

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

God Gives Me Food

“God gives us food.”

(See Genesis 1:29.)



This month we will help your child:

- develop an awareness that God made food;
- enjoy eating food with teachers and other children.

(Alert nursery staff of any food allergies your child has.)

November

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

Little Activities for Little People

Babies

- Babies like toys that can be held easily in their hands and chewed upon. (Toys that are too big to be manipulated by small hands are frustrating.) A baby cannot really experience something unless the baby can get it into his or her mouth. Make sure the small toys you provide are safe: too big to be swallowed, no sharp or rough edges, no pieces that can come off.
- As your baby develops control over his or her arms and hands, your baby likes toys that respond to his or her actions, not ones that he or she must passively observe. A ball that your baby can roll, a pull toy that makes a noise when moved, or a toy that bounces back when hit are great favorites. Perhaps most fun of all are your responses when your baby does something. A parent who laughs, squeals and claps when a baby does something is the best of all possible playmates.

Do It!

My Food



This is my nose
To smell my cracker.



These are my eyes



To see my cracker.

These are my hands
To hold my cracker.



This is my tongue
To taste my cracker.



Thank You, God,
For my cracker.

Do this finger play with your child before giving him or her a snack. If your child is interested in what you are doing, ask, **Where is your nose? Where is my nose?** Watch your child point to the noses. Then do the whole finger play, encouraging your child to do it with you. While your child is eating his or her snack, do the fin-

ger play again. (If you are having a different snack than crackers, use the name of your snack in the finger play instead of crackers.)

Sing It!

I Thank God

(Tune: “Mulberry Bush”)

Apples taste so good to me,
So good to me, so good to me.
Apples taste so good to me.
I thank God for my food.

Show your toddler an apple. Say, **Is this an apple or a banana?** Give your child a chance to respond, then say, **This apple is red!** Sing this song with your toddler. Do the motion of rubbing the tummy when saying the words “so good to me.” Serve your child an apple. (When having a different snack than apples, sing this song about the snack you are having—bananas, pears, crackers, etc.)

Get Ready! Holidays Are Coming

Thanksgiving and Christmas are traditional times for families to gather. And your young child is bound to be one of the main points of interest for everyone from the youngest cousin to the oldest grandparent. All this togetherness is great fun for the cousins and grandparents, but it can produce real stress for your child and you.

To reduce the chances of your child (not mention his or her parents!) getting overstimulated, tired and fussy during holiday celebrations, remember these five hints:

- Avoid overscheduling through the holiday season. Turn down a few invitations if necessary. When visiting at someone's home who doesn't have children, don't expect that your host will necessarily have appropriate food or toys for your child. Bring a favorite snack and several favorite toys along with you.
- Plan time each day when you can be alone with your child—and with your spouse when possible!
- Plan a time of prayer every day—even when taking a walk with your child, driving on an errand or in the shower!
- Protect your child's nap time as much as possible.
- Understand and accept your child's times of upset. The holiday excitement is bound to take its toll sooner or later. Offer calm words of understanding, a hug of comfort and a short break from a crowded room.

Touch 'n Feel

• Put an object (baby's brush, a toy car, a block, a piece of fruit) inside a paper bag. Stick your hand in the bag and feel the object. Let your child do the same. Say, **What do you think it is? Is it a blanket? An apple? A car?** (If child is reluctant to put a hand in the bag, show the object before putting it in.)

• Let your child feel the object and, if interested, guess the object's name. Then let your child take the object out and look at it. Say the object's name.

• Then, without letting your child see, put a different object in the bag. Let your child feel this object, too. Say, **What do you feel? Is it hard or is it soft? Is it smooth or rough? Is it hot or cold?**

• Continue letting your child feel different objects in the bag as long as he or she is interested. Name and talk about each object as your child takes it out of the bag.

• For very young children, simply play a peekaboo game. **Here is a car.** Place the car inside the bag. **Oh. Where did the car go?** (A child may or may not realize that the car is inside the bag, even if he or she saw you place it there. Every child moves beyond the "out of sight, out of mind" stage of development at an individual rate.) **Look! Peekaboo! Here is the car!** If child is interested, repeat the game.

"Before I got married I had six theories about bringing up children: now I have six children and no theories."

John Wilmot (1647-1680)