

Tips and Activities for Parents of
Children 18 to 36 Months • Year 1

Jesus Loves Children

“Jesus loves the children.”

(See Mark 10:16.)



This month we will help your child:

- hear songs and words about Jesus’ love for children;
- feel loved by caring teachers;
- participate in play activities that teach him or her about Jesus’ love.

October

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

Little Activities for Little People

Toddlers

- Toddlers love to look at books. Hold a sturdy cardboard book and sit on the floor near your toddler. Show the first picture to the child. Point to something familiar in the picture and say its name. If your child is interested in looking at the book, he or she may want to turn the pages and point to things of interest. Say the names of the things the child points to. Ask your child to tell you what something is or what it says. Little children like to look at the same book many times. Each time, they recognize more of the things in the book.
- Children enjoy the feeling of different textures. Take your child outside and invite him or her to feel the bark on a tree, the fur of a dog, the water from the hose, a feather, flower or rock. Let your child touch the back of your hand and the side of your face with his or her fingers. Talk about what these things feel like. Say, **God made your hands so that you can feel (a rough rock).**

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.

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Tell It!

Jesus Loved the Little Children

Jesus loved the little children.
Mommies and Daddies brought
their children to Jesus.
Jesus held the little babies close.
Big boys and girls walked to
Him all by themselves!
Jesus smiled at all the children.
And the children smiled at Him.
Some children came and sat near Jesus.
Some children climbed right up in His lap!
Jesus loved each one.
(See Mark 10:13-16.)

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"!).

Play Dough

- Mix 1 cup of flour with 1 cup of salt in a bowl. Put half of this mixture in another bowl. Put 2 to 3 drops blue food coloring in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water and mix the colored water into one bowl of flour/salt mixture. In another $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water put 2 to 3 drops of yellow food coloring and mix into second bowl of flour/salt mixture.

- Give your child a lump of blue and a lump of yellow dough to play with. Sit down and play with some dough too, demonstrating how to roll, squeeze or mold it. Your child may try to taste the dough, but it will taste so salty that he or she will stop (and it will not hurt your child, should he or she swallow a small amount). Your child will want to see how play dough feels and to experiment with it.

- Let your child mix the two colors of dough together to discover the new color it makes. Store the dough in an airtight container for use on another day. Children enjoy repeating this activity. Repetition allows them to build on the knowledge they have previously gained.

Little children remind us not to take ourselves so seriously.