



Fall 2023

Dear Families,

Raising children in the faith doesn't happen just at church, but at home and in everyday life. As parents, you have the unique role to walk alongside your children every day and teach them about Jesus. In order to help promote and encourage faith development at home, I have included several resources for you to use in your homes:

- Family Devotions
 - Carlos Caterpillar
 - Yancy and the Little Praise Party
- Smart Moves for Little Ones
 - Habits at Home
- Family Traditions
 - Fall Holidays
- Faith Conversation Guide
- Creating Rhythm Words

“Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (Deuteronomy 11:18-19).

Blessings,

Jen Roettjer, DCE

Director of Youth and Discipleship





[FAMILY DEVOTIONS]

LEARN

Carlos Caterpillar

Visit YouTube to find episodes of Carlos Caterpillar as he journeys to become a butterfly.

Visit <https://carloscaterpillar.com/downloads/> for additional resources.

SHARE

Highs and Lows from the day
What are you thankful for today?

PRAY
Confess
Honor
Ask
Thanks

MUSIC

Yancy and the Little Praise Party

Visit the YancyNotNancy channel on YouTube for music videos.

<https://yancyministries.com/tag/little-praise-party/>



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HABITS AT HOME

Thoughts to Consider

Sometimes the only way to build a habit is to intentionally work at it and begin to include it in our regular routine. Often activities to build our faith don't come naturally. Instead we have to work at it to make them part of our life. Fortunately, this does not need to happen by our own power and free will. The Spirit is ready to work in our lives to build good habits.

Consider making the following habits a part of your daily routine at home.

- Mealtime prayers
- Bedtime prayers
- Story time
- Singing songs
- Highs and Lows
- Giving thanks
- Family devotions

Family Traditions

While your child is young, this is a great time to talk about what type of family traditions you would like to begin with your family. As you think about these activities, keep in mind the special traditions you remember from your childhood, traditions you have seen other families do, and what you want your children to take with them into adulthood. Check out the Family Traditions sheet in each Grow at Home packet for ideas.

- Birthdays
- Baptismal Birthdays
- Holiday Celebrations
- Everyday Celebrations



[FAMILY TRADITIONS]

FALL HOLIDAYS

Thoughts to Consider

With the cooler weather and pumpkin spice filling the air, Fall is a great time to spend with your family. Let's look at several holidays and see what types of traditions we can celebrate together.

Fall

- Pick a minor holiday and turn it into a full celebration
- Take a fall picnic
- S'mores bar – set out multiple types of chocolates and marshmallows to create your own s'mores creation. If it's too cold outside, consider putting all of your ingredients in a waffle cone and baking them.

Halloween

- Pumpkin gathering and carving
- Boo your neighbors – make some treats and leave them on their porch as a surprise
- Look for creative ways to use up your Halloween candy – how about building a candy structure or making a special dessert
- Pick a family theme for your costumes

Thanksgiving

- Thankful box – fill early in the day with anonymous things you are thankful for, then pass the box around during dinner to read them
- Thanksgiving Tree – Hang blank pieces of paper from an empty tree for each person to write what they are thankful for
- Touch Football Game
- Don't forget about breakfast – make your own special Thanksgiving themed breakfast foods
- Run/Walk a 5K before your holiday meal

It's Just A Phase . . . So Don't Miss It

To enhance the conversation, here are a few activities your family can try:

- **Print photos of family members and friends** and place them in an inexpensive album. Let your preschooler flip through the book while you lead them in praying for the people they see in the pictures.
- **Create a playlist of your child's favorite praise and worship songs.** Demonstrate connecting with God through song by dancing and singing with your preschooler on a regular basis. Don't know where to find great, kid-friendly music? Check out ParentCueStore.org or Orange Kids Music in iTunes.
- **Pray consistently with your preschooler.** Demonstrate that prayer is having a conversation with God by using a pretend telephone during your prayer time. Take turns "dialing" (starting the prayer) and "hanging up" (ending the prayer). Let your preschooler use their own words and language, but feel free to prompt them if they get distracted or stall out.
- **Tell your child simple Bible stories** and repeat favorite memory verses. (Use the Parent Cue App for help!). Explain simply that stories from the Bible are true, and show us how to live.

This guide is based on research from The Phase Project, a collaborative, ongoing effort, assembling classic and innovative research with practical application. To discover more ways to help your preschooler develop healthy habits, check out <http://PhaseGuides.com>.



For more information on The Phase Project and other great parent resources, visit theParentCue.org
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FAITH

PARENT CONVERSATION GUIDE

Faith. How we talk about faith at each phase of a person's life matters in how they'll think about faith in the phases to come. Preschoolers use their five senses to experience the world around them. In this phase, you can help them develop authentic faith by inciting wonder. You will give them the foundations for their faith in the way you respond with concrete examples and by letting them explore God's creation. As they grow and mature into adolescents you'll be able to unpack abstract concepts more deeply. For now, be as simple as possible, and remember that your role in the preschool phase is to . . .

Incite
WONDER



So they will . . .
**KNOW GOD'S LOVE AND
MEET GOD'S FAMILY.**

This guide is designed to help you connect with your child in the phase they are in, by giving you some words to say to introduce them to faith. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always keep this end goal in mind for your kid:

AUTHENTIC FAITH

Trusting Jesus in a way that transforms how I love God, myself, and the rest of the world.

IN THE NEW BABY PHASE, SAY THINGS LIKE . . .

"God, thank You for this healthy baby." *(Pray aloud while you are with your baby.)*

"Jesus loves me." *(Sing songs while you hold your baby.)*

"We are going to church." *(Connect with a faith community.)*

"How did the Samaritan take care of his neighbor?" *(Talk about what your preschooler learns at church.)*

"Can you let your friend have a turn?" *(Prompt them to share.)*

**"Isn't that wonderful?
Let's thank God for it."**

"Do not be afraid, for the Lord your God is with you." Joshua 1:9
(Repeat simple Bible verses.)

IN THE FOLLOWING PRESCHOOL YEARS, SAY THINGS LIKE . . .

God made you. God loves you. Jesus wants to be your friend forever."

"God, thank you for . . ." "God, please help us . . ."

"Let's read about how God made the world."

"Are you scared? Let's talk to God about it."

JUST REMEMBER

Every phase is a timeframe in a kid's life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future. The preschool years are the wonder years. You can incite their wonder by exploring the world side-by-side with your child. Your child listens to your words, so this phase is the perfect time to begin talking, singing, and reading out loud with your toddler about faith. And as they get older—three, four, five—and have questions about so many things, including faith questions, answer as simply as possible.

CREATING A RHYTHM WITH YOUR WORDS...

in PRESCHOOL



Set the mood for the day. Smile, greet them with words of love.

- Are you ready for a super fun day?
- Are you excited to _____ today?
- Guess who loves you! I do! Guess who loves you even more than mommy/daddy?
- You look so beautiful/handsome today!



Reinforce simple ideas. Talk to your preschooler and play music as you go.

- Look out the window at what God made.
- Can you find something green that God made?
- If you could be invisible for one day, what would you do?
- Would you rather have a pet dinosaur or a pet shark?



Be personal. Spend one-on-one time that communicates love and affection.

- I'm so glad God made you.
- I'm so glad I get to be your mommy/daddy.
- Jesus loves you so much. He wants to be your friend forever.
- God, thank you for . . .
- God, please help us . . .
- Are you scared? Let's talk about it.
- I love you.



Wind down together. Provide comfort as the day draws to a close.

- You did such a good job doing _____ today.
- I love watching you grow.
- Where's your belly button?
- I love your little feet. They help you run so fast.