

**valleykids**  
NURSERY

**0-6 MONTHS**

Development and Discipleship Guide



## Discipleship help for where your child is now.

Our framework for family discipleship includes time, moments and milestones. This language provides a clear philosophy and strategy for discipleship in the home, encouraging and empowering parents to raise up a new generation of believers within our church.

To help you as a parent, we've incorporated this framework into a guide with examples for each stage of child development.



## Time 🕒

**Family discipleship time means intentional time built into the rhythm of your family's life for the purpose of thinking about, talking about, and living out the gospel. Time may look different for each family depending on the age and individual development of each child, as well as the number of children in the home.**

Pray aloud over your baby and for your baby as you feed them. Pray for their salvation. Pray that they would grow in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23).

As you play with your baby, talk to them about the objects they are exploring. Talk to them about God's care for his children (God is in charge of everything!).

During playtime and bath time, talk to your baby about how God made everything, including him or her. As your baby discovers the ability to creep, crawl, pull up, and walk, name and thank God for the different parts of your baby's body: "Thank you, God, for feet; God made your feet. Thank you, God, for hands; God made your hands. God made you. God made everything!"

Live a lifestyle that demonstrates worship of God. Pray aloud simple, one-sentence prayers of thankfulness to God for his goodness, such as, "God is good. Thank you, God, for [child's name]." Sing the gospel to your baby during their bedtime routine. Sing about how God loves his children. Sing about how Jesus came to save sinners! Sing songs of God, Jesus, and truth to your baby as you

rock them to sleep.

Remind your baby of God's love and care as you feed them.

Read the Bible and Bible stories to your baby.

Pray aloud for your child's salvation as you change their diaper.

Provide a Bible for your baby to explore through sight and touch; talk about it being God's true Word.

## Moments ✓

**Family discipleship moments capture and leverage opportunities in the course of everyday life for the purpose of gospel-centered conversations. Understanding how your child is developing can highlight moments for daily discipleship.**

### Physical Development

Your baby starts seeing in full color, and as their eyesight continues to strengthen, the world becomes a vast playground for discovery. Your baby sees and recognizes their caregivers. They hear their name and respond. They reach for and grab objects that interest them.

Pray aloud over your child as you explore the world together. Thank God for the way he made your child. Remind your child that God made everything!

### Emotional Development

Your baby is learning to display new emotions. They no longer feel only sadness and happiness, but also surprise and anger.

As you comfort your baby, you model God's care for his children. Tell your child, "God is a loving Father, and God is good."

### Social Development

As your baby bonds with their caregivers, they learn to communicate basic needs through hunger cues, babbling, and socially smiling.

As you care for your baby and meet their daily needs, model God's responsiveness to his children. Thank God for always answering his children in prayer. Tell your baby about how God wants to talk with us!

### Cognitive Development

Your baby is a cognitive being from birth. As your baby absorbs information, their brain matures, and they gain more control of their body. This allows them to explore more of their world.

Talk to your baby about the world God created. Thank God for what he has made. Pray aloud so that your baby hears you speaking truth. God is in charge of everything!

### Spiritual Development

Your baby is learning to trust you each time you care for their needs. As their trust in you grows, their worldview is shaped. Pray aloud over your baby that they might know Jesus came to save sinners and love and trust Jesus for salvation at an early age.

## Milestones ★

**Family discipleship milestones mark and make occasions to celebrate and commemorate significant spiritual milestones of God's work in the life of the family and child. Each family's milestones will look different as they relate to what God has done in each individual family.**

As a family, celebrate the milestones of God's faithfulness. Praise God for blessing your family with a new addition. If you have other children, remind them of the value God places on children and his faithfulness to carry you through pregnancy or adoption.

Thank God for how he never abandons his children in their time of need. God sustains you as you sacrificially serve your family after your baby's birth. Ask God for patience, energy, and to sustain you with his strength through sleepless nights in the newborn season. At the end of six months, celebrate God's care for you while you cared for your baby.

Keep a journal of your prayers and how God has answered them in this special time of life. Share and celebrate God's answered prayers with your closest family members.

Begin a baby book that highlights God's faithfulness to your family in the first six months of your child's life. As your baby grows older, share the story of God's faithfulness in your family each year on your child's birthday.