

K12 Stepping Stones

Phases of Development: Three's and Four's

What's Going on with my Preschooler?

Curiosity

For your preschooler, the concept of play is center stage! During this stage of development, your preschooler is learning by exploring new ideas and skills through play. He is very curious! You can encourage him by giving him a safe place to play and explore and delight in his imagination. You may be asked, "Why?" more times than you can count; embrace this question! Your answers are opportunities to point your child towards God.

How Do I Share my Faith with my Preschooler?

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. Preschoolers are ready to learn about a God who loves them! As you encourage your preschooler's curiosity through play and need to ask questions, 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 Preschooler to Know?

- **He is loved by you and that he is loved by God.**
 - *“Jesus loves you so much!”*
 - *“I will always love 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!”*
- **God made his body, and his body is beautiful.**
 - Teach your child his body parts and the correct names for them.
 - Now is the time to explain that private parts are meant to be kept private, and no one should touch them.
- **Simple Bible Verses**
 - Most of the crafts your child brings home will have a verse he can memorize with you.
 - Download the Parent Cue app. You will find Bible verses appropriate for your preschooler’s age.

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

At this age, preschoolers learn through play and engaging their curiosity. You can teach your preschooler about God’s love in the following ways:

- **Play with your preschooler:** Through play, you can find out many of the questions your preschooler has about the world around her.
 - Have a scavenger hunt where you find different things outside that God has made.
 - Act out the Bible story your child learned in K12 that Sunday.
 - Include your child in making something together like a craft or cookies.
- **Pray:** You can pray any time. Look for natural moments to pray to God aloud with your preschooler. Ask your preschooler for what or whom they would like to pray. Turn moments of intense emotion into time to talk to God.
 - *Morning Time:* “Thank you, Jesus, for this new day!”
 - *Drive Time:* “Dear God, please be with those in the ambulance.”
 - *Cuddle Time:* “Dear Jesus, thank you for Sarah. I pray you will help her not to be afraid of the thunder. You made this rain that we need!”
 - *Bath Time:* “You are such a good friend to care about Samuel. Would you like to pray for him and his sick Grandpa?”

- **Sing:** Follow K12Worship on Spotify to sing the songs your preschooler is learning on Sunday, or simply celebrate God's gift of music!
- **Read:**
 - Read to your preschooler daily from a Children's Bible and go over the stories they are learning in K12.
 - Read books together that highlight the values you want to teach. Click [here](#) for book ideas.
- **Go to Church:** Pick a service time and attend that service weekly. Your example will teach your preschooler the importance of belonging to a church community. You will introduce her to those in your community who love God and love your family, and your preschooler may love church, too!