriate to your preschooler.

According to [CuteLittleDarling.com](#), another behavior that you will notice on a preschooler is their increased desire to be independent. This means they will be more interested in learning the things they like and alternating from being cooperative and demanding. At the same time, your child is going to want to make his/her own decisions in certain instances. For example, he/she might insist on wearing his/her favorite clothes and argue with you about it.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), other than physical control, preschoolers are also gaining better control over their emotions. It is also at this age range where they will be more aware of the

feelings of the people around them.

It is also typical for preschoolers to want to please their friends and socialize more. However, they still look back on close family members as a source of comfort. Because of this trust, remember to be patient when they ask a lot of curious questions about [sexuality](#).

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Establish a Regular Schedule

Setting a regular schedule for every day will help with their desire for independence and potential stubbornness. If you insist that your little one must follow it, he/she will have lesser options to go out of his/her way and do things that he/she likes.

This includes creating a list of tasks to do right from the moment your preschooler wakes up until his/her bedtime at night. You may also add other activities that will curb his/her desire to try potentially dangerous things.

For example, you can teach him/her how to ride a bike but in your terms. Instead of him/her stealing the bike and learning on his/her own, you can dedicate weekends and teach him/her yourself.

Other than activities, you can also give your preschooler some small responsibilities. These can range from simple tasks such as putting his/her toys away, fixing his/her bed, etc. Afterward, make sure you praise your child and maybe even reward him/her occasionally. Something as simple as a sticker can even make your child more responsive.

Be Consistent in Discipline Methods

Another tip that you must follow is that you have to be consistent with your rules and disciplinary methods. After setting a daily schedule, make sure that your child will stick to it consistently. To do this, you have to communicate with other family members, teachers, and even with his/her occasional babysitter.

This way, the rules that you want to instill in his/her mind will stick on easier. Think about it, if you and his/her teacher have conflicting ways of disciplining your child, what will your child do? He/she will have a harder time following either of you because it is just too confusing.

Something as simple as saying “please” and “thank you” can be a great example. Even if you’re not around, you’ll feel more confident that your child will still act with good manners.

Maintain a Positive Tone

When it comes to parenting a preschooler, it is important to maintain a calm yet assertive tone. Yes, children this age have a better grasp of communication and emotions. However, if you are giving them negative attention, they won’t know the reason behind your actions.

If you find yourself being openly frustrated, you're also losing control of parenting. Remember to always talk in a calm voice. On the contrary, yelling is only scaring your child without teaching him/her anything. But we know that this can be hard on some days. So what you can do is take a step back for a bit. And once you're calm, you can explain it better to your child why what he/she did was wrong.

Let Him/Her Express How He/She Feels

As we have mentioned earlier, it is typical for a preschooler to be more aware of his/her emotions. So after he/she does something undesirable, you can ask your child why he/she did it first. Try knowing the reason behind his/her actions instead of being angry on the spot.

For example, [sibling fights](#) are pretty common in children. And your child might feel frustrated if he/she feels like he/she can't do certain things. For example, maybe your child's sibling is older and can do more tasks such as cooking. And with your preschooler, he/she is only allowed to help with the dishes.

If your child happens to act out, do your best to let him/her express how he/she feels. Let's take the scenario above. Your preschooler can't help with the stove yet because it can be dangerous. So he/she shoved his/her sibling on the way out of the kitchen. Try asking, "How would you feel if your brother/sister did that to you?" Or "Why did you feel angry with your brother/sister?"

Together, you can come up with appropriate action when that situation happens again. You can gently say that it is wrong to get physical when you feel angry. You can also suggest some other appropriate response for these instances to replace the wrong behavior.

Lastly, don't hesitate to talk to your pediatrician. There might be some underlying things that need to be addressed, and you'll feel much better after talking to a professional.