



the Parent LINK

Children's Ministry Edition

May 2012



The HARBOR Parent Connection and Resource



POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. To help you be a Christ-like example of how to deal with—and learn from—problems.
2. To reassure your family members that God loves them, no matter what they're facing.
3. To help your kids trust God, not themselves, for answers.

Help Children Solve Problems

As kids grow, they must negotiate peer interactions, make decisions, and learn new skills. Here are age-appropriate insights about problem-solving:

Ages Birth to 2: Young children are sensory-oriented and learn by imitating. Offer choices and model problem-solving techniques, such as different ways of stacking blocks or holding a cup.

Ages 3 to 5: Preschoolers are multi-sensory, solving as they touch and do. Allow time and space for problem-solving. Praise kids' efforts.

Ages 6 to 8: By this age, kids begin to learn in specific ways (auditory, visual, spatial, etc.), which will affect how they tackle problems. Encourage kids to employ these different approaches as they problem-solve, too.

Ages 9 to 12: Preteens observe how peers solve problems. Although they want to be independent, they often lack confidence. Tell kids you trust their abilities. Let them know failure is okay. Be available to discuss problems.

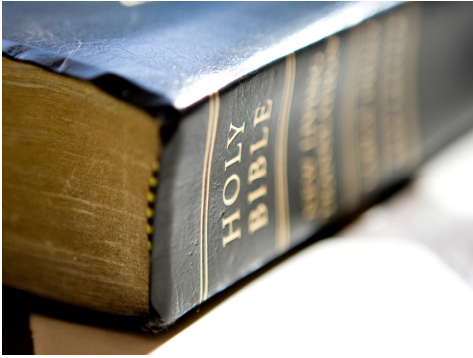
INSIGHTS

- In a survey of more than 1,000 children ages 9 to 13, 35% said they worry "a lot" about making mistakes and messing up. Another 33% said they worry a lot about friends and their problems. The good news is that 75% of kids say they want and need their parents' help when they're struggling.

(KidsHealth KidsPoll)

- When given training in appropriate ways to solve problems, children of all ages show improved social skills, as well as increased impulse control and patience.

(thinkingpreteen.com)



“I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors, for you have given me wisdom and strength. You have told me what we asked of you and revealed to us what the king demanded.” (Daniel 2:23)

Although King Nebuchadnezzar’s astrologers said his dream was “impossible” to interpret, Daniel received answers from God in a vision. Then the king praised God!

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

1. **“I Can’t” Jar**—When children say they can’t do something, write down the problem and pray about it together. When the problem or obstacle has been overcome, put the slip of paper in the jar as a visual reminder of what God helps us accomplish.
2. **Calm and Collected**—Model for children how to react to bad or scary news. Don’t use worst-case scenarios or exaggerate risks just to make a point. Instead, provide accurate, age-appropriate information. Empower kids and give them a sense of control by brainstorming solutions with them.
3. **Stand Together**—Remind children that everyone has weaknesses and that God puts us in families to support one another. Practice using “I” statements to speak out for what you need, whether it’s help or hugs.



Start a conversation about problem-solving by asking these questions:

1. When you can’t figure out something, how do you feel? How do you usually react, and why?
2. Where do you look for answers to your problems?
3. What lessons have you learned from dealing with different problems? What have you learned about yourself in the process?

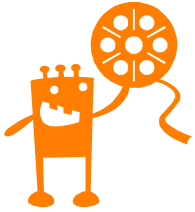
FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Use these fun activities, adapted from Group’s *Hands-On Bible*, to show how God helps us solve problems:

• **Falling Walls**—Read aloud Joshua 6:1-20, when God knocks down the walls of Jericho without force. Say: “Does this sound impossible? Let’s try it!” Break graham crackers into fourths and spread marshmallow creme on one side of each section. Stack the crackers on top of each other, using the creme as cement. Line up several stacks to form a wall. Say: “Let’s shout at our wall as loudly as we can.” Afterward, ask what happened. Say: “That’s right—nothing! It isn’t easy to bring down a wall with just noise, but God did it. God is awesome!” As you eat each section of the wall, discuss times when you need God’s power. Close in prayer, asking God to help you with all your problems and challenges.

• **Strength to Fly**—Ask: “Ever wish you could fly?” Read aloud Isaiah 40:31. Say: “That verse isn’t talking about people flying. But it’s a promise that if we trust God, he’ll give us new strength.” Have family members each try this cool trick as a reminder to trust God when problems arise. Stand in a doorway. Press the backs of your hands against the door frame as hard as you can. Count to 25. Then move away from the doorway, relax your arms, and discuss what happens. Say: “You found new strength! When you stopped pressing so hard, your arms wanted to fly up. God promises to renew our strength when we trust him, even when we’re tired and troubled. Next time things gets tough, just remember that God promises to give us new strength.”





MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIES

Title: *Chimpanzee*

Genre: True-Life Adventure

Rating: G

Cast: Oscar and family

Synopsis: This Disney nature film takes viewers into Africa's forests to meet Oscar, who must fend for himself after rivals attack his family. A portion of opening-week proceeds will go to chimpanzee-protection programs.

Our Take: Families can use this film to discuss God's creatures, their habitats, and how we care for them. Older children can talk about creation vs. evolution.



MUSIC

Artist: Willow Smith

Album: *Knees and Elbows*

Artist Info: Smith, the 11-year-old fashion trendsetter who has famous parents, hit it big with her singles "Whip My Hair" and "21st-Century Girl."

Summary: *Knees and Elbows*, Willow's debut album, has been described as "a gumbo of R&B, pop, and rock." The first single, "Fireball," features Nicki Minaj.

Our Take: Willow says her album is all about kid empowerment. Overall, she succeeds, though with a sometimes-sassy tone.



CULTURE & TRENDS

- If traveling with children stresses you out, now you can opt for in-flight child care. Nanny in the Clouds, the brainchild of a mom who flew cross-country with her 2 year old, helps parents find high-altitude baby sitters. (*time.com*)
- More kids are using their iPods to watch TV these days, thanks to a deal between YouTube and Disney. Nearly 70 videos from the Disney Channel—many of them full-length shows—are now available for free viewing on YouTube. (*allthingsd.com*)

QUICK STATS

- During tough economic times, 72% of families say they limit adult outings and activities but only 25% limit their kids' extracurricular activities. (Mamapedia)
- Child-care costs took up only 2% of the average family budget in the 1960s. But now they consume 17%, second only to mortgage or rent. (U.S. Department of Agriculture)



GAMES, SITES & APPS

| Title | Content | Rating & Platform |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Battleship</i> | In this game, based on the new <i>Battleship</i> film (and the classic board game), players command forces to fend off an alien threat. | E10+; Wii |
| <i>Draw Something</i> | This next big mobile hit has been called a "fiendishly addictive Pictionary party." Players draw something and challenge friends to guess what it is. | Available for iPhone, iPad, and Android. Free with ads; 99 cents otherwise. |
| <i>Stop Bullying Now!</i> | At takeastand.stopbullying.gov/kids/ , kids can play games and watch webisodes about bully prevention. | Best for ages 8+. |

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





May



| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--------------------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 Children's Church Sunday School | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 Mother's Day Children's Church Sunday School | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 Children's Church Sunday School | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 Children's Church Sunday School | 28 Memorial Day | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |