

July 2017

parenting CHRISTIAN kids



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Tomoka Christian Church
www.tomoka.cc
ONE CHURCH. MULTIPLE LOCATIONS.

ORMOND BEACH CAMPUS:
1450 Hand Avenue
Ormond Beach, FL 32174

PALM BAY CAMPUS:
344 Emerson Drive NW
Palm Bay, FL 32907

Remind Kids They're Made in God's Image

POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. To help your children view themselves as God's beloved creations.
2. To guard kids from harmful messages about their bodies.
3. To heal any of your body-image issues so you can be a positive role model.

This month we'll explore how children view their physical bodies—and how parents can encourage positive body image through God's eyes.

Children as young as 5 are becoming critical of their build and appearance. Media, music, ads, toys, social media, and peer pressure all contribute to the problem of low self-esteem and poor body-image issues.

What kids see and hear at home matters, too. They notice parents' negative comments and attitudes about *their* bodies, which may give kids the impression that our value is based solely on physical appearance and attributes.

The good news is that children pick up on our *positive* comments and attitudes, too. Parents can go a long way toward promoting healthy body image by taking these steps:

- Emphasize that God created our bodies and even calls them his temple (1 Corinthians 6:19).
- Together, read Bible verses about Jesus' love and acceptance (Matthew 6:26; Mark 10:13-16).
- Accept *yourself*. Don't obsess over pounds and calories.
- Model healthy eating. Show kids how to make wise food choices and how to listen to hunger signals.
- Give honest compliments and celebrate God-given strengths.
- Teach children to persevere, and pray with them for guidance.

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Where's Your Worth?

Self-esteem is directly related to children's beliefs about themselves. Beliefs based on other people's praise may vary from day to day, but God's views remain constant. Therefore, for children to have a Christian self-concept, they must see themselves from God's viewpoint—as sinners in need of a Savior but also as deeply loved and valued individuals. More than anything, our kids need to be in a relationship with Jesus—and that, above all else, will define who they are. As children grasp that their worth isn't rooted in how they perform or look, but in their relationship with Jesus and what he says about them, they'll develop unshakable, positive self-esteem. And their feelings about themselves won't be subject to whether or not they receive praise for everything they do.



TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Honest Images

Hand out Silly Putty and have family members mold it on their noses to create a new look. When everyone is done, look in a mirror together.

Ask: **What was it like to create a new nose for yourself? How do these noses create a different image of your face? What are other ways we portray a “false image” of who we are inside?**

Read aloud 1 Samuel 16:7. Ask: **Why does God care about what's in our hearts? Why do you think it matters to God if we're honest about who we are or if we portray a false image?**

Say: **Building crazy new noses is fun. But it's easy to create a false image of ourselves in other ways. God wants us to be honest about who we really are, both to others and to ourselves. After all, God made each of us and values us all equally.**

Close in prayer, thanking God for making each one of you unique and special.

Search the Source Read and discuss Bible passages about beauty (1 Samuel 16:7; Proverbs 31:30; 1 Peter 3:3-4) and strength (Isaiah 41:10; Ephesians 6:10-11; Philippians 4:13; 1 Timothy 4:8).

Body Blessings Brainstorm ways you were each helped today because of how someone else used his or her body. Thank one another for using God's gift of your bodies to serve. Then think of ways you can pass the same kind of blessing on to someone else.

Unique Creations Make clay sculptures of things that are important to each of you. Discuss why you cherish and care for that item. Remind children that Jesus cherishes and cares for us—and wants us to care for our bodies.

Branch Out! Encourage kids to try new things. New experiences, like playing a new sport, help affirm kids' bodies in unexpected ways. Also look for activities that diversify children's experiences, fortify emotional strength, develop talents and interests, and widen circles of peers and mentors. Your children's ministry is a good place to start.

Wonderfully Made Remind older kids of how wonderfully God has made them. Read aloud Psalm 139:13-16. Discuss messages that today's society communicates about beauty and body image. Then describe what God sees in each person. Together, create a poster that communicates our worth and image in Jesus. Hang the poster near a mirror as a reminder of how much God values each of us.

Hopping-Popping Bodies With younger kids, draw a large gingerbread-cookie-type person and then draw arrows from different parts of the body to the outer edge of the paper. From the head, write words that describe what you all like to learn about. From the hands, write things you like to do. From the feet, places you like to go. From the stomach, food you like to eat, and so on.

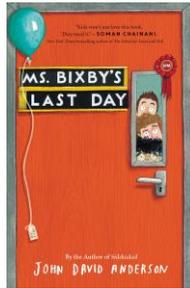
Circle of Thanks Form a circle, link arms, and say in unison, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made!” Then raise your hands and close in a prayer of thanks for the wonderful bodies God has given you. End with a group “amen”!

“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.” —Psalm 139:14, NIV

MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIE



BOOK

Title: *The Emoji Movie*

Genre: Animation, Adventure, Comedy

Rating: Not yet rated

Cast: Anna Faris, T.J. Miller, Sofia Vergara, James Corden

Synopsis: Everyone's favorite emojis live in Textopolis, a secret world inside smartphones. They each have only one facial expression, except for Gene, who was born without a "filter." To try to become like all the other emojis, Gene goes on an "app-venture" with two friends. They must save their world before it's permanently deleted.

Our Take: Young viewers will likely be attracted by these colorful, familiar characters. But the film will probably contain rude language and potty humor (thanks to the poop emoji). Talk with kids about ways to express emotions.

Title: *Ms. Bixby's Last Day*

Author: John David Anderson

Synopsis: This book, geared toward children ages 8 to 12, explores the variety of teachers that children might have. Ms. Bixby, one of the "good ones," has to leave school because she has cancer. As some students throw her a special farewell party, they discover their own bravery and strengths.

Our Take: This relatable book will make readers laugh and cry. Children whose teachers have been sick will especially be able to relate to the story. Readers will discover the impact they can have on other people's lives. They'll also explore what makes them each special. Talk with kids about how they can show people honor.

Games, Sites & Apps

Has-Been Heroes

In this game for the new Nintendo Switch, a group of forgotten champions goes on an epic quest to take the king's twin daughters to Princess Academy. The game features action and strategy, as players unlock magical spells to defeat enemies. Rated 10+.

ReadingBear.org

This free site helps beginning readers learn phonics, vocabulary, and other concepts. Fifty presentations show children how to sound out words, and videos illustrate sample sentences. This self-paced, low-pressure program can supplement kids' learning. Ages 4+.

Under Leaves

With this \$1.99 iPhone app, players uncover animals—and food for them—in six peaceful nature settings. The illustrations and sounds are soothing, and reading isn't required (the app only uses numbers). The app is designed for children ages 5 and under.



CULTURE & TRENDS

Stop Fidgeting? Fidget spinners and boxes have soared in popularity partly because of claims that they help children who have ADHD, autism, and anxiety. But scientists say parents shouldn't pin their hopes on these distracting toys—and that actual fidgeting is probably more effective. (*time.com*)

Fangirls of the Force Because the "Star Wars" fan base is increasingly female, new material is being aimed specifically at girls. *Forces of Destiny*, a series highlighting heroines, debuts in the form of animated shorts on Disney YouTube this month. New toys, books, and apparel are also being marketed to girls. (*Entertainment Weekly*)

QUICK STATS

On the Go Up to 55% of children eat meals in cars at least once per week. (*First for Women magazine survey*)

Youngsters on YouTube In a recent study of children's digital behavior, 81% of 6- to 12-year-olds said they use YouTube. (*LA Times*)

World Changers? Only 16% of kids in grades 5 through 12 believe they'll "invent something that changes the world." (*gallup.com*)

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This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children watch, read, listen to, and play.