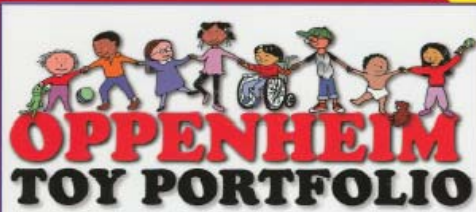


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*The only independent guide to children's media*

**The Best Toys, Books, Videos,  
Music & Software For Kids**



**2005 Edition**

### Pretend Play

This is the age when pretend play blossoms. Some kids pretend with blocks, trains, and miniatures they move around as they act out little dramas. Others prefer dressing up and playing roles with their whole being. Either way, such games are more than fun. They help children learn to stretch their imaginations, try on powerful new roles, cope with feelings and fears, and develop language and social skills.

## 3 • Preschool Three to Four Years



### What to Expect Developmentally

**Learning Through Pretend.** Preschoolers are amazing learning machines! Watch and listen to them at play and you can hear the wheels of their busy minds working full tilt. From sunup to sundown, preschoolers love playing pretend games. Playing all sorts of roles gives kids a chance to become big and powerful people. Providing props for such play gives kids the learning tools to develop language, imagination, and a better understanding of themselves and others.

### Dress-Up Play and Let's-Pretend Props

Old pocketbooks, briefcases, jewelry, hats, or a homemade badge are often all that's needed to transform young players. Below are a few specialty items you may want to buy:



#### ■ Get Real Gear **2005** PLATINUM AWARD

(Aeromax Toys \$49.95 & up **★★★★★**) We were most taken with this company's themed jumpsuits: an orange **Jr. Astronaut** uniform with tons of official looking patches; the **Jr. Air Force Pilot**; and the **Jr. Championship Racer**. Come in sizes for kids 3-12. (877) 776-2291.