

nought to 5ive

Ep 10: 2.30pm TV 2 - Friday September 1st
(Repeats on Monday November 27th)

Ready For School

We meet Stella who's 4 years and 8 months, and her parents Polly and Ray. Stella is looking forward to school but she sucks her thumb, doesn't go anywhere without her grey bunny and is not always dry at night. Polly and Ray ask psychologist Nigel Latta if they should be worried by this behaviour. Identical twins Andre and Isaac are also 4 years and 8 months. Their mum is Sarah and they've got an older brother James who's 8. Sarah is a sole parent who works full-time, and has the household running like a well-oiled machine. Gill Connell discusses the importance of children mastering the three kinds of fundamental movement skills, having awareness of their whole bodies, and developing short-term auditory memory by the time they go to school. And we show you how making letters out of sandpaper assists children's recognition because of the kinesthetic experience.

What happens at this age and stage?

Four year-olds are energetic so be prepared for many trips to the park, beach or wherever there's room for them to roar around and burn off energy! They like to try new things so encourage their attempts at throwing and catching, forward rolls, swinging, bouncing, swimming, gymnastics - whatever it is they want to try. You'll marvel at their perseverance. Four year-olds are full of confidence – they love talking about themselves, and are big on testing the boundaries. Be prepared for the odd tale or lie and ignore the silly talk – or at least try not to react. Friendships are very important - foster and encourage these. Four year-olds will cooperate well and play happily with others – but don't expect an argument-free zone just yet! They will enjoy playing with other children in complex dramatic or pretend games. Fine motor skills are being used to produce pictures and symbols and children this age will enjoy painting and making things out of collage. Small buttons no longer pose a challenge and most will have mastered cutting with scissors following lines. As they get close to five children may calm down and be keen to please you. They won't like admitting they are wrong and will try to be good. Their understanding of 'time' is developing and will ask: 'how many sleeps until...grandma arrives, I start school, my birthday...?' On the talking front, most people will be able to understand them although some sounds such as 's' and 'th' may still be developing. Be prepared for lots of questions still. Appreciate their developing sense of humour and thirst for adventure. Enjoy these last special few months before your child begins a new chapter of their life, at school.

About Nigel Latta

Nigel is a clinical psychologist who specialises in working with kids in the "too hard" basket and consults with families throughout the country. A sought-after speaker and trainer, Nigel is also a regular media commentator. He can be heard in the parenting segment of This Way Up each Saturday on National Radio and has recently published 'Before Your Kids Drive you Crazy, Read This'. He lives in Dunedin with his wife and two young sons.



About Gill Connell

Based in Christchurch Gill is our Active Movement presenter. She has an impressive amount of information about the importance of children being active, and imparts this to our families along with a series of activities they can do with their little ones to ensure they ultimately reach their genetic potential. Gill travels the country with her company 'Moving Smart', educating early childhood educators, primary school teachers, parents and caregivers on the all-important link between movement and learning. A primary-school teacher and mother of 3, Gill has co-written a book for parents called *Moving To Learn*, and is about to write a sequel. She was part of a reference group that worked with SPARC to develop a national framework and guidelines for physical activity in early childhood. This work was the basis of the world-leading national initiative *Active Movement*, a philosophy targeting the 0-5 age group. NZ is the only country in the world to have a nationwide focus on the under-fives in this regard. Gill continues to work with SPARC in a mentoring capacity.



Craft Item: Sandpaper Letters

- Coloured sand paper
- Coloured card A5 size (enough pieces for each letter of the name)
- Double sided tape.

Print from the computer large letters of the child's name. (Font Arial, size 600). Using double sided tape cut out and attach the letters face down to the back of the sand paper. Cut out again and tape down to the cardboard

