

Celebrating Your Child

Parent Home Page

Tips and Activities for Parents of
Children 0 to 18 Months • Year 1

Jesus Loves Children

"Jesus loves the children."

(See Mark 10:16.)

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This month we will help your child:

- develop an awareness of the name of Jesus and associate Him with being loved;
- enjoy the activities provided.

October

Do these activities with your child to continue the learning your child has experienced at church.

Little Activities for Little People

Babies

- Even the youngest baby usually responds positively to soft, quiet singing. Hearing simple yet rhythmic melodies again and again will give your baby great pleasure. Sing the song for this month to your baby many times along with other songs for babies that you know. Even if you're not comfortable singing, simply repeat the words of familiar songs as poems. Your voice is the sweetest sound in the world to your baby!
- Give your baby an intriguing toy with which to play. Talk to your baby, describing the toy and the baby's actions. Occasionally play with the toy yourself, moving the cradle gym, turning a dial or shaking a rattle. Respond to your baby with a smile and an encouraging nod when he or she attempts to imitate your actions. Play music or sing a song and shake a rattle. Give your baby a rattle to shake to the song, too.

Do It!

Jesus Loves Us All

Who are the children Jesus loves?

Jesus loves us all!

He loves us when we clap;

He loves us when we crawl.

He loves us when we walk;

He loves us when we fall.

Who are the children Jesus loves?

Jesus loves us all.

Jesus loves you!

Show your child a picture of Jesus from a child's Bible story book (available at most bookstores). Point to Jesus and say His name. Tell your child that Jesus loves every child. Say the finger play, making the motions with your fingers. If your child is interested, repeat the finger play slowly and encourage him or her to act out

the actions with you by clapping, crawling, walking and plopping down on the floor. Say your child's name in the last line of the finger play.

Sing It!

Each Little Child

(Tune: "Mary Had a Little Lamb")

Jesus loves each little child,

Little child, little child.

Jesus loves each little child,

He loves you, yes, He does.

Sing this song to your child, inserting your child's name in place of "each little child." Show your child a picture of Jesus. Say, **Jesus loves you!** Sing the song. Point to Jesus when you sing His name. Point to your child when you sing his or her name.

Question & Answer

Q: How do I develop rules for my toddler?

A: It's easy to find oneself saying, "No!" to nearly everything a toddler does! But rather than fall into a "no" pattern that makes little sense to your child and creates constant irritation for you, take some time to determine what your essential house rules should be. It may help to write them down and discuss them with other family members so that everyone can help your toddler understand what rules apply around the house.

- Physical safety issues (staying in the yard) and family routines (bedtimes) need a few basic rules. For instance, "We play in the yard. We keep the gate closed." "We are going to take a nap now. It's nap time."
- When you state a rule to your toddler, do your best to state it positively. (Children often don't hear the "don't" part of a rule and instead act on what they did hear, thus doing just what you said not to do!) Help a child understand why, even at this age. (It's good practice for later years when your child will ask, "Why?" constantly!) For example, rather than, "Don't touch the cord!" try, "The cord stays in the wall. It can hurt your hand if you touch it. Owie!"

• Toddlers will test you. This does not mean you need to change the house rules! A child needs to know that you (and your rules) are a sure thing. A child gains comfort and security in knowing what you expect and what comes next. Rules help a child make sense of his or her world.

And remember! A few rules, consistently enforced, are far more effective than many rules (and you will not have to wear yourself out playing "police"!).

Hide and Seek

- Collect several toy cars or animals.
- Hold the car or animal in your hand, showing it to your child. Then place the car behind an object on a shelf or behind a chair. Ask the child to find the hidden object. The child may walk to where the toy is hidden and pull it out. If not, pretend to look in several places around the room. When you find the toy, say, **I found it!**
- Repeat the game as long as your child is interested, varying the objects you hide. Say, **It's fun to play hide and seek with you. Jesus loves us when we play. Jesus loves us all the time!**

Little children remind us not to take ourselves so seriously.