



CFC Monthly

An outreach to parents of young children

This is our inaugural CFC Monthly. Our aim is to share some quick thoughts around parenting and the Church. We

hope you find it interesting and useful. ☺

God Bless the little ones!

Technology and Youth

A big question for parents of young children is how much technology or screen time should be allowed children at different ages. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) suggests that children under 18 months avoid screens entirely, except for video chatting. For ages 18-24 months, screen use should be limited to high-quality programming watched with a parent or caregiver. For children ages 2-5, no more than one hour of screen time per day is recommended with a focus on educational content viewed together with an adult. Children ages 6 and older can gradually have more screen time, but it should be balanced with other activities.

While some screen time can benefit children, like learning from educational apps or video calling family, excessive screen exposure can negatively impact physical, social, and emotional development.

- Physically, too much screen time can lead to sleep disturbances, eyestrain, and reduced physical activity and risk of obesity.
- Socially, excessive screen means reduced personal interactions, which are key for developing social skills and understanding social cues as well as avoiding loneliness later in life.
- Emotionally, despite unending captivation for a screen, young children may struggle with attention spans and may be more

prone to mood swings after prolonged screen use because passive screen time doesn't engage their imagination or problem-solving skills.

Moderation and supervision seem to be key. Parents can encourage healthier screen habits by setting time limits, choosing educational content, and balancing screen time with active, hands-on play that supports physical and social growth.

Parents: Discuss what you each think about screen content and time? When do you give them a phone and, when you do, is content/access restricted? Will you track their locations or have access to their texts? What do your friends and family think as peer pressure will come to bear? Are you concerned about technology's long-term effects that more research seems to be pointing out?

Wherever you land on the questions, know that there will be pressures from the child as well as indirectly from other families who may be less strict on technology. It will be important to have a good plan in mind ahead of time to help stave off those pressures!

See also NYT 'Tech Fix' article 11/10 "How Tech Created a Recipe for Loneliness".

Church New Year

The Church year includes 6 seasons from early December and through the following November. In order: Advent, Christmas, some Ordinary Time, Lent, the Holy Triduum (incl Easter), Easter, some more Ordinary time. With this calendar in mind, your kids might appreciate that Thanksgiving is like the Church's New Year Celebration!!

Art Idea

Draw lines across a simple coloring book page and have the child color it like a stained glass window.

Upcoming Events

- 12/6 CFC Gathering: Celebrating Jesus' birthday.**
Service Project is to bring a toy for children with cancer.
- 1/10 CFC Gathering: A Nurse will present on toddler behavior and health.**
Service Project is sandwich making. BRING 1 pound of meat, 1 pound of cheese, and a loaf of bread.
- 2/7 CFC Gathering: Family Blessing with Msgr. Tom.**

Why Church?

- 1) Church is where we can begin to encounter God, develop faith, and learn about Christ's teachings.
- 2) Church provides a structured environment.
- 3) Being part of something bigger than yourself.
- 4) Being part of a society of generally good people,
- 5) A place to form positive habits during formative years.
- 6) A place to learn rules and self discipline.
- 7) A family activity.
- 8) A way to help fight loneliness in our society.
- 9) As a link to other people in need thru volunteering.
- 10) An alternative to at least one hour of screen time.
- 11) Reminds us to be thankful.
- 12) A place to be nurtured, encouraged, and strengthened by the timeless messages in the Bible.

Listening at Church

Hold hands and see who can be the first to give a squeeze when they hear an agreed upon word like love, Christ, Lord, or Jesus, etc.

If there is something you'd like to see in this monthly outreach, please let us know.

Repeat After Me

Have kids loudly proclaim the following while going to school or church:

I am kind.	I am friendly
I am smart.	I can do hard things.
I am brave.	I am a beautiful creation.
I am honest.	I never give up.
I am strong.	I love.
I am helpful	I am loved.

Tend the Garden—Earth Focus

For a wow factor, try a zero maintenance Amaryllis bulb. From a wax-covered bulb about the size of an orange sprouts a glorious flower coinciding with the Christmas season. The kids (and you) will enjoy their rapid growth and flower.

Family Dinner Conversation Prompt

Gratitude can improve mental strength, increase emotional awareness, reduce stress, improve immunity, allow for better sleep, and connects you with others via empathy. Prompt a conversation by going around and around the table with each saying one thing they are thankful for. No repeats!

Tend the Garden—Health Focus

Easy Hi-protein, No Added Sugar Pancakes

Mix together 2 eggs, 1/2 cup instant oats, 1/2 cup cottage cheese, with vanilla and cinnamon to season. Stir in blueberries (can be frozen) or bananas to preference. Cook like a regular pancake.

Kid Joke

What kind of room doesn't have windows or a door? *A mushroom*
