



November 2016

# parenting CHRISTIAN kids



Territorial Headquarters  
204 Cuba Street  
Wellington 6011  
PO Box 6015  
Wellington 6141

Territorial Children's Department  
childrens\_mission@nzf.salvationarmy.org  
Phone: 04 802 6269 ext 24542

## ALWAYS RELY ON JESUS

### POWERSOURCE

#### ASK GOD:

1. To guard your children and their faith during good times as well as challenges.
2. To make Jesus' love real to all your family members.
3. To help you trust God no matter what you're facing.

Family life brings plenty of challenges—and also plenty of opportunities to practice trusting in Jesus. Even positive changes can disrupt our schedules and affect relationships with each other and with God. Although you can't control everything that comes your way, you can minimise the impact of stress, change, and uncertainty.

Whether children are experiencing good times or facing challenges, they have three primary needs:

#### **1. Consistent Relationships**

When life gets tough, kids need reassurance and familiarity. Model the positive qualities of Jesus, who's consistently present, unconditionally accepting, attentive, affirming, and reliable.

**2. A Safe Place** Children need an accepting place where they can talk about what's happening in their lives. Be real with kids and encourage them to open up about their thoughts, fears, and emotions.

**3. Boundaries and Structure** When new or different situations arise, maintain the same rules and routines, as much as possible. Let children know ahead of time what to expect. Then provide extra attention during changes.

The good news is that Jesus is *always* trustworthy, no matter what we're facing. Read on for active ways to share that important truth with your children.



## JESUS WON'T LET YOU DOWN

When life spins out of control, children need reminders of Jesus' complete trustworthiness. They also may need skills to cope with anxiety or uncertainties. Use these tips to offer kids a much-needed B.R.E.A.K.:

- \* **Be** an example. Minimise any unnecessary stresses and cast all of your own cares on Jesus (see 1 Peter 5:7).
- \* **Relate**. Spend time together, share interests, listen, and cheer kids on.
- \* **Educate** yourself. Learn what stressors your kids face each day. What goes on at school, at daycare, or with their friends?
- \* **Ask** questions. Inquiries show you care—and help you understand.
- \* **Keep** praying. Talk to Jesus regularly about what your kids are facing.

## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

### Powerful Protection

Say: **God's special people were slaves in Egypt and were tired from working so hard. Moses told the Egyptian king, "Let my people go!" but the king didn't listen. So God sent plagues, or troubles, to the land—but God kept his people safe each time!**

Re-enact the first nine plagues:

Blood to water—Drop red food colouring into water.

Frogs—Hop around the room.

Gnats—Buzz in a high pitch.

Flies—Buzz in a lower pitch and zoom around the room.

Diseased livestock—Moo and moan; lie on the floor with arms and legs sticking up.

Boils—Put dots on your skin with washable red marker.

Hail—Throw paper wads.

Locusts—Nibble on some snacks.

Darkness—Turn off the lights.

After each plague, shout, "Let my people go!" Take turns sharing times you've seen God's power in action. Close in prayer, asking God to help your family trust in his protection.

**Trust Fall** Have one partner stand behind the other and catch the standing partner as he or she falls back. **Ask: "How did it feel to trust someone? How did it feel to be trusted—or not trusted?" Read (or summarise) Genesis 22:1-14. Ask: "Why did Abraham trust God? How did God reward Abraham? When is it easy or difficult for you to trust God? What does this Bible passage reveal about God that will help you trust him?"**

**Always Found** With younger kids, unwind with a fun family game of Hide and Seek. After playing for a while, talk about how God looks out for and watches over us—at all times and in all circumstances.

**Create a Smile File** Not only is stress exhausting, but it removes our focus from life's many joys. Make a file, box, or journal where family members can put pictures or notes about God's blessings. Look through it together when you feel discouraged or overwhelmed.

**Lick Life's Problems** When life gets messy, spending one-on-one time with your children is crucial. If possible, take each child on a simple outing (for example, to an ice cream shop). Let your child air what's on his

or her mind. Then share ways you can stick together, trust God, and address any issues.

**It's Stickin'** Place an index card on each person's shoulder, and see if they can shake it off. Next, clip a clothespeg on each person's shoulder, and see if they can shake it off (no hands allowed!). Ask: "Which was easier to lose, the card or clothespeg? Why?" Read aloud Hebrews 13:5b-6. Say: "God is always with us. He's like the clothespin, not the card. We can trust God to stay with us wherever we go." Ask: "How does it feel to know that God never leaves you? When is a good time to trust that God is with you?"

**Synchronised Skating** "Skate" around a room, either with socked feet on a carpet-less floor or by placing paper plates under your feet. Then have pairs skate together, trying to do the same moves without talking. Change partners every two minutes. Afterward ask: "As you skated, how did you get to know your partners?" Read aloud 1 Corinthians 8:3. Ask: "How does it feel to hear that God knows you? How can you stay synchronised with God and always trust him?"

**"HE IS THE FAITHFUL GOD WHO KEEPS HIS COVENANT FOR A THOUSAND GENERATIONS AND LAVISHES HIS UNFAILING LOVE ON THOSE WHO LOVE HIM AND OBEY HIS COMMANDS."**

**—DEUTERONOMY 7:9, NLT**

©Group Publishing, Inc., 2016

parenting  
CHRISTIAN kids

Group  
Real. Bold. Love.

## MEDIA MADNESS



### MOVIE

**Title:** *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*

**Genre:** Comedy

**Rating:** Not yet rated

**Cast:** Lauren Graham, Thomas Barbusca, Griffin Gluck

**Synopsis:** This film, based on a novel by James Patterson, follows a sixth-grader named Rafe through assorted challenges in junior high. Feeling oppressed and stifled, the imaginative preteen devises a plan to break every single rule at school.

**Our Take:** The book handled tough topics with humour, so the movie has potential. But the content probably won't be appropriate for kids under 10.



### MUSIC

**Title:** *7/27*

**Artist:** Fifth Harmony

**Synopsis:** This pop and R&B girl group formed on season two of *The X Factor* reality show. Their debut album, *Reflection*, went gold. This follow-up CD includes collaborations with many big-name artists and producers, including Ty Dolla Sign, Fetty Wap, and Missy Elliott.

**Our Take:** Beware: Many of Fifth Harmony's lyrics and music videos are sexually explicit, such as the hit single "Work From Home." So we wouldn't recommend this group as quality role models. Although songs such as "The Life" feature a good sound without sexual content, you'll still likely come across references to drinking and "getting lit."



## CULTURE + TRENDS

**Tech Addicts** Mental-health experts say technology can be just as addicting as drugs and alcohol. Some young people admit they crave video games and other screen time, using it as a coping mechanism to deal with life's problems.

([dailycamera.com](http://dailycamera.com))

## QUICK STATS

**Early Start** Around 96% of children in New Zealand aged 3 or 4 years attend some sort of Early Childhood Education, with kids spending on average 21 hours each week in care.

([www.occ.org.nz](http://www.occ.org.nz))

**Get Outside** 9 out of 10 children aged 5-14 years spend at least 3 hours per week taking part in sport and active recreation. ([www.occ.org.nz](http://www.occ.org.nz))



## GAMES, SITES + APPS

### Nickelodeon

Kids will love seeing their favourite TV characters in the wide range of free online games. Preschoolers can enjoy [www.nickjr.com](http://www.nickjr.com), while [www.nick.com](http://www.nick.com) is aimed towards older kids. As well as games, the websites offer TV episodes, and kids can listen to music online with Nick Radio.

### WatchKnowLearn.org

Serving as a library of free educational videos, this site offers children and parents a goldmine of information on a wide range of topics. The 50,000 videos are sorted into 5,000 categories, from academic topics to cultural and ethical issues. An age filter helps viewers locate appropriate content.

### Color Switch

This popular app game, which is free to download but comes with ads, challenges players to move a ball through colour-coded obstacles. Although the task seems simple, it takes a lot of skill. Players say it's fun because they can play over and over again in a short time period.

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our goal is to help you make informed decisions about what your children watch, read, listen to, and play.