



June 2009



Help Children Build Trust in God

Developing trust is a crucial task for children. Psalm 22:9 says, “[You] led me to trust you at my mother’s breast.” Trust sets the foundation for all other social and emotional tasks to come. When children realize that God, their environment, and the people around them are trustworthy, they feel secure, hopeful, and optimistic.

Trust is key for spiritual development. Early experiences with parents and the church impact children’s perceptions of God. When kids feel safe and loved, they can trust that God loves them, too. From birth, you can help children develop trust through:

Trustworthy Relationships—Children need to learn to trust other adults. Expose kids to nurturing people, from grandparents to church nursery staff. Try to keep your promises.

Trust-Building Games—With younger children, play a rousing game of Peek-a-Boo and sing familiar songs. With kids of all ages, laugh often and give lots of reassuring hugs.



Trustworthy Environments—Safe, engaging surroundings allow children to trust that they’re taken care of. But the most important environmental aspects aren’t things; they’re the people who offer consistency and comfort to children.

Faithful Foundations—As trust grows, you create a foundation for children to build trust in God. Bit by bit, you empower kids to trust in Someone who’s so much bigger than they are.

Who Earns Your Trust?

- A recent USA Today/Gallup poll asked Americans to rate the trustworthiness of various professions. Nurses topped the list, with an 83% positive rating. Grade-school teachers (74%) and pharmacists (71%) followed. At the bottom were lobbyists and car salespeople (each at 5%).
- In a poll at quibblo.com, a quiz site popular with preteens, respondents were asked, “Who do you trust?” The top answer was “yourself,” followed by “friends,” “God,” “boyfriend or girlfriend,” “parents,” “animals,” and “the church.” In last place was “the media.”

PowerSource

Ask God:

1. To help you be a trustworthy caregiver and an example of God’s trustworthiness.
2. To reassure your children that God cares deeply for them and keeps all his promises.
3. To reveal his trustworthiness and goodness to your family.

Parenting Insights

These age-level insights from *Children’s Ministry Magazine* show how children’s view of God develops as they grow.

Ages 2 to 4

Preschoolers identify God as having a human form and characteristics. These traits most likely resemble those seen in significant adults in kids’ lives.

Ages 5 to 8

Fear of the unknown prompts kids to want to believe in a God who’s all-powerful, all-knowing, and everywhere all the time. Their understanding of God’s love and tenderness depends on how adults express these qualities.

Ages 9 to 12

Older children’s perception of God can range from a legendary superhero to a living, spiritual being. Kids often picture God the same way they view their own fathers.

OpenTheBook

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.”
Proverbs 3:5

Only God is completely wise and trustworthy. Despite good intentions, our family and friends will let us down at times because everyone is sinful. But God is perfect; his love and promises will never fail us.

Teachable Moments

1. Trust Walk—Have family members take turns leading one another around your house or yard. The person being led should wear a blindfold or keep his or her eyes closed. First, have the guide hold his or her partner’s elbow but say nothing during the walk. Next, have the guide shout instructions from far away. Then discuss what makes trusting easy or difficult.



2. Do the Impossible—Pour a bag of Hershey’s Kisses on a table. Tell family members they can eat as many as they want, as long as they don’t use their hands to unwrap them. (This is nearly impossible!) Then read Matthew 19:26 and ask, “What things can God do that are impossible for us to do? What are you facing that seems impossible? Do you trust that God can solve all of your problems?” End with a group hug, and share some candy kisses.



“So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are **ON THE ROAD, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.”** Deuteronomy 11:18-19, NLT

God promises that “those who trust in the Lord will find new strength” (Isaiah 40:31). Use these discussion-starters to talk to your children about trust.

1. How would you define the word *trust*? What does it take to fully trust in God? How does trusting in God make you strong?
2. How trusting are you? How trustworthy would others say you are?
3. How does it feel when you break a promise—or when someone breaks a promise to you?

Family Experience: “I Tell You the Truth...”

Grapple, a new preteen curriculum from Group, helps kids in upper elementary grapple with and own their Christian faith. Below are portions of a lesson titled “What If Jesus Is a Liar?” Use them to help your family members grow their trust in God.

Say: “Some people don’t know Jesus very well. They say Jesus is a liar. But in the gospels, Jesus said, ‘I tell you the truth...’ 68 times. Do you think a court of law could convict Jesus of being a liar? Let’s grapple with that in God’s Word.”

Have family members serve as “witnesses” by reading Scriptures aloud. (Older children can help non-readers.)

- Read John 8:44 and Numbers 23:19. Who is the biggest liar? How reliable is God as a witness to who Jesus is?
- Read John 8:12-18. Why did the Pharisees think Jesus was a liar? What does Jesus’ answer to the Pharisees tell us about Jesus? Why do we need Jesus to be a truthful witness?
- Read Acts 5:26-42. What do these witnesses say about Jesus? Explain what they’d say about Jesus: Was he truthful or a liar?



Say: “Explain whether a court of law could convict Jesus of being a liar. Think about how you feel when someone lies to you. I promise that you will *never* feel that way in your relationship with Jesus because Jesus is not a liar. Jesus will never lie to you. Anything the Bible says is absolutely true, because Jesus speaks only the truth. This week, I dare you to find one way that you’ll trust Jesus.”



What's Playing at the Movies

Movie: *Up* (releases May 29)

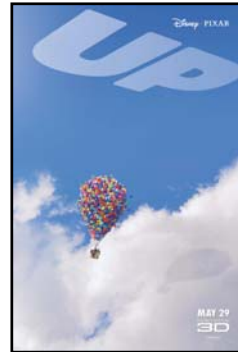
Genre: Animated 3-D comedy

Rating: PG (for some peril and action)

Cast: Ed Asner, Christopher Plummer, Jordan Nagai

Synopsis: Carl Fredricksen, age 78, ties thousands of balloons to his home, hoping to reach his lifelong dream of seeing South America. But he soon discovers that his biggest nightmare, 8-year-old Russell, is a stowaway. During a wild ride, the unlikely team has to work together to get back home.

Discussion Questions: What's your biggest dream, and what are you doing to reach it? What risks have you taken, and how did they turn out? Do you prefer spending time alone or with other people, and why? How do you deal with people who get on your nerves? Think of a time you worked as a team with someone: How did you each contribute to a goal?



What Music Is Releasing

Artist: Mandy Moore

Album: *Amanda Leigh*

Artist Info: Singer-actress Mandy Moore, now 25, was a teen-pop sensation. During the past decade, she released five albums and starred in several hit films, including *A Walk to Remember*. This spring, Moore married indie rocker Ryan Adams.

Summary: Moore's new album, which has a folk-country sound, is "a collection of personal reflections about life and love." Standouts include "Song About Home" and "Love to Love Me Back." When her career began, Moore says, people told her what to sing. "The music is all a reflection of me now, not somebody else's choices," she says. "If people don't like the music, then they don't like me—and that's quite all right."

Discussion Questions: How does it feel when people make decisions for you? What are some good and bad aspects of making your own choices? What makes you unique? Explain whether we should care if people like us or not.



What Games Are Out

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>SuperSecret</i>	This online role-playing game is for preteens. Kids play at "growing up" while their avatars age.	Web site (SuperSecret.com)
<i>Patapon 2</i>	Players fight fairly tame tribal battles in this downloadable game. Figures are dark and stylized, but there's no blood or gore.	E; PSP
<i>Donkey Kong Jungle Beat</i>	This classic is updated with new play control, plus new enemies and obstacles. Contains mild cartoon violence.	E10+; Wii

GAME RATINGS KEY: EC=Early Childhood, E=Everyone (ages 6+), E10+ (ages 10+), T=Teen (ages 13+)



Culture & Trends

What's happening right now that may affect your children and family:

- America's pastime is striking out with the younger set. Enrollment in Little League baseball and softball is down, experts say, due to the recession and all the extracurricular options now available for kids.



- Of the 17,000 children injured by falling furniture in 2007, almost half were hurt by televisions. Experts say these numbers are going up as flat-screen TVs keep getting larger.

(msnbc.com)

Quick Stats

- During summer, 11% of children younger than 13 are regularly without adult supervision. About 6% of kids attend summer school.

(Babble.com)

- Kindergartners ate 50% more vegetables when those foods were given exciting, appealing names, such as "X-ray vision carrots."

(Newsweek)

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