

# What's Special About Me at this Age?



## Character Building

- My character and interests are obvious now. I need encouragement to practice and become skilled in my interests. This is when *pilimmaqsarniq* really begins.
- I am learning to treat my siblings well. I need encouragement not to bother them or tell on them. Remind me that my siblings and I will need each other's support in the future.

*In the past, girls were told that one day they would need their brothers to provide food for them. Boys were told that they would need their sisters to provide warm mittens.*



## Communication

- My memory is developing. Teach me to remember chants and songs. When you tell me a story, stop sometimes and ask me to tell you what will happen next.
- I can start to read now. You can help me by putting labels on things in our house that I already know the names of. Challenge me by mixing up two labels and asking me to find the mistake.



## Skill Building

- I am very interested in new things. Always encourage me to try!

*In the past, children were encouraged to try any skill they showed interest in. Boys who showed interest in sewing were encouraged. If a child wanted to go hunting even though it was very cold, we allowed them to go.*

# Applying Inuit Values

## Family – Putting the Needs of Others First



### Commentary

When we were young, we did not feel pressure because we knew that our parents would make sure our needs were met, such as having warm clothing and good shelter. If my hands got cold, my father would stop the trip to warm my mitts inside his parka. We knew we were well cared for. This gave us a sense of being very secure. Our parents were efficient and paid close attention to us, so we had great respect for them and confidence in whatever they did or said.

Today, parents and children do not have the same relationship. Today, parents have to find ways to rebuild relationships of confidence and respect. They can do this by spending time with their children, by paying close attention to the child's needs, and not just doing what they want to do.

~ Elder Advisory Committee

## Reminders

- ✓ Children should have health assessments before they start school, including development, vision, and hearing. Check with the Health Centre.
- ✓ It is also time for immunizations. Make sure your child is up-to-date.

# Inunnguiniq

## Childrearing Advice from Inuit Elders

5 Years



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CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

Children and Adolescents with Special Needs



## About this Age

Children become very independent at this age. Always monitor the child's activity, but don't interrupt unless she is doing something wrong or dangerous. If the child is doing something wrong or dangerous, correct her immediately so she learns.

Five-year olds are very curious about their environment. This is a good time to teach them about the land, what can be used, and what can be eaten. For example, they will be excited to learn what plants can be eaten or used for tea. They will also be interested in small animals and insects. Teach them the names and characteristics of each one. Encourage them to observe details and changes in nature. This is a good time to teach your child that we live in relationship with everything in the world.

Five-year olds like imaginary play. Imaginary play is important because it causes children to think about challenges in life and seek solutions. Support imaginary play by encouraging children to play with what is in their environment. Don't give them too many toys.

At this age, children want to spend more time with their peers. Talk with them about how to make friends. Teach them that they will be treated well if they treat others well.

At this age, the child can tell you when he is hungry or doesn't like a food. Let him help himself to what he wants as long as it is healthy and nutritious.

## What Parents Can Do

- **Encourage your child to resolve conflict on his own.** When a child complains about other children, encourage them to work things out together. Don't try to fix it for them right away.
- **Teach relationship skills.** Teach your child to share and be a good friend. Show them how to do this.
- **Teach respect for property.** Teach your child to respect other children's toys and playgrounds. Many playgrounds have lasted for many many years because we respect them.
- **Teach respectful talking.** Be a good role model when you talk around children. Don't gossip or tease others, because this never helps and always leads to trouble. If you hear children talking about issues they should not talk about, correct them right away. Explain why.
- **Encourage quick action and helpfulness.** Encourage children when they respond quickly to your requests for help. Show appreciation when they are eager to help.
- **Encourage them to pick up garbage on the land.** Teach them to recognize what doesn't belong on the land. Encourage them to bring it back to town and throw it in a garbage can.
- **Teach respect for nature.** Teach children to only harvest what is needed and never more.
- **Teach respect for plants.** Show them how to pick leaves and berries so that the plant is not destroyed. We must always respect the plant and make sure it can keep growing.
- **Teach respect for animals.** Children should never torment small animals or cause suffering, such as when they look for eggs or hunt mice. Show children that all parts an animal must be used and never wasted, even if it is only for dog food.

## Parenting Skills to Practice for this Age

- Strengthen your child's **observation skills.** Here are some ways you can do this.
  - Play observation games while doing everyday activities. For example, put your sewing tools on a table. Add an object that doesn't belong. Ask your child which item doesn't belong. Then, have your child place an object that does belong for you to find.
  - Play the cup game. Have three cups. Hide a small object under one cup. Mix up the cups. Ask your child which cup the small object is under. Take turns mixing up the cups and guessing.
  - Pretend to be animals. Have your child pretend to be an animal. Challenge them to move, sound, eat, and play like that animal would.
  - Collect items from the land together. Talk about everything you know about each item. Encourage the child to share what she knows with others who visit.



### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Encourage children to resolve problems with other children in friendly ways, rather than by telling on others. Give helpful suggestions if your child comes to you with a problem. Explain to your child that being kind when others are mean will make her a stronger person.
- ✓ Teach children to be disciplined. Teach them to be obedient, to never talk back, to listen to their teachers, and to persevere and always do their best.