



## PowerSource

### ASK GOD:

1. To help you be a Christ-like example of how to deal with—and learn from—problems
2. To reassure your family members that God loves them, no matter what they're facing
3. To help your kids trust God, not themselves, for answers

## ParentingInsights

- In a survey of more than 1,000 children ages 9 to 13, 35% said they worry "a lot" about making mistakes and messing up. Another 33% said they worry a lot about friends and their problems. The good news is that 75% of kids say they want and need their parents' help when they're struggling. (*KidsHealth KidsPoll*)
- When given training in appropriate ways to solve problems, children of all ages show improved social skills, as well as increased impulse control and patience. (*thinkingpreteen.com*)

# Help Children Solve Problems

As kids grow, they must negotiate peer interactions, make decisions, and learn new skills. Here are age-appropriate insights about problem-solving:

- **Ages Birth to 2:** Young children are sensory-oriented and learn by imitating. Offer choices and model problem-solving techniques, such as different ways of stacking blocks or holding a cup.
- **Ages 3 to 5:** Preschoolers are multi-sensory, solving as they touch and do. Allow time and space for problem-solving. Praise kids' efforts.
- **Ages 6 to 8:** By this age, kids begin to learn in specific ways (auditory, visual, spatial, etc.), which will affect how they tackle problems. Encourage kids to employ these different approaches as they problem-solve, too.
- **Ages 9 to 12:** Preteens observe how peers solve problems. Although they want to be independent, they often lack confidence. Tell kids you trust their abilities. Let them know failure is okay. Be available to discuss problems.



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## Open the Book

*“To You, O God of my fathers,  
I give thanks and praise, for  
You have given me wisdom  
and power; even now You  
have made known to me what  
we requested of You, for You  
have made known to us the  
king’s matter.”*

**Daniel 2:23**

Although King Nebuchadnezzar’s astrologers said his dream was “impossible” to interpret, Daniel received answers from God in a vision. Then the king praised God!

### TEACHABLE MOMENTS

**“I Can’t” Jar**—When children say they can’t do something, write down the problem and pray about it together. When the problem or obstacle has been overcome, put the slip of paper in the jar as a visual reminder of what God helps us accomplish.

**Calm and Collected**—Let children make a “joyful noise” Model for children how to react to bad or scary news. Don’t use worst-case scenarios or exaggerate risks just to make a point. Instead, provide accurate, age-appropriate information. Empower kids and give them a sense of control by brainstorming solutions with them.

**Stand Together**—Remind children that everyone has weaknesses and that God puts us in families to support one another. Practice using “I” statements to speak out for what you need, whether it’s help or hugs.

Start a conversation about problem-solving by asking these questions:

1. When you can’t figure out something, how do you feel? How do you usually react, and why?
2. Where do you look for answers to your problems?
3. What lessons have you learned from dealing with different problems?
4. What have you learned about yourself in the process?

*So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”*

**Deuteronomy 11:18-20, NLT**

## FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Use these fun activities, adapted from *Group’s Hands-On Bible*, to show how God helps us solve problems

- 1. Falling Walls**—Read aloud Joshua 6:1-20, when God knocks down the walls of Jericho without force. Say: “Does this sound impossible? Let’s try it!” Break graham crackers into fourths and spread marshmallow creme on one side of each section. Stack the crackers on top of each other, using the creme as cement. Line up several stacks to form a wall. Say: “Let’s shout at our wall as loudly as we can.” Afterward, ask what happened. Say: “That’s right—nothing! It isn’t easy to bring down a wall with just noise, but God did it. God is awesome!” As you eat each section of the wall, discuss times when you need God’s power. Close in prayer, asking God to help you with all your problems and challenges.
- 2. Strength to Fly**—Ask: “Ever wish you could fly?” Read aloud Isaiah 40:31. Say: “That verse isn’t talking about people flying. But it’s a promise that if we trust God, He’ll give us new strength.” Have family members each try this cool trick as a reminder to trust God when problems arise. Stand in a doorway. Press the backs of your hands against the door frame as hard as you can. Count to 25. Then move away from the doorway, relax your arms, and discuss what happens. Say: “You found new strength! When you stopped pressing so hard, your arms wanted to fly up. God promises to renew our strength when we trust Him, even when we’re tired and troubled. Next time things get tough, just remember that God promises to give us new strength.”

# Adoption: The Journey of Three Families

Do you realize that there are no natural-born children in the family of God? None of us were born Christians. If you are a believer, it is because God has adopted you into the family—that's it; all races brought together by God's adoption of spiritual orphans.

This month, we will read about the adoption journey of three CASM families. Obviously, not everyone is called to adopt, but every believer is called to act. In addition to adoption, other ways we can be actively involved include hosting orphans for a summer, financially supporting adoptive parents, and fostering children in our community. I pray that you are blessed by these stories.

## The Making of the Long Family Through Adoption

Under the sovereignty and providence of God, Alexis was unable to have children of her own. Alexis had some legitimate concerns about the ability to love a child that was not her own biologically. As she saw the reality of this kind of love being exemplified by Tony's mother on all of her adopted children (8 in all), the question of adopting and loving a child that was not hers biologically was answered and adoption became the means by which our family would come together. Everyone from both sides of our family was very encouraging and eager for us to adopt. After many years and much prayer, we decided to go with AASK as our agency to be certified for adoption.

One of the challenges we faced in getting started was with a family specialist to whom we had been assigned, who was not very receptive of unwillingness to take children with major medical conditions (Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc.). She even told us that perhaps AASK was not the agency for us. We remained undeterred, believing that the decision was not truly up to her, but was in the hands of God. After much paperwork, classes on parenting, and effort to be certified, our family specialist lost our paperwork. Discouraged and dealing with the health issues that Alexis's mother faced, we started the process over again with a different family specialist who helped us to expedite the process; we were certified within two months and our two daughters were placed in our home two months later. The Lord completed our family over the next two years with the adoption of our two boys. All of our children came out of the state system (children who had been removed from their homes and the care of their biological parents).

All of the children's home lives prior to adoption were extremely poor and we are concerned about the time when they may be interested in knowing more about their biological parents. We decided our children would know that they were adopted so as to avoid any pitfalls that would come from withholding this information until a later time. They have known from the first day that they were so special that God loved them and selected a mommy and daddy just for them who were looking to have little children in their home to love and nurture. They feel special and are special children God has given to us.

## Nemetz Adoption Story

Seven years into our marriage, we thought we were finally ready to start a family. We considered international adoption and attempted various fertility treatments. Things did not go as planned. Approximately eight years later and after receiving Christ into our lives, we realized that we were never truly ready and that God had a better plan. By His Word and by the many examples in the church, He led us down the path of fostering/adopting children.

## Culture & Trends

- If traveling with children stresses you out, now you can opt for in-flight child care. Nanny in the Clouds, the brainchild of a mom who flew cross-country with her 2 year old, helps parents find high-altitude baby sitters. ([time.com](http://time.com))
- More kids are using their iPods to watch TV these days, thanks to a deal between YouTube and Disney. Nearly 70 videos from the Disney Channel—many of them full-length shows—are now available for free viewing on YouTube. ([allthingsd.com](http://allthingsd.com))

## QuickStats

- During tough economic times, 72% of families say they limit adult outings and activities but only 25% limit their kids' extracurricular activities. ([Mamapedia](http://Mamapedia))
- Child-care costs took up only 2% of the average family budget in the 1960s. But now they consume 17%, second only to mortgage or rent. ([U.S. Department of Agriculture](http://U.S. Department of Agriculture))

It took a year to get certified as foster parents. The phone began to ring the first Monday that our license was active. Calls poured in daily for children in need of a home. We agreed to accept children on multiple occasions, only to wait the requisite two hours and have our hopes dashed into pieces. We received four calls for placement on the tenth day. It was the fourth call that would change our lives forever!

The children arrived and the crash course we took in foster parenting quickly transitioned to on-the-job training! As foster parents, our freedom in parenting was quite limited as the children were still wards of the state. This meant that by accepting these children into our home as foster parents, we agreed to comply with the states rules and guidelines on a number of topics, including...discipline. This made parenting a challenge. It was also a difficult time for the children. Visitation with their biological mother every other week proved to be quite disruptive and made it challenging for the kids to settle in. It also became evident over time that each child had unique needs. Services were obtained to meet these needs, but getting the states approval was never an easy process.

Once the adoption was finalized, we felt that we could finally settle in as a family. It was a time of great rejoicing, and a time of mourning. The possibility of being permanently separated from these children whom we quickly grew to love was now gone. On the other hand, the adoption meant that the children would no longer have visitation rights with their biological mother. The grief that an adopted child can experience due to separation from their biological parents has been likened to the grief that is experienced with the death of a parent and can often stay with the child throughout his or her adult years.

The challenges we face are unique to families who adopt children with special needs. But in spite of these, we ARE a family, who loves each other dearly. We are grateful for these two precious gifts the Lord given to us and cannot imagine a life without them

### **God's Gift to the Grays**

The gynecologist told Nicole we didn't have much time, and if we wanted to have a baby, we had better do it soon. So, the Lord allowed us to have Gabby about a year and a half later. Soon afterwards, Nicole had her surgery, and we knew we would have no more children. A couple of years went by before I mustered up the courage to suggest adoption.

The conversation didn't really go anywhere for a few years. When it was revived we decided to try the foster/adopt program. This would allow us several advantages. First, we could have several children in our home to see how our daughter, now eight years old, would adjust. Second, we would see how we adjusted to having another child in the house after parenting a single child. Third, we would begin to have some idea of what the challenges would be in adopting an older child. We wanted a child who was about Gabby's age or younger.

We chose a Christian agency. The training was trying, due to the number of hours and some of the worldly content. Every agency has a state curriculum that it must teach, even if it is a religious organization. Not only was the training trying, the paperwork was literally redundant.

Near the end of the process, our caseworker convinced us to lower the age limit for children we would accept into our home. This one detail opened the door for Alberto to come into our family. After a few months of waiting for a child, we received our little gift disguised as an emergency temporary placement. He was our first and only placement.

Little did we know that this little boy would become our son through adoption. There was some concern among family members regarding the inter-racial nature of the adoption, but by God's grace, they got over it and now love him as their own family.

What did we learn? First, God's providence has His timing and His packaging. Second, His gifts are joyous and sanctifying, all wrapped up in one.

# MAY 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Nursery Truth Statement: God sees me.</p> <p>TZ: John 20:31a *</p> <p>PreK-6th: Ps.25:4-5*</p>		1	2	3	4	5
<p>6</p> <p>Mother's Day</p> <p>Nursery Truth Statement: God hears me.</p> <p>TZ: John 4:24*</p> <p>PreK-6th: James 5:16b*</p>	7	8	9	10	11	12 Tempe Family Fun Run & Walk
<p>13</p> <p>Nursery Truth: God Is Light.</p> <p>TZ: Col.1:16a *</p> <p>PreK-6th: Prov.4:23*</p>	14 3rd Annual Arcadia Student Film Festival	15	16	17	18	19 Peach Festival Arizona Barbecue Festival
<p>20</p> <p>Nursery Truth Statement: God leads me.</p> <p>TZ: 1 Cor.8:6b *</p> <p>PreK-6th: James 5:16b*</p>	21	22	23	24	25	26
<p>27</p> <p>Nursery Truth Statement: God knows me.</p> <p>TZ: Romans 3:23*</p> <p>PreK-6th: Game Day</p>	28 Memorial Day	29	30	31	<p><b>Various Summer Activities:</b> Movie tickets for sale: 10 movies; 10 weeks; for kids; less than \$1/movie Camp Zoo @ The Phoenix Zoo Mad Science Summer Camp</p>	<p>Future Stars International Summer Camp Adventures Kids' Cooking Camp Summer Parks and Recreation for Kids Arizona Food Allergy Alliance Summer Camp</p>

\*The memory verse is taught the week it is listed to be recited by the children the following week.

CASM Prayer Meetings will be held at 6:30pm on Wednesdays, June-August.