

Experiencing Goodness and Truth

What are some ways that we can help the Lord store goodness and truth for our children? What is our role as parents?

Provide a loving environment that supports innocence

- Talk to your baby often. Tell him or her, “Mom loves you, Dad loves you, the Lord loves you.”
- Be selective about what your child sees and hears.
- Set reasonable expectations for behavior and be consistent about behavioral boundaries.
- Teach the Ten Commandments.

Create an enriched learning environment

- Read stories from the Word, fairy tales, and folk tales with your child.
- Provide unstructured play time—especially outdoors.
- Explore nature together. Talk about the Lord’s creation.
- Encourage your child to talk about their learning experiences.

Cultivate habits that give children a sense of useful purpose

- Get everyone involved with household chores.
- Adapt chores to a child’s level of competency.
- Toddlers can fetch and carry and put their toys away.
- Older children can help with meal preparation, fold clothes, sweep and vacuum.

Practice the skills of friendship

- Provide opportunities to interact with others.
- Encourage giving and sharing.
- Keep in mind that becoming unselfish takes a lifetime of practice.

Encourage compassion

- Provide opportunities to reach out to people in need. Children can help deliver a meal to a family with a new baby, help an elderly neighbor, or help a charitable organization.
- Talk about ways to use the Golden Rule as a guide when interacting with people: Whatever you want people to do to you, do also to them (see Matthew 7:12).
- Look for books and movies that help children learn about kindness and compassion.

Help your child become aware of his or her own competency

- Give opportunities to practice making choices e.g. “Do you want to wear the yellow shirt or the red shirt?”
- If you cannot honor all choice options, take care not to present a situation as a choice when it is not really a choice, e.g. “Do you want to set the table or cook dinner for the family by yourself?”
- Foster confidence and security by giving increasing opportunities to make good choices.
- Allowing children to take some risks can increase their feelings of competency, e.g. climbing trees, jumping down steps, swinging high.