



## Ideas for three, four, and five-year-olds

### Mother and baby

Print out the mother and baby pictures from here [Link to mother and baby sheet] and cut up. Keep the 'mother' pictures but place the baby pictures on another table. Give your child(ren) one mother picture at a time, and ask them to find their baby on the other table, teaching the names of the baby animals as they find them. Try and think of what you might have to buy to help look after that pet if you had it.

### Sing a song

Teach your child(ren) one or more of the songs listed. They are to the tune of I'm a Little Teapot. Talk about the songs and what the words mean. Are there some messages in there about looking after these pets?

### Meeting dogs

Using a toy cuddly dog, the adult pretends that the dog is theirs. If you can, put a collar and lead on the dog to stress that your child(ren) should only be asking to stroke dogs that are properly under control. Your child(ren) can role play asking if they can stroke the dog.

We recommend teaching young children to meet dogs they don't know like this, which can all be acted out with the cuddly dog:

1. Ask the owner
2. If the owner says "yes", do not go up to the dog. Instead, call the dog to you by patting your thighs and saying "Hello".
3. If the dog chooses not to come up to you, leave the dog alone. (You can practice this with your cuddly dog while acting it out with your child(ren).)
4. If the dog chooses to walk towards you, stand still with your palms facing the dog, so he knows you're not a threat and he can come and have a sniff.
5. If the dog seems nice and relaxed and friendly, then it is ok to stroke his dog but not on the head.



(Some dogs find this scary.) Instead, stroke the dog's shoulder (you will probably need to show them where exactly this is on a dog) three times and then stop so that the dog can then move away if he wants to.

We call this 'canine choice' because it is making sure a dog gets a choice whether to meet someone new or not, which is much safer for children and more comfortable for a dog. You will definitely need to explain what 'canine' means if you use that phrase!

Ask the children if they know of any rules around dogs. The rules that they definitely need to remember are:

1. Never to run up to dogs
2. Not to put their faces right up close to a dog's face – dogs don't like it
3. To leave dogs alone while eating
4. To leave dogs alone while sleeping
5. Not to hang around a dog's neck or cuddle

For more advice visit the Blue Cross website.  
[bluecross.org.uk/pet-advice/be-safe-dogs](http://bluecross.org.uk/pet-advice/be-safe-dogs)

## Be a vet

Set up a vet's practice. You will need cuddly toys to be the patients, a 'doctor's kit', a table, but also include things like food for different animals, blankets, beds, a hutch, bedding - whatever you can find so that the animals that 'need to stay overnight' can be looked after.

## Who lives where?

Matching activity. Ask your child(ren) "who lives where?" and get them to match the pictures of the home to the pictures of the animal.





## Songs to Sing About Pets

These songs are all to be sung to the tune of 'I'm a little teapot'.

After teaching them to the children, check their understanding of the words.

Are there any messages there about looking after their pets well?

### **I'm a Little Puppy**

I'm a little puppy, short and sweet  
I learn the rules if you feed me treats  
When I'm getting tired hear me speak  
Leave me be and let me sleep

### **I'm a Little Bunny**

I'm a little bunny, soft and round  
I like to jump and run around  
Let me out of my hutch and on the ground  
Don't forget that I'm around

### **I'm a Syrian Hamster**

I'm a Syrian Hamster, small and fat  
Keep me safe, away from the cat  
Let me run in tunnels, I like that  
I live alone, don't like to chat





