

Tips and Activities for Parents of
Children 18 to 36 Months • Year 2

God Makes Growing Things

"God made everything."

(See Genesis 1:1.)



This month we will help your child:

- hear words and songs about the world God made;
- feel awe at God's creation;
- participate in play activities to touch and see things God made.

April

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

Tell It!

God Made the World

God made everything that grows.
He made green grass
And pretty flowers grow on the ground.
He made trees grow way up high.
God made puppies grow into dogs
And kittens grow into cats.
Little pigs grow into big pigs and
Little cows grow into big cows that say "moo!"
God made little babies grow bigger
And bigger—just like you.
(See Genesis 1:11-31.)

Do It!



I'm a Little Seed
I'm a little, tiny seed
In the earth so low.
God sends sun and rain,
Then I start to grow.



Little Activities for Little People

Toddlers

- Show your child pictures of growing things such as a dog with puppies, a cat with kittens and other animals with their young. Use the words "little" and "big" as you talk about each animal and its young. Say, **This is a big duck; these are little ducks. This is a big horse, this is a little horse.** Ask your child to point to a big animal and then a little animal. **God made all the animals.**
- As your child plays, talk about his or her actions. Say, **You are stacking the blocks. You are using your strong arms to lift the big blocks. God made your arms. Thank You, God, for Derek's arms.**

Up, up, up,
Slowly I grow,



Then my leaves and flowers show!

Say and do this finger play with your child. Use the child's name instead of "I" and "I'm." To act out the poem in another way, sit on your knees with your head down to be the seed. As you say "Then I start to grow," begin to stretch your head up, then your arms, and then stand up. As you say the words "Then my leaves and flowers show!" stretch your arms out and wiggle your fingers or cup your hands to represent leaves or flowers.

Sing It!

Animal Friends

(Tune: "Jingle Bells" chorus)

Oh, God made ducks
And rabbits and squirrels
And little birds to sing.
God made you and God made me.
Yes, God made everything!
(Repeat.)

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Show your child books picturing ducks, rabbits, squirrels and birds. Ask your child, **What does the duck say? Show me how a squirrel runs. I can wiggle my nose like a rabbit. Can you? Can you flap your arms like a bird flaps its wings?** Then sing the song with your child. Your child may enjoy pretending to be a bird by flapping his or her arms, chirping and moving around while you sing and pretend to be a bird, too.

Discipline

The Child's Legacy

Parents have always worried about discipline. Articles and books on the subject have been in demand since ancient times. While "experts" sometimes disagree with each other on how to deal with certain problems, there is much common ground that has proven solid for generations of parents.

- First, discipline means teaching. And young children are very quick learners. Unfortunately, parents sometimes teach just the opposite of what they intend. For example, angry words and harsh punishment confuse a child, resulting in resentment rather than repentance.
- Children learn best in pleasant surroundings. Therefore, discipline is most effective when the child knows he or she is loved and understood. The natural response when a child has displeased a parent is for the parent to punish the child. However, the parent's action should help the child learn what to do instead of the wrong action. Discipline is for the child's benefit, not simply to release adult frustration.
- Another factor in helping children learn acceptable behavior is the parents' pattern of

meeting the child's needs. The child whose needs have been frustrated will find it hard to respond positively to parental guidance.

- Since young children have limited understanding of words, their unacceptable behavior is most effectively guided through actions, not talk. Usually the best approach is to distract the child with an acceptable activity. In some cases it is necessary to remove some item from the child, or the child from the item. In either case, a simple statement of why you are taking action is helpful. Avoid dwelling on the problem. Focus your attention and the child's attention on the desired new activity.

- If the child continues to misbehave, look behind the action to discover the reason. Your child may be trying to get your attention. Or the child may be intensely curious about a particular item. Whatever the cause, seek to meet your child's need in a healthy manner. Remember, when it comes to the human heart, love wins more battles than force.

Bird Watching

- Take a walk with your child. Say, **We are going to look for some birds. God made birds.** As you walk, point out and talk about birds you see. Say, **I see a bird flying. There is a bird looking for food to eat. Listen to the sounds the birds make.** Talk about other things you see that your child shows interest in.
- Place a simple bird feeder outside a window your child can see out of. When you see birds at the bird feeder, talk with your child about what you see.

"There are one hundred and fifty-two distinctly different ways of holding a baby—and all are right."

Heywood Broun