

Your Kindergartner's Growth

Kindergartners enjoy life! They are curious, eager to learn, and thrive on discovering new things through active exploration. To foster your child's spiritual growth, practice several of the suggested activities every day.

Mental (Know)

Kindergartner's Abilities

- comes up with imaginative ideas and solutions to problems; often thinks out loud
- writes some numbers and letters; reads a few simple words; counts to 20 or higher
- makes up songs from his/her imagination; retells stories in own words
- analyzes situations; deliberates and weighs choices
- learns best from hands-on experiences
- knows 3,000-5,000 different words; vocabulary growth is astonishing
- speaks in compound and complex sentences; grasps some figures of speech and idioms
- differentiates between "living" and "non-living" things
- wants to know more about how the world works
- recognizes that: God is a loving Father, Jesus is God's obedient Son, God wants a relationship with people, God's people go to heaven, people can follow God's plan, the Bible is God's special Book

Spiritual Growth Activities

- Continue *Daily Blessing Time*: read a Bible story together, sing a praise song, pray for family and friends.
- Read good books together which stimulate and challenge your child's mind, heart, and spirit. Revisit favorite books again and again.
- As you read Bible stories, identify godly traits of key characters.
- Encourage him/her to make up stories that include animals, friends, playground, travel, etc.—and God's involvement in the story.
- Endeavor to walk in the Spirit every moment of the day—God's enabling grace, energy, and wisdom will sustain you.
- As you patiently answer your child's questions, look for connections to God and His ways.
- Be enthusiastic and upbeat about your faith, beliefs, testimony, and values.
- Make church-time special. Ensure that your child's church experiences are positive and that he/she learns about God each week.
- Keep memorizing Bible verses that will help him/her know what God is like, love the Lord wholeheartedly, and serve God and people.
- Pray for your child's spiritual receptivity, mental development, and enjoyment of learning.



Emotional (Feel)

Kindergartner's Abilities

- shows increasing awareness of and concern for the feelings of others
- needs adult approval and affirmation; feels proud when praised
- enjoys expressing himself/herself verbally; initiates conversations; shares personal experiences
- is self-conscious and often fears making mistakes
- conforms to group expectations; wants to "belong"
- likes to help others, please others, and to receive attention
- expresses feelings through actions; may have dramatic mood swings
- respects leaders at home, church, and school
- fears the "unknown"—darkness, strange sounds, unusual bugs, etc.
- likes to mimic actions and traits of others, especially older siblings and peers

Spiritual Growth Activities

- Affirm your child's positive attitudes, emotions, and behavior. Acknowledge progress whenever possible.
- Be sure to include grandparents and extended family in his/her world (especially those who live at a distance).
- Remind your son/daughter to choose a happy heart and to exercise self-control when his/her attitude sinks.
- Explain that healthy relationships (with God, family members, and other people) are important to establish and to build.
- During challenging moments with your child, maintain a calm spirit. Embrace God's strength and peace as you deal with the situation.
- If something seems to bother or disturb him/her, take time to talk and pray about it.
- Discuss how your son or daughter should respect others' bodies, belongings, and feelings.
- Take advantage of mealtimes to interact with each other—ask questions, tell jokes, discuss the day, share prayer needs, etc.
- Before bed, make it your nightly pattern to read, talk, and pray together.
- Pray for your child's emotional development, childhood friendships, and family relationships.



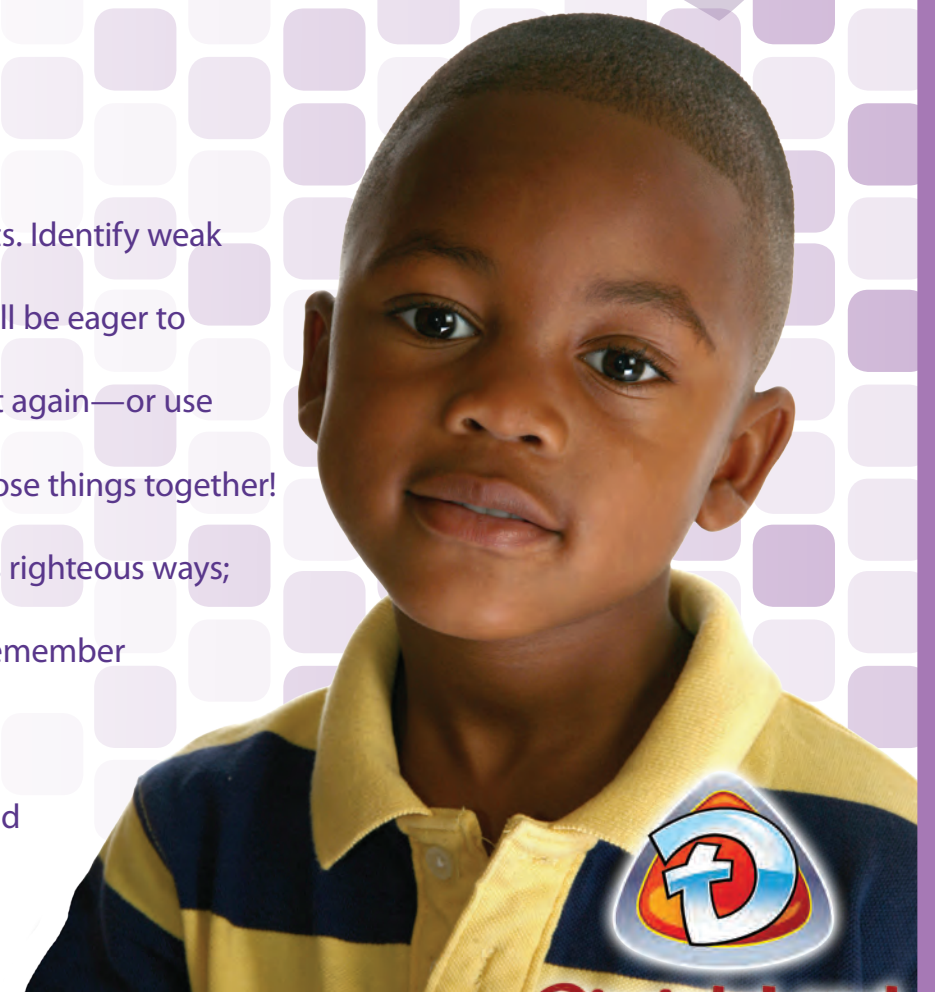
Physical (Do)

Kindergartner's Abilities

- needs daily physical activity—indoors and out
- shows fine-tuned small muscle coordination (girls are often more adept than boys at this age)
- exhibits precise hand-eye coordination that enables writing skills
- laces shoes; buttons shirts and jackets
- assembles complex puzzles (up to 24 pieces)
- engages in activities for longer periods—15-20 minutes
- likes to play-act: dress-up, cars, house, school, etc.
- likes to be told what to do; needs guidelines and consistent rule enforcement; notices inconsistencies in words and actions
- completes a variety of chores: fold laundry, sweep floor, set table, keep room clean, etc.
- sees rules as absolute and unbendable; tends to view life as "black and white"

Spiritual Growth Activities

- Strive to maintain a Christlike role model in your words, actions, and habits. Identify weak areas and invite a trusted friend to keep you accountable.
- Make relating to God a natural, central part of your family so your child will be eager to grow spiritually.
- Act out Bible stories together as a family. Change character roles and do it again—or use puppets.
- Identify activities that your child enjoys most—then spend time doing those things together!
- Make church attendance and involvement a high family priority.
- Be consistent in enforcing family rules so your child will understand God's righteous ways; keep expectations clear and simple.
- Give him/her chores that build a sense of responsibility and self-worth. Remember to praise each success.
- Finish what you start, so your son/daughter will experience satisfaction in completing tasks.
- Encourage him/her to attempt new/unfamiliar activities that will help build skills and self-esteem.
- Pray for your child's safety, health, and for his/her continued physical development.



You probably realize that those three elements are essential for your spiritual progress, too. Your own growth is pivotal to doing what's very best for your kindergartner! Every Christian parent who genuinely endeavors to grow in these three ways is on God's path toward raising godly children.

How can you raise your kindergartner to follow in Jesus' footsteps? Effective parenting interweaves three components: knowledge + character + conduct.

Your Parenting

The parents who brought their children to Jesus earnestly wanted God's best for them. Similarly, when parents today present their little ones to the Lord, they desire God's assistance in raising them. For many families, this is where discipleship begins. Disciple-making, like parenting, is an ongoing process.

Twenty-First Century Parenting

One day, several well-intentioned parents brought their young children to see Jesus. Realizing that Christ was far closer to God than typical religious teachers, these devoted parents hoped that the Lord would place His hands upon their children's heads and pronounce God's blessing on them.

First Century Parenting

Your Desire—God's Blessing

Deep inside, your kindergartner knows that God is eager to welcome and embrace all children. Promote your child's access to the Lord by making sure that he or she is "plugged in" to spiritual growth opportunities at church and at home.

(Mark 10:13-16, NLT)

Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them.

anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it."

I tell you the truth, to those who are like these children, For the Kingdom of God belongs to them! Don't stop them! He said to them, "Let the children come to me. he was angry with his disciples. When Jesus saw what was happening, But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him. so he could touch and bless them. One day some parents brought their children to Jesus access to Him:

God deeply loves and values your child. The Lord anticipates a life-long friendship with him or her. Jesus valued time with children so much He scolded His disciples for blocking their access to Him:

Your Kindergartner—God's Friend!

Your P-O-W-E-R Walk

Parents who embrace the responsibility to raise godly children must assess their own spiritual condition. First and foremost, Jesus Christ calls every believer to follow Him. Walking in Jesus' steps and being His disciple is the Christian's highest privilege and priority!

God invites you to walk with Him every moment of every day. As you practice these five disciplines, the Lord will live His life in and through you! God gladly supplies His incredible P-O-W-E-R as He directs your steps as a parent. (See Isaiah 40:31; Acts 1:8; and Galatians 2:20.)



Pray from Your Heart

Prayer is talking openly with God. He eagerly responds to your requests! (2 Chronicles 7:14; John 15:7; 1 John 5:14-15)

ObeY Your Loving Shepherd

God is your Shepherd and your Lord. Things always go better when He's in charge. (John 10:27-28; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:23-24)

Worship with Your Church

The Church is your Christian family. Unwrap your spiritual gifts to help you worship God and serve the Church. (John 4:23-24; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Peter 4:10)

Explain Your Faith to Others

Everyone needs to hear about God's love and forgiveness. Share your faith with those around you. (John 3:16, John 14:6; Acts 1:8)

Read Your Bible Daily

The Bible came from God. He speaks to you on every page. (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

You can trust God's wonderful plan. God chose you and your kindergartner for His special purposes. The Holy Spirit wants to guide every step of your journey together (Jeremiah 29:11; John 16:13; Romans 8:28).

Do you want your child to grow into a fully-devoted follower of Jesus Christ?



This parenting series, **Raising Godly Children**, will assist parents and teachers in the disciple-making process. Each brochure is packed with proven activities that will assist you, along with your local church, in nurturing your child's faith.

Also available:



DiscipleLand Kindergarten Curriculum

Your children will meet more than 48 different Bible personalities as they discover that Jesus is the special Hero who fulfilled God's plan to rescue them from sin.



DiscipleLand.com
800.284.0158

DiscipleLand
Disciples for Life

Raising Godly Children

What Your Kindergartner Really Needs



Kindergartners Need Salvation

Some people insist, "Children need to grasp the Gospel's deep significance before they respond." That thinking marginalizes the power of God's message. Research confirms that people are much more likely to respond to the Good News between the ages of 4 and 14 than any other time in their lives.

Salvation is a free gift through personal faith in Jesus Christ. When are children ready to trust Christ as Savior?

- 1) **Hearts**—when they feel sorrow for their own sins.
- 2) **Heads**—when they understand that Jesus died to pay for their sins.
- 3) **Hands**—when they are ready to repent in attitude and action, receiving His new life.

By the age of 6-8, kids can comprehend "substitution"—that Jesus took their place. Present the Good News to these children clearly and enthusiastically!



What You Can Do: Discern your child's spiritual condition. Is he or she ready to respond, struggling to understand, or resisting the Gospel message? Don't manipulate a child to simply do what you want. After your child responds to God's offer of forgiveness and new life, encourage him or her to publicly profess faith in Christ to friends, family, and the church.

Kindergartners Need Good Friends

Children ask each other, "Will you be my friend?" Most kids are desperate to "belong." They are afraid of being excluded and want to fit in with their peers. But many children lack the ability to distinguish good friends from bad. They can easily fall in with those who do not embrace Christian values.

God created people to enjoy a variety of relationships. The first step to having good friends is being a good friend. King Solomon summed up friendship in one sentence: "A friend loves at all times" (Proverbs 17:17). Teach a child to selflessly love others, and he or she will inevitably develop solid, healthy friendships.

What You Can Do: Help your child search for good friends, just as he or she would seek valuable treasure. Carefully filter your child's peers. Surround him or her with people who mirror godly traits and Christlike attitudes. Discuss each phrase of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 together, substituting the word "friends" for "love." Explain that friendships take time to grow strong. Pray with your child, asking God to make him or her a good friend—and to provide many strong, lasting friendships.



This poster tells how to boost your kindergartner's spiritual growth!