

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

## God Helps Me to Grow

**“God made us.”**

(See Malachi 2:10.)

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**This month we will help your child:**

- associate new accomplishments with God and Jesus;
- enjoy the success of new accomplishments.

## January

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

## Little Activities for Little People

Babies

- While feeding your baby, talk about the parts of the child’s body. Say, **God made you. God made your mouth so you can eat.** Touch the child’s mouth when you mention it. Repeat the word “mouth.” Continue similarly, naming and touching fingers, toes, nose, ears, etc.
- What would it feel like to have someone much bigger than you suddenly take your arms and push them into the sleeves of your coat when you had no idea you were going anywhere requiring a coat? Or how would you like to be lifted high in the air without any warning? Talk to your baby about what you are going to do with him or her. Babies understand much more of your speech than you may imagine. And the tone of your voice calms and helps your child move with ease into the next activity.

### Sing It!

I Am Growing

(Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)

I am growing.  
I am growing.  
Yes, I am.  
Yes, I am.

One time I was smaller.  
Now I am much taller.  
Watch me grow.  
Watch me grow.

Sing this song to your child as you play with him or her. Show your child a picture of him- or herself when younger and smaller. Talk about how much bigger he or she has grown. **Lindsay, you’re growing! You’ve learned to sit up, and now you’re learning to crawl. God made you, and He helps you grow.** Children will begin to associate God’s care with their growth and new accomplishments.

### Do It!

I’m Growing

When I was a baby,  
I was very, very small.  
Now I’m growing older.  
I’m growing big and tall.



When I was a baby,  
I could only crawl.  
Now I can walk, and I can jump.



But, sometimes, down I fall!

Say and do this finger play with your child. Use your child’s name instead of “I.” Toddlers will enjoy the sounds and actions, although they may not be able to do the finger play with you yet. Acting out the poem as you say it will also be enjoyable for your child. Encourage a toddler to crawl with you or to gently sit down.

## Praying with Your Child

I stood over the tiny bundle lying in the bassinet and decided she was starting to look less like a prune. But she was still so helpless and I felt so inadequate. So I did the only thing I thought might help. I prayed.

"Lord, you know I've never been a father before. The idea used to sound like fun, but now I'm scared. I really need your help."

That was the first of many similarly inelegant prayers I whispered late at night, standing beside my sleeping baby's crib. I knew she could neither hear nor understand me. But I began to feel these moments of prayer were bonding me to her in a way I found very special.

Gradually, a brief prayer became part of our bedtime ritual, mixed in with the tummy rubbing, forehead stroking, chin tickling and cheek kissing that helped Kari relax and go to sleep.

Through this process, I stumbled onto a key that continued to make our prayer time meaningful, even as Kari entered adolescence. I found myself talking to God about the experiences Kari and I had shared each evening. As Kari grew and began to contribute her own prayers, she followed the same pattern of thanking God for her-

self and me and for the good times we shared, and of asking God's forgiveness for failures.

Over the years our father-daughter prayer times have been among the strongest experiences in building our relationship. I have often wondered if the pattern would have been so consistent and meaningful if I had not begun practicing in those nights beside her crib. If I had waited until she was two or four and could have understood what I was saying, would I have persevered through my awkwardness or simply given it up as inappropriate for a young child?

—Wes Haystead, Parent and Author

## What's That Sound?

- Gather several toys or objects that make sounds (bells, rattles, shakers, etc.).
- Place one toy or object inside a bag. Shake the bag for your child to hear.
- Let the child take a turn to shake the bag and then pull the toy or object out of the bag.
- Repeat with other toys and objects.
- Say, **I hear a bell. Can you hear the bell? God made your ears to hear. God made you! God is helping you to grow.**

**"You can talk to God about your children. You can tell Him everything, ask Him anything. You can even laugh with Him about the funnier things. I believe He understands laughter, for He is the One who made your child so funny in the first place."**

**Ethel Barrett**