



Raising UP SPIRITUAL CHAMPIONS

HARDWORKING: Stay focused

Also in this newsletter:

- Connect Your Kids to God • Family Fun • Easy Bonus Activity

TIP:
Display this newsletter at home, and use the activities as desired throughout the week.



Questions to Go at bedtime, mealtime or car time

- What kinds of things distract you when you're trying to get something done?
- What helps you to not get distracted when you're working on something?
- What advice would you give to someone who had a hard time focusing on schoolwork?

Verse to Chew on

"Hard work always pays off; mere talk puts no bread on the table" (Proverbs 14:23, *The Message*).

- Talk with your kids about situations you know where this proverb has proven to be true.
- How will working hard at school pay off? How about practicing a sport or learning God's ways?

Character Builder: Hardworking

Some of the greatest obstacles to being hardworking are distractions. To stay focused on a task or project means to be single-minded, unswerving, absorbed—quite a challenge for people of any age. Teach strategies to your kids so they can stay focused.

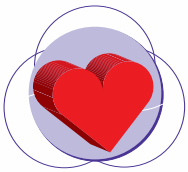
- **Make a plan.** If you're getting ready to do your homework, get set up with a drink and snacks, if needed, and set a timer for when you will take a five-minute stretch and restroom break. At break time, set the timer as a reminder to get back to work. Tell yourself you can have a bite of snack after finishing a certain number of problems. If you have a big chore to do, make a game of it. See how fast you can finish.
- **Reduce distractions.** Find a place to study that's out of the way. Turn off the TV. Turn music on low, if that's helpful. Let others know your plan and ask them to help by not distracting you.
- **Get back on track** when you lose your focus. Talk to yourself: "What do I do next?"

Your Strategies

Tell your kids you notice that the older they get the more focused they are becoming. Share with them strategies that you use at work and home to stay focused. Let them know hard work has its rewards.

Preschool Focus

While your young child colors or plays with blocks, read a story to him or her or work on a brief task of your own (empty the dishwasher, answer e-mail, etc.). When you finish, say, "You stayed focused on your activity and for a long time. Good job!"



Connect Your Kids to God

How is God like a best friend?

What are some qualities of a friend? A best friend is honest, listens, cares about you, helps you, understands you, and loves you no matter what.

God is all that and more. You are a treasure to Him. When you were separated from Him because of sin, He came to earth to die in your place so you could be with Him forever (see Romans 5:8).

Everyone needs a friend like that. Everyone can call Him a best friend. You can introduce others to Him by just telling them what God is like, how He helps you, and what He means to you.

You Can Do It!

- Share with your kids times when God has been a friend to you. Read to them Bible verses that have special meaning to you.
- Ask your kids how God is a friend to them. Let them share a Bible verse or a characteristic of God that they especially like.
- Make thank-you notes together to God for His special friendship.

Family Fun

Laugh and have fun together reviewing math basics with your kids. This game can get loud and exciting and make kids beg to play again. It makes a quick after-supper game.

- Make or buy flash cards (addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division) and mix up the easiest cards. Pit a parent against all the kids.
- Hold up a card and players try to be the first to answer. Of course, the parent will hesitate and stumble sometimes—not too obviously—so the child can figure it out. Gradually add more difficult problems into the mix.
- For preschoolers, use number and alphabet cards.

Visit www.raisingupspiritualchampions.com for more Family Fun.

Did You Know?

“Our goal as parents should be to help our children know how much God loves them and how much good he wants to do for them, so that they can trust him with every part and every moment of their lives.”

—Rick Osborne, *Talking to Your Children About God* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998), p. 31.

Easy Bonus Activity

On a map, find the quickest route to church. “What would happen if we had just enough time to get there but we got distracted by the donut shop?” Show the new route. Talk about how their distractions affect their work.

Preschool Focus

Play a game with your young child where you stare into each other’s eyes and try not to be the first to blink. Say, “Wow! You can stay focused for a long time.” Recognize times when your child stays focused on a task, for example, when he plays with play dough for a long time.