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## Countryside Public Health



Health

# TRACKS

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## Age 4 years

### *Greetings!*

By now you know your 4 year old has become a very unique young person with a high energy level and interested in learning about everything.

He is talking a lot and is very curious. You may often hear him ask, "why?" or "how come?". Your child will often show his independence but he still needs the security of a loving environment.

### *Your child's health care*

#### **Well-Child Check Ups:**

It is time for him to have his 4 year old checkup. Please make an appointment soon. If your child receives Minnesota Health Care programs insurance, remember to ask the clinic for a Child & Teen checkup for your child's 4 year checkup.

It is also time for him to have his pre-school screening if he hasn't had it already. Please call your local school for more information.

Continue yearly or every six month dental visits.

#### **Immunizations (shots):**

Between ages 4-6 years and prior to Kindergarten, your child will need the following vaccines:

- ♥ 5<sup>th</sup> DTaP
- ♥ 4<sup>th</sup> IPV
- ♥ 2<sup>nd</sup> MMR
- ♥ 2<sup>nd</sup> Varicella

If your child is behind, get caught up now as children are not able to enter school without all the needed immunizations



## *Your growing child*

- ♥ Can stand alone on one foot for at least 5 seconds.
- ♥ Can hop on one foot 2 times
- ♥ Can skip using one foot then the other
- ♥ Can cut and paste with practice
- ♥ Can wash and dry hands
- ♥ Can brush teeth independently, but continues to need you to do it for him
- ♥ May know the alphabet
- ♥ Can count 10 or more objects
- ♥ Can name 4 colors
- ♥ Wants to be like his friends

### **tip**

Make playdough and play with your child.

#### Recipe:

4 cups flour

2 cups warm water

add food coloring to water

1 cup salt

2 tsp. alum

Mix all together. Store in air tight container.

## *Feeding your child*

- He should be able to use a fork and spoon well.
- Use caution when serving hot liquids.
- Give small portions and let him ask for seconds if he wants them.
- Offer finger foods such as crackers, sandwiches, vegetable and fruit slices instead of sweets.
- Cheese cubes or fresh fruit pieces are a nutritious and enticing snack.
- Do not be concerned if his appetite varies from time to time.
- Food likes and dislikes are becoming more apparent.
- Do not use food as a reward.
- He should drink at least 2-1/2 cups of milk each day.



**If you have any concerns/questions about feeding your child please call WIC or Countryside Public Health Service.**

**WIC is a program that provides nutrition education and special foods to pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants and children to age five.**

**Call 1-800-244-6026 to see if you are eligible to receive WIC Program benefits.**

# *Common health concerns*

## **Injuries:**

The most common injuries causing hospitalization in 4-year olds are due to:

- **Falls** (that cause head injuries)
- **Poisonings** - mainly from taking drugs. Aspirin is the most common. Keep vitamins with iron out of reach.
- **Burns** from fires, hot liquids, or hot surfaces
- **Suffocation**

The most common injuries causing death are due to:

- **Burns** from fires
- **Being hit by a car** while walking
- **Being in a car accident while not using a booster seat with a seat belt**
- **Drowning**

## **Farm injuries:**

The most common farm injuries occur during spring planting and summer/fall harvest between 3-6 p.m. They are caused by:

- Machine operator not seeing them and running over them.
- Corn augers
- Power take offs
- Conveyor belts
- Climbing on machinery, bins or buildings

Children often have broken bones, severe cuts, or lose an arm or a leg. These injuries are the result of poor supervision or by children operating complex machinery.

**As you can see, it is very important for parents to always think about possible injuries before they occur and try to prevent them. Please follow the safety tips in each newsletter.**

## Positive parenting

- ♥ He is totally toilet trained but may have "accidents" because he is busy playing, no bathroom is available, or because he is sleeping. Be careful not to scold him. Use positive reinforcement. It is not uncommon for children to wet the bed for several more years, however, if they have been dry at night and start to wet the bed, discuss this with your doctor.
- ♥ Reward positive behavior such as sharing, taking turns, helping, etc. Reward with praise, hugs, reading a book, etc.
- ♥ Bring him to a zoo or museum. He will love to learn.
- ♥ Some children like to play make believe games like imitating action figures. This is a normal stage of development.
- ♥ Recognize that play is the way children learn about themselves and their world.
- ♥ Allow your child to play with other children his own age.
- ♥ It is normal for children this age to touch their own genitals & to be curious about "boys and girls".
- ♥ Allow him to help set the table.
- ♥ Continue to read to your child.
- ♥ Limit TV time and monitor the shows you allow him to watch.
- ♥ Play is serious business to children. Through play children learn about themselves and the world in which they live.
- ♥ Consider enrolling him in a preschool program. He will enjoy going to "school."



### tip

Promote imaginative play and "dress up" and "play house" or being a fireman or teacher.

## Safety check

Here are a few simple rules to follow to make sure that your child is safe:

- ✓ Change car seat to a booster seat if your child is over 40 lbs. Keep in back seat. They should ride in booster until 80 lbs. Using a lap/shoulder belt to secure your child.
- ✓ Teach him to watch for traffic.
- ✓ Teach color of traffic lights and what they mean.
- ✓ Keep firearms, matches, poisons and tools out of reach.
- ✓ Have phone numbers of Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) and your doctor.
- ✓ Keep medicines out of reach.

- ✓ Keep hot water heater temperature no greater than 120 degrees.
- ✓ Continue to teach name, address and phone number.
- ✓ Stress to not accept items from strangers.
- ✓ Teach about "bad touch" and to tell you if it ever happens.
- ✓ Supervise him around any body of water.
- ✓ Use a sunscreen (at least #15) when he is out side.
- ✓ Wear protective gear when riding a bike or rollerblading.

**Enjoy your wonderful 4 year old. Take time to capture many of his activities on film and/or tape for years and years of future enjoyment.**

## *Messages for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity*

- ♥ Your child depends on you to learn new things. Offer your child 5 fruits and vegetables each day.
- ♥ Set a good example. Play with your kids.

**We will send another newsletter before your child is 5 years old.**

**If you have friends that are pregnant or have young infants, please tell them to join our program by calling Countryside Public Health.**

### **Countryside Offices**

#### **Swift County**

201 13th St. S. • Benson, MN 56215  
320-843-4546 or 1-800-657-3291

#### **Yellow Medicine County**

415 9th Avenue • Granite Falls, MN 56241  
320-564-3010 or 1-800-407-3628

#### **Chippewa County**

719 N. 7th St. • Suite 308 • Montevideo, MN 56265  
320-269-2174 or 1-800-894-0192

#### **Lac Qui Parle County**

600 6th Street • Madison, MN 56256  
320-598-7313 or 1-800-255-0736

#### **Big Stone County**

47 NW 2nd St. • Suite 104 • Ortonville, MN 56278  
320-839-6135 or 1-866-277-5587

Health Tracks was adapted from Communities Caring for Children MDH, NW District