

K12 Stepping Stones

Phases of Development: One's and Two's

What's Going on with my Toddler?

Exploration

Your toddler has become extremely busy; there's a whole world to explore! During this stage of development, your toddler is learning by interacting with the world around him. You can encourage him by giving him a safe place to explore and try new things. Your reaction when he fails is important. Toddlers have been known to make messes; teach your toddler without shaming him. You want your toddler to continue to explore. His exploration of the world around him provides multiple opportunities to share with him about God.

How Do I Share my Faith with my Toddler?

As a parent or caregiver, you have the ability to influence your child's faith more than anyone else because of the sheer amount of time you have together that no one else has. Even toddlers can develop a foundation of faith! As you encourage your toddler to safely interact with and explore the world around him, you can introduce him to the love of God in a developmentally appropriate way.

The Bible teaches us that we should make talking about God part of our everyday life:

⁵Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.⁷Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:5-9

The above passage tells us that we should talk about faith with our children, and talking to them about our faith should be natural. You can tell your child about God every day, any time of the day, but there are natural rhythms built into most family's schedules that will lend themselves to these learning opportunities. During these times, look for opportunities to teach and to show your faith:

- **Morning Time**
- **Drive Time**

- **Cuddle Time**
- **Bath Time**

What Do I Want my Toddler to Know?

- **He is loved by you, and he is loved by God.**
 - *“Jesus loves you so much!”*
 - *“Daddy loves you no matter what!”*
- **God made the world and everything in it.**
 - *“Aren’t these flowers beautiful? God made them!”*
 - *“I like watermelon, too! God made a delicious fruit!”*

What Can I do to Encourage my Toddler’s Faith?

At this age, toddlers learn by interacting with you and exploring the world around them. You can teach your toddler about God’s love in the following ways:

- **Encourage your toddler’s exploration in a safe environment:** Your toddler will learn about God’s world through her exploration. She will also learn about grace when she is allowed to fail at new things in a supportive environment.
- **Pray:** You can pray any time. Look for natural moments to pray to God aloud for your toddler to hear, and encourage your toddler to imitate you with simple prayers. Allow your toddler to use his new language skills!
 - *Morning Time:* “Thank you, Jesus, for this day!”
 - *Drive Time:* “Dear God, please be with those in the ambulance.”
 - *Cuddle Time:* “Dear Jesus, thank you for Benjamin. I pray he will love and follow You when he grows older.”
 - *Bath Time:* “What’s that called? That’s right! Your foot. Let’s thank Jesus for making your two feet.”
- **Sing:** Toddlers love music and the chance to sing or dance. Sing songs about God or simply celebrate God’s gift of music! You can follow K12 Worship on Spotify to listen to what your two-year-old hears in our Preschool environment.
- **Read:** Read to your toddler; she is not too young. Hearing you read will help her continue to develop language while you introduce her to Bible stories or values you want her to learn. Click [here](#) for book ideas.
- **Go to Church:** Pick a service time and attend that service weekly. By having a consistent rhythm, you will help soften any separation anxiety as your toddler recognizes the faces of the volunteers in the Nursery and Preschool areas. You will also introduce her to those in your community who love God and love your family.

