

valleykids
NURSERY

3 YEARS OLD

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.

Create a bedtime rhythm of reading your child a story from a children's Bible every day. After reading the story, ask your child questions about the story and try to relate it to their world.

Listen to kids worship music in the car and sing along! Sing our monthly memory verse song together (available on our website). Talk to your child about what the songs mean and how they apply to their life.

Your child may answer questions about God in a way that they know will please you. Continue to ask questions and talk about God and what they've been learning about in Valley Kids, as repetition is key to their understanding of the gospel and God's 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 child is growing in coordination of their large

muscles and may enjoy climbing, jumping, and running. Your child gains further control of fine motor skills by dressing their dolls and building with Lego bricks. They may drop nap time as their brain develops. As your child has sustained energy throughout the day, they no longer need rest time to involve sleep.

As you play outside, talk to your child about how God made everything. Remind your child that they're growing according to God's perfect plan.

Emotional Development

Your child is attempting to understand the feelings of adults, motivating them to try and please you through their behavior and performance. They also want to do more things on their own as they grow in confidence.

Leverage discipline to remind your child that their heart is sick with sin. Talk about how Jesus came to save sinners and make sick hearts into healthy hearts that love and trust him. Remind your child that you love them and want to guide them in their choices.

Social Development

Your child is exploring their environment through imaginative play, such as pretending to cook, caring for baby dolls, or dressing up. You will observe a growth in language skills and their ability to communicate with others. Help your child share their thoughts and feelings about the world. As you talk with your child, you help them understand their own emotions.

As your child grows in an understanding of their world and their ability to express emotions, remind them that God is in charge of everything. Tell your

child they can trust God and tell him what they're feeling in prayer.

Cognitive Development

Your child's vocabulary is quickly growing and expanding, and they learn new words through context clues, simple definitions, and word associations.

Help your child practice a memory verse each month. As your child encounters words they're not familiar with, help define them so they can understand the meaning of the verse. Help your child understand that the memory verses are from the Bible. God is good, and he gave us the Bible!

Spiritual Development

Your child can identify and retell portions of the Valley Kids lessons and family devotional time. Since their attention span is about two to three minutes, your child can listen to short Bible stories. Help your child relate to the stories by connecting the lesson with things that are part of their environment. Through family discipleship, your child is learning the difference between right and wrong.

When your child has a hard time listening to the Bible story during family devotional time, tell them how God wants to talk with us. Explain to your child that one of the ways God talks to us is through what he has written in the Bible.

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.

Celebrate your child's third birthday. Rejoice in how God has continued to grow and develop your child over the last year. Consider writing your child a letter to read when they're older. In the letter, include aspects of their personality that you see and prayers for their life.

If your child is starting school, celebrate this milestone. Model prayer for your child by praying with them for their teacher and classmates before the first day of school.

