

Tips and Activities for Parents of
Children 0 to 18 Months ● Year 2

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.



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.

Little Activities for Little People

Babies

• Take advantage of nature's beautiful "mobiles"—the quiet floating of falling snow; leaves and branches dancing in the wind or rain trickling down a windowpane. Hold your baby near a window and comment on what you see. Look at the branches blowing in the wind. **God made the wind. God made the leaves. God made you! God is helping you grow!**

• Rocking your baby or preparing him or her for a nap can be a special "I love you" time. **You're growing, Zachary. Sometimes you like to rest. Sometimes you like to play. God loves you when you rest or play.** Having a favorite blanket or toy to hold helps most children relax. Play a quiet song from a children's CD.

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Question & Answer

Q: My toddler is fascinated by television. He loves to watch it. Should I be concerned about any possible ill effects?

A: There is significant evidence that toddlers have a great need to explore their surroundings and manipulate objects in order to nurture their curiosity and stimulate their intelligence. If you are willing to allow your toddler to explore and manipulate each button on your TV, he or she will probably quickly learn how to operate the machines. There's some real learning value in that—but the question is, do you want your child to be able to turn on the TV at will? On the other hand, children who spend time sitting and watching rather than moving and doing are likely to be slowed in their cognitive and physical development. They also will be more likely to become sedentary (and often overweight) physically as they grow older. But most important, television simply offers a toddler very little in comparison with firsthand interactions with people and objects. Real life is a hands-on experience that teaches far more than TV, no matter how highly-touted the "educational" quality of a show.

If your child must watch, limit your child's exposure. Do your best to make viewing a special event done with an adult (complete with a time

to talk about the show), rather than using it as an electronic baby-sitter.

The following comment from a parent, Jack Wiens, puts another light on the subject: "The thing that nags at me when I watch a lot of television is not so much what TV does to me and my family, but what it keeps us from doing. Things like . . .

- talking and listening to each other
- looking at each other
- hugging, holding, tickling, dancing
- reading, thinking
- painting, building, creating
- exercising, playing, singing."

Shakers

- Wash empty plastic soda bottles and caps thoroughly, inside and out. Pour a handful of macaroni, beans, hard candy, etc. into the bottle. Coat the inside of the cap with superglue and close tightly. When the cap is dry, cover cap seam completely with duct tape.
- Use the shakers as you listen to music with your child. Say, **What do you hear? I like to listen to music. It is fun to shake my shaker.** Continue playing with shakers as long as your child shows interest.

"Blessed be childhood, which brings down something of heaven into the midst of our rough earthliness."

Henri Amiel