



25 WAYS TO BUILD ASSETS IN PRESCHOOLERS



1. Play with preschoolers, letting them choose the type of play.
2. Find other caring adults to participate regularly in preschoolers' lives.
3. Encourage preschoolers' thinking abilities by exposing them to new situations, such as visiting a beach, a construction site, an apple orchard, or a children's museum.
4. Do simple acts of community service together, such as collecting cans of food for a food bank.
5. Teach preschoolers basic safety rules, such as avoiding poisons and looking both ways before crossing the street while holding an adult's hand.
6. Give preschoolers simple chores, such as sorting laundry by color or matching socks.
7. Encourage preschoolers to play with another child on a regular basis. This helps children learn social skills.
8. Stay calm when preschoolers act in highly emotional ways.
9. Demonstrate appropriate behaviors rather than just telling preschoolers what to do and what not to do. ("We wait our turn in line, like this.")
10. Follow preschoolers' lead in which activities interest them most. Support that interest by exposing children to other related activities. For example, if a child likes insects, go on walks where you identify them, search for books about them, and draw or paint them.
11. Introduce preschoolers to zoos, children's story hours, preschool programs, and other events that welcome young children.
12. Look for fun ways to play together as a family.
13. Give preschoolers opportunities to meet and spend time with a neighbor, a great-aunt or great-uncle, or another adult who's important to you.
14. Visit the library often. Have preschoolers choose books to check out.
15. Make up new songs, stories, and games to play with preschoolers.
16. Notice and comment on preschoolers' appropriate behavior.
17. Teach preschoolers how to care for a special toy, outfit, pet, or plant, but don't expect preschoolers to do this on their own. They'll need an adult's active participation.
18. When you notice others behaving in ways you admire or don't admire, explain your own family's values to preschoolers. For example, "I like how that girl is sharing by giving her toy to the boy next to her."
19. Emphasize the concept of sharing. Model sharing whenever possible.
20. Continue to cheer on preschoolers' new skills, such as cutting, drawing, and walking backward.
21. Have periodic family meetings where preschoolers have input and a voice in decision making.
22. Ask preschoolers how they feel about the events in their lives. Encourage them to identify more positive examples than negative ones. Ask: "What makes you feel happy? When do you get excited?" Encourage preschoolers to articulate their feelings by using words.
23. Break new tasks and skills into small, manageable steps so that preschoolers can master them without becoming too frustrated. For example, you can teach learning to put on and buckle a shoe in four steps: First, put the left shoe on the left foot. Second, slide the shoe strap into the buckle. Third, push the buckle pin through the hole on the strap. Fourth, slide the strap through the other side of the buckle.
24. Encourage preschoolers to take pride in their cultural heritage. Share pictures and stories about children's background. Start or keep traditions that highlight this heritage.
25. Dress up with preschoolers. Pretend to be astronauts, doctors, and veterinarians. Help the imagination soar.