

Birth to 2 Years

God's Word			
Cognitive	Nurturing Implications		Additional Tips for Home
<p>Initially see everything as objects</p> <p>Begin to see the results of cause and effect</p> <p>Move from everything being an extension of themselves to the discovery that they are a separate object in a world of objects</p> <p>Discovery that objects do not cease to exist when they are out of sight</p> <p>Short attention span - 2 minutes or less</p> <p>No sense of time</p> <p>Learn through the senses and repetition</p> <p>Imitate actions</p> <p>Begin to talk</p>	<p>Children observe one another at this age but they do not interact with one another in such a way as to introduce God's Word.</p> <p>God's Word can, however, be introduced by teachers and caregivers.</p>	<p>Sing simple songs that teach God's truths.</p> <p>Use colorful pictures of Bible stories in the room.</p> <p>Handle the children's picture Bible in a careful way, and allow older toddlers to hold or touch the Bible in a careful way.</p> <p>Hold children in your lap and look at picture books of Bible stories together.</p> <p>Use hand movements with Bible nursery rhymes and songs.</p>	<p>Sing simple songs that teach God's truths.</p> <p>Use colorful pictures of Bible stories in the room.</p> <p>Handle the children's picture Bible in a careful way and allow older toddlers to hold or touch the Bible in a careful way.</p> <p>Hold children in your lap and look at pictures books of Bible stories together.</p> <p>Use hand movements with Bible nursery rhymes and songs.</p>

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Relationships			
Social/Emotional	Nurturing Implications		Additional Tips for Home
<p>Dependent</p> <p>Self centered</p> <p>Discover whether or not they can trust parents and others to care for them</p> <p>Desire attention</p> <p>Easily startled</p> <p>Form attachment to primary caregivers</p> <p>Begin to distinguish between “you” and “me”</p> <p>Engage in parallel play</p> <p>Need security and routine</p>	<p>Children begin to play alongside each other but not with each other.</p> <p>Children are self absorbed with trying to discover their world and may grab or take things from others with no sense of hurting another’s feelings.</p> <p>It is best in these situations to redirect a child’s attention to another toy or activity.</p>	<p><i>REFLECTING CHRIST</i></p> <p>Ministering to children in the nursery is a reflection of Christ in the most pure way. As caregivers hold and cuddle infants and meet their most basic needs they, like Christ, receive little or nothing in return. In fact, their efforts sometime yield nothing but wails and tears. Yet their love and care reflects the grace and love Christ extends to all of us.</p> <p><i>TRUST</i></p> <p>Developmentally, children need to know they can trust their parents and other caregivers to care for them. Trust is the beginning of a sense of faith in self and others growing out of the expectation that the world is consistent and dependable. Without consistent, dependable care, young children experience a world of people who are undependable, leading to confusion, hopelessness and mistrust.</p>	<p>Your caring for and loving your child is his/her first reflection of Christ’s love for him/her.</p> <p>Allowing your child to be held and cared for by other trustworthy family members and friends throughout infancy will help them more easily adapt to the nursery.</p> <p>Praise both your child and your child’s accomplishments.</p> <p>Direct conversation to child.</p> <p>Show loving firmness with flexibility.</p> <p>Play with your children.</p> <p>Take them with you as you go places, but be sensitive to their sleeping and napping schedules.</p> <p>Work to establish a consistent routine.</p>

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Outward Action			
Physical	Nurturing Implications		Additional Tips for Home
<p>Cannot meet own physical needs</p> <p><i>Large muscles still developing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Progress from rolling over, to sitting up, crawling, standing up to walking * Rapid growth but at varying rates <p><i>Active</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Movement of large muscles * Oral exploration * From experimenting with vocal muscles to speaking * From manipulating environment by grasping objects to organizing * Begin to feed selves * Small motor skills developing but not consistent <p><i>Susceptible to disease</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Infants still need to build up immunities to viruses * Susceptible as they orally explore their world and interact with others 	<p>Children will play in parallel to other children, but not with them.</p> <p>There is a significant difference in mobility between an infant and a child who is approaching 24 months. Be sure there is significant space for both.</p> <p>Children between 18-24 months will mimic you in song and keep a careful eye on how other children are also mimicking the song or story.</p> <p>Provide an adequate number of toys for all ages. Be careful not to include toys which have small parts that children might choke on.</p> <p>Do include push and pull toys, books, blocks, and make-believe areas.</p>	<p>Infants and toddlers are too young to understand what it means to live obediently. However, they can begin to learn from their experiences.</p> <p>INFANTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Talk, laugh and smile. * Provide mobiles with bold colors. * Move babies often for a new view. * Provide space for rolling and crawling. * Care for basic needs. <p>TODDLERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Talk and help the child with vocabulary. * Help toddlers create art pieces for others. * Set limits in the classroom. * Do not ignore inappropriate behavior. * Redirect children who infringe on others. <p>Provide special services of welcome for children: <i>birth announcement with rosebud on the communion table, prayer, baptism, dedication, or service of adoption followed by a time of fellowship and celebration. Take pictures of the baby and family during this time. Give copies to the parents, but also keep them as part of the church's spiritual baby book.</i></p>	<p>Your child will want to explore. Provide an environment which makes this possible.</p> <p>This means keeping harsh chemicals, keepsakes and electronics out of reach.</p> <p>Provide safe spaces for your child to exercise his/her growing mobility.</p> <p>As your child approaches 24 months go to the grocery store together and let your child take items from the shelf and put them in the cart. Then take them to a local food pantry.</p> <p>Make something for someone else such as a picture or cookies which your child has helped decorate.</p>

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Worship			
Spiritual	Nurturing Implications		Additional Tips for Home
<p>Able to sense the presence of God</p> <p>Do not cognitively comprehend the fullness of who God is</p> <p>Begin to grasp spiritual concepts of love and care through caregivers</p>	<p>Children this age do not have the cognitive ability to comprehend God as they will later on. This, however, does not mean they do not have a spiritual relationship with God and a sense of God's nearness, love, and presence in their life.</p> <p>We must be careful not to assume that just because a child cannot communicate with us about God, they do not have a relationship with God.</p> <p>Children also experience God's love and care for them through the church and their families.</p>	<p>Pray for children daily.</p> <p>Hold a child or a child's hand while praying with him/her.</p> <p>Always speak about God and to God with the understanding that God is present.</p> <p>Provide lots of visual stimulus: <i>stained glass, banners, cross, candles, water, material swayed across the ceiling, etc.</i></p> <p>Children need planned movement in worship services: <i>Motions to music, mix short periods of music, prayer, drama, dance (lots of variety).</i></p>	<p>Model faith. Children learn through observation, repetition and mimicking.</p> <p>Pray together. Speak knowing God is present.</p> <p>Read a portion of a picture Bible together with the expectation that God has something to say to you and your child.</p> <p>Worship with others in the church.</p> <p>Hold your children or put your arm around them while praying.</p> <p>Hold little ones and sway with the music as you sing about Jesus.</p>