



# Your Four-Year-Old: Wild and Wonderful

*Louise Bates Ames*

Download now

Read Online 

# Your Four-Year-Old: Wild and Wonderful

*Louise Bates Ames*

## **Your Four-Year-Old: Wild and Wonderful** Louise Bates Ames

What is it about four-year-olds that makes them so lovable? What problems do four-year-olds have? What can they do now that they couldn't do at three? Drs. Ames and Ilg, recognized authorities on child behavior and development, discuss these and scores of other questions unique to four-year-old girls and boys, and they offer parents practical advice and enlightening psychological insights.

## **Your Four-Year-Old: Wild and Wonderful Details**

Date : Published November 1st 1989 by Dell (first published 1976)

ISBN : 9780440506751

Author : Louise Bates Ames

Format : Paperback 160 pages

Genre : Parenting, Nonfiction, Psychology

 [Download Your Four-Year-Old: Wild and Wonderful ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Your Four-Year-Old: Wild and Wonderful ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Your Four-Year-Old: Wild and Wonderful Louise Bates Ames**

---

## From Reader Review Your Four-Year-Old: Wild and Wonderful for online ebook

### Sarah says

Despite being ridiculously old, the observations of typical 4-year-old behavior give parents reassurance that their crazy child will more than likely calm down next year when they are five.

I will say again that I really wish the Gesell Institute would update these because the parts that haven't aged are wonderful.

---

### Allison says

I find it hard to believe that I liked this book as well as I did considering that I thought the 3 year old book total crap and full of bad parenting advice. But, in the year between 3 and 4, they've changed their spanking advice from base your spanking on the child's body type to spanking is not immoral but shouldn't be relied on as the primary discipline. They've also stopped with the 'your child will probably do better in day care or with a baby sitter as much as possible' advice. It also seemed to match up pretty well with what I've seen so far - 4's love vigorous physical activity (tricycles), exaggeration, adventure, understand a sense of time, and this is a top age for questions (why, why, why).

I also really liked the bit about that 4 year olds should not be expected to read, count past 10 (or even up to 10 if they don't show an interest), know their letters (unless there's an interest) or spell anything (again, based on interest. Theirs. Not the parents.)

I'm still not completely on board with the whole 1/2 year cycles of equilibrium/disequilibrium thing.

And then there's the disclaimer of "do not take too seriously what anybody (we included) tells you about how your child will or may behave." which makes reading this book probably a bit like reading a horoscope, any horoscope. Of course parts of it will be describing your child/you.

---

### Andrea says

3.5 stars. Some interesting and insightful observations about four-year-olds (some of which were spookily accurate re: my son!). I wish there had been more concrete suggestions about how to deal with challenging behavior. This was published in the 70s, so a lot of it just isn't relevant anymore, though that stuff is entertaining to read--for example, they discuss television in a funny, sweetly naive way when viewed through today's realities. There's also an entire chapter very peculiarly devoted to insanely specific directions for a four-year-old birthday party (?), and, for example, advice about what to do when your child is embarrassed to have to keep wearing rubber pants at night so they don't wet the bed. And, very traditional gender roles abound in this whole series--everything is about Mother taking care of the child. But! The uncanny insights and explanations of child behavior make it worth reading--it's pretty quick too.

---

### Evie Rabeck says

Very dated and not comprehensive enough. I think I'm still looking for the manual for my specific kid!

### **Kristen says**

Though some things are obviously dated, this series adequately provides parents with developmental expectations for their children at each age. I have found them reassuring and helpful for many years.

---

### **Shala Howell says**

This series of children's books was recommended to me by my pediatrician, and I have read them faithfully as my child grows. This book was the least helpful to me of the bunch. I still find the developmental information about what a four year old is learning and capable of (both emotionally and physically) to be extremely interesting. However, the book lost me on the body type = personality section. I didn't find that terribly helpful at all, especially with the author's disclaimer that no one person is one body type and your child may exhibit behaviors that span types. Why include it then, if it's such a crappy way to sort people?

I will probably read the five-year old book, simply because I do find the developmental marker information (and the suggestions for birthday parties) so very helpful, but I may skip over the other bits.

To comment on the other reviewers points -- yes there is a lot of dated information in here, but I tend to find those bits funny.

---

### **Dion says**

Insightful, helpful and calming.

---

### **Krista says**

My hygienist recommended this book, and I took her opinion very seriously since she is the only dental professional who ever successfully convinced me to floss.... and she also has four very lovely teen and adult children, so she must know what she's talking about! I initially had the previous book in the series – Your Three-year-old, Friend or Enemy – but I couldn't get into it. These books were written in the mid-1970's and do not appear to have been updated. I found myself wondering if they were still applicable today and before I knew it, I had a four-year-old!

After reading page one of “Your Four-Year-Old,” I knew that these books apply just fine to today's child – it was like they had a hidden camera in my home and wrote a book just for my four-year-old. Ames and Ilg described a child who loves to be silly, loves all things new, and doesn't love to stop and settle down. They talked about the tendency to exaggerate and boast, and to experiment with “elimination swearing”. It's unbelievable how many ways “doodoo” can logically fit into a Four-year-old conversation!

The authors follow a consistent pattern of chapters in these books including the typical abilities of this age group, how to throw a birthday party for a four-year-old, techniques for living with your four-year-old child, and more. I especially liked the “techniques” chapter. When overwhelmed by my son's boasting and

outrageous claims, I can just ignore them. That much I knew, but found myself getting riled up anyway, so I've been putting their alternate solution to good use: play along! Now, when he says he can run faster than the Blue Angels, I talk about how he can run up to one, climb on top, ride to the moon, and jump off onto the sun. Much more fun for all. They concluded that chapter with encouragement not to worry if your child swears, lies, and exaggerates: it's normal, and besides there's hope for age five!

This describes the tone of the book well – practical guidance, combined with credible reassurance. The final section, “Stories from Real Life”, was a question and answer section full of questions from real parents. While I was left wondering if certain philosophies may be dated, I could see that most of the advice was timeless common sense. I must make a note to get the Your Five-Year-Old: Sunny and Serene with enough time to plan the birthday party. :)

---

### **Jenna says**

A good portion of the text in the books in this series contain outdated recommendations and advice, but the reading on development is excellent. It's fascinating to read of all the things your child is doing in print that you would otherwise take advantage of or not make particular note of, but when you read the descriptions in these books it's like "yeah, that's exactly right!" I'll even find myself brought to tears just having the daily behaviors I encounter each day put into words -- it's like my reality is being acknowledged and I'm filled with an awareness of the fleeting time of each age. I find that when I read up on development it helps me to fully appreciate and love (and tolerate) each wonderful and unique stage. Having the increased knowledge and understanding of where my child is at developmentally helps me to parent much more effectively and with more empathy and good humor.

---

### **Jennifer says**

I read it. Hit too close to home for me over here at Battle of the Wills Central. My favorite line was "Mother is the one that he needs to conquer."

Remember: "Your child is not your enemy. It is not you against him. Do not unnecessarily multiply the occasions when your will must prevail. Stay out of conflict and even let him win at times."

Helped me realize that the chewing hair, imaginary friend stuff is par for the course. Here's hoping that four is a little less "dynamic."

---

### **Sarah B. says**

First, the book was written in 1976 and your child will be referred to as either "Four" or "him" throughout. An occasional paragraph is written specifically about girls, but aside from those, your child is a "he". I found this distancing (my four-year-old is female) and a bit confusing, because sometimes the prose switches from using "he" to mean all children to using "he" to refer only to male children, and it's hard to keep track of who is being referred to sometimes. Although, if you don't concentrate on the details, it's pretty easy to figure out, because apparently boys are adventurous, aggressive, and athletic, and girls are, well, not mentioned that often so I guess they're just not like boys! This is why we don't read parenting books written in 1976

anymore.

Other than the rampant sexism, this book seems to be written to reassure parents that all the normal things their child does are normal. For example:

Dressing up is very big at Four. Boys as well as girls love to dress up, preferably in adult clothes. Boys, as a rule, prefer cowboy hats and holsters; girls love long gowns, veils, hats, handbags. Boys are less likely than earlier to dress up in high-heeled shoes or women's hats. Make-believe weddings, with the bride, especially, dressed elaborately from the old-clothes box, are popular.

Duh. Congratulations, your child is successfully incorporating societal gender norms into his or her identity? Yay for gender programming? No comments from the authors: in telling parents what to expect, this book amounts to a way to check if your child is "normal" without having to question whether or not being normal is a good thing.

The best part of the book is the second paragraph. You can read this and then throw the book away, because there isn't anything as helpful as this in the whole rest of the book:

For the most part, we have found the boy or girl of this age to be joyous, exuberant, energetic, ridiculous, untrammled -- ready for anything. What a change he offers as compared to his more difficult, demanding, Three-and-a-half-year-old, just-earlier self! If at times he seems somewhat voluble, boastful, and bossy, it is because it is so exciting for him to enter the fresh fields of self-expression that open up at this wonderful age.

So sweet! This made me want to gather up my daughter and give her a big hug, and I keep it in mind when she seems to have too much energy for me. There's a lot to love about someone who has so much enthusiasm, and who will always say "Yes" to any suggestion you have for something to do together.

The worst part of the book is this horrific letter included in Chapter Nine: Stories from Real Life:

Dear Doctors:

I have read your writings for several years and marvel at your solutions for people who seem to need them. I hope you can do the same for me.

I have what I think is a problem with my Four-and-a-half-year-old daughter Martha. It just started recently. When she goes to sleep at night she has to have her head covered up, no matter what the weather.

If she sleeps with someone else, or takes her nap in the daytime, she doesn't cover her head. Just at night if she is alone. I have talked with her, warned her that she may smother, even spanked her, but it does no good. She waits until she thinks everyone is asleep and then covers her head. I've asked her if she is afraid of something, but she says no.

Is this just a stage? If not, how can I stop her?

She SPANKED her four-year-old daughter for putting her blankets over her head at night?!? I forgot how terrible the 70s were. This book may have been helpful when it was originally published, but there are better resources for parents out there now.

### **Tracey Mcd says**

I really liked the Three book because it did such a good job of explaining what they act that way. This book basically says Fours are more independent and need to be physically active. (Pretty sure that reveal doesn't count as a spoiler). Even if you can overlook the 35 year old references, there isn't enough insight into a Four's mindset to justify the cost of the book.

---

### **Cynthia says**

I wish I could chose "read" and "currently reading" at the same time, because this is one of those books that I'll be reading all year. I can't really say re-reading since every time I open it, it will be new to me and exactly what I need. I knew I would love my kid, I didn't know I would fall in love with her at all her different ages. I'm crazy about the exuberance of FOUR! It's like she's living in capital letters! ALL! THE! TIME! This book is a gem because it decodes some things that maybe I used to know when I was four, and helps me understand her. The poop jokes, the huge highs and lows of her friends, the minute by minute excitement of WHAT'S NEXT!

---

### **Jeanine Mills says**

I have been reading this series, one each year, as my daughter grows. I read a couple of reviews here and agree with both of them though one was pro and one was con. These are DATED books from the 70's and much of the parenting advise is crap and makes me feel sorry for my parents who were actually trying to parent with advise like this. BUT the child development information is SO helpful in knowing what to expect at what age. My kid is not a crazy, insane, brat... she is 3 1/2! I find it helpful to read ahead a bit so I can anticipate the next set of challenges and figure out how \*I\* want to handle them. As I said before, the parenting advise and discipline and gender expectations and such are things I skim over and try not to get too worked up about. These books are a quick read, short with pictures even. I have yet to get my husband to read through one of them. And I don't buy them, but get them from the library.

---

### **Amanda Evans says**

Only 4 stars and not 5 because the book is over 40 years old and could obviously benefit from an update in terms of studies and the way kids live today. The essential nature of Fours hasn't changed though and that's where this book shines.

---