

Ages 4-6

God's Word		
Cognitive Development	Nurturing Implications	Additional Tips for Home
<p>Attention span - from 5-20 minutes</p> <p>Development of reading skills begins</p> <p>Enjoy repetition and imitation</p> <p>Can learn through humor</p> <p>Ask questions about the origin of things, such as babies</p> <p>Try to cope with the concept of death</p> <p>Think intuitively rather than logically - can make connections with their experiences</p> <p>Think from particular to particular, unable to generalize</p> <p>Still assume everyone thinks just as they do</p>	<p>Provide activities including all five senses.</p> <p>Begin to give children opportunities to read.</p> <p>Repeat Bible stories and songs.</p> <p>Stories about God's creation and creatures are fascinating to this age.</p> <p>They can begin to grasp the concepts of life and death.</p> <p>They can begin to relate experiences to stories.</p>	<p>Ask "wondering" ("<i>I wonder...</i>") questions and begin to ask about story details.</p> <p>Use concrete language - words that mean what they say.</p> <p>Make applications for the present.</p> <p>Do not ask children to make generalizations or draw conclusions from Bible stories.</p>
		<p>This is a critical time to read with your children and to begin to have them read to you or to tell stories back to you.</p> <p>Begin to relate Bible stories and truths to life events.</p>

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Relationships			
Social/Emotional	Nurturing Implications		Additional Tips For Home
<p>Initiate actions and ideas</p> <p>Begin to play in groups with others</p> <p>Test limits</p> <p>Understand right and wrong actions</p> <p>Act according to their interpretation of the rules laid down by parents or teachers to avoid punishment</p> <p>Moral understanding related to quantity rather than intention.</p> <p>Can understand physical pain they cause another but not psychological pain</p> <p>Need to know that if they are guilty of wrong action, they will be forgiven</p>	<p>Offer group activities.</p> <p>Include boys and girls in same groups.</p> <p>Even though a child may not understand the psychological pain they cause one another, we can still teach a child to be thoughtful and considerate of others and point out behavior that hurts others.</p> <p>This is a key time to teach about consequences of actions as well as forgiveness and grace.</p>	<p>Children who do not experience the assurance of forgiveness during this stage may later experience inner guilt over goals and actions: <i>Self-doubt, fear of losing self-control, inability to forgive self, brooding over past mistakes.</i></p>	<p>Find children doing positive things and praise them for it.</p> <p>Just as children this age begin to relate to others, so too can they begin to think about their relationship with God. Encourage this relationship.</p> <p>Plan times to give children your full and undivided attention.</p>

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Outward Action: Missions and Service			
Physical	Nurturing Implications		Additional Tips for Home
<p>Better small muscle control</p> <p>Greater variation of growth rate</p> <p>Little endurance</p> <p>Very active</p> <p>Eyes and ears are easily strained</p>	<p>Art and craft projects should still be kept simple with little detail.</p> <p>Remember that if projects are for others, it models Outward Action.</p> <p>It is still easier for children this age to manipulate larger drawing instruments.</p> <p>Alternate periods of activity and quiet.</p> <p>Do not let music levels get too high.</p> <p>Children this age still need opportunities for exercising larger motor skills. (<i>Group games, climbing equipment, outdoor activities</i>)</p>	<p>Remember that a source of conflict at this age still arises because these children still cannot grasp the concept that other children could think differently from them.</p> <p>Set clear expectations and be consistent in following through on expectations.</p> <p>Service ministries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Nursing home visits * Pictures to missionaries * Buying food for food shelf * Planting * Collecting toys, mittens, etc. for needy. * Send pictures to children who are absent * Baking cookies for others * Singing in a choir 	<p>Children may be too large to pick up but they still need lots of hugs and touch.</p> <p>Children this age can also begin to take on small chores. (<i>i.e. teaching them to pick up after themselves</i>)</p> <p>Consider doing a joint service project from the list provided on page 9 – <i>Outward Action</i>.</p> <p>Speak and act kindly toward others.</p> <p>Talk to children about how they like to be treated.</p>

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Worship			
Spiritual	Nurturing Implications		Additional Tips for Home
<p>Able to sense the presence of God</p> <p>Understand obedience</p> <p>Have a simple trust in God</p> <p>Accept what they are told about God</p> <p>Capable of worship</p>	<p>Use “Wondering” (“<i>I wonder...</i>”) Questions.</p> <p>Have children tell and read the Bible stories as they are able.</p> <p>Answer questions simply and clearly. Do not use abstract language (<i>ideas which cannot be experienced through the senses</i>).</p> <p>Provide opportunities for worship and be alert for spontaneous times for worshipping God.</p> <p>Constantly remind children of God’s love for them.</p>	<p>Can understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * God takes care of me * God forgives me * God is always with me * I love God * I belong to God’s family * Jesus is God’s Son, died on the cross, rose from the dead and lives in heaven 	<p>Devotion time can include more than reading the Bible and praying. It can also include games.</p> <p>A child’s spiritual nurturing happens throughout the day - not just during a designated time.</p>