

Checklist for Parents of Young Children/Ages 3-6

HOW PARENTS NURTURE FAITH

Helping Children *Experience* Faith

Yes No

- 1. Establish a family atmosphere that is secure, loving and forgiving.
- 2. Cultivate and model an attitude of wonder and gratitude about human life and nature.
- 3. Develop parenting styles which reflect Catholic/Christian convictions about the dignity and value of every person.
- 4. Choose child care options that are consistent with your personal and spiritual values.
- 5. Invite extended family members (grandparents, aunts and uncles, godparents, friends) to participate in the care and faith formation of children.
- 6. Set expectations for the child's behavior which promote confidence and self-esteem.
- 7. Encourage initiative and curiosity; reward effort more than success.
- 8. Preserve family time and opportunities for one-on-one nurturing between parent and child.
- 9. Participate in adult spiritual renewal and personal enrichment programs.

Helping Children *Learn* Faith

Yes No

- 1. Talk about God, Jesus, the church and your faith.
- 2. Help children identify signs of God's presence in nature in their own life experiences.
- 3. Explain signs and symbols of faith (eg, the church, its furnishings, statues, pictures, etc.)
- 4. Read/watch bible stories adapted for children and other children's stories with faith themes, bible heroes, saints, and examples of Christian values
- 5. Limit children's exposure to contrary values and role models on TV and other media.
- 6. Enroll children in pre-school religious education programs.

Helping Children *Express* Faith

Yes No

- 1. Teach your child the Sign of the Cross; use simple prayers at meals and bedtime.
- 2. Use simple blessings or prayers for special family occasions (birthdays, anniversaries, first and last-time events, life-changes and family problems)
- 3. Use religious symbols and objects (candles, pictures, statues, etc.) in family prayer and celebrations.
- 4. Celebrate religious seasons and events (Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter, feast days, holy days)
- 5. Adapt or develop family customs and traditions which express religious faith and values
- 6. Sing songs and tell stories; develop arts and crafts activities that express your faith and values.
- 7. Model an example of church participation and an adult prayer life.

Helping Children *Act* with Faith

Yes No

- 1. Teach children to share, to be fair, and to be honest with friends and playmates.
- 2. Teach children to appreciate and respect nature as part of God's creation.
- 3. Limit children's exposure to conflicting values and lifestyles depicted on TV, other media, advertising.
- 4. Model appreciation and respect for social, cultural and economic differences among people.
- 5. Model an example of concern, respect and service to others, especially the less fortunate.