

**SAY THIS:**

Who can you thank
for everything?
**YOU CAN THANK GOD
FOR EVERYTHING.**

**DO THIS:****MORNING TIME**

When you go into your baby's room, say, "Good morning, sweet [baby's name]! Do you know what I'm going to tell God thank You for today? I'm going to tell God thank You for YOU!"

**FEEDING TIME**

While feeding your baby this month, thank God out loud for whatever comes to your mind, "Thank You, God, for [baby's name]'s smile. Thank You, God, for our home. Thank You, God, for our food. Thank You, God, for our family."

**CUDDLE TIME**

Cuddle with your baby this month and pray, "Dear God, You are so good to me. I want to live life aware and thankful, but sometimes life gets busy and I just forget to say thank You. I want to take time right now to say thank You for [something specific]. I especially want to thank You for [baby's name]. I love You, God. In Jesus' name, amen."

**BATH TIME**

Sing the following words to the tune of Mary Had a Little Lamb while giving your baby a bath: "We thank God for everything, everything, everything. We thank God for everything. I thank God for YOU!" Touch your baby on the nose when you say, "YOU!"

BASIC TRUTH:

GOD MADE ME.

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HOW TO READ BETTER BEDTIME STORIES

By Robert Carnes

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When I became a new parent, the thing I looked forward to most was reading bedtime stories with my child. Now that I'm a dad, that's my favorite way to connect with my daughter. Here are a few ways I've learned to make the most of this opportunity:

Make Reading Part of the Routine

Bedtime stories can help to establish a healthy bedtime routine. Even from a young age, this can help your child sleep better. Having a set routine each night signals to your kid that it's time to start winding down. It helps takes their mind off of the day and ignites their imagination.

Pick the Right Books

There are lots of children's books out there—both good and bad. But the best indication of the right book for your child is whether it's developmentally appropriate. Many factors can go into deciding what's age appropriate—from the complexity of the word, to the colors in the illustrations. Doing your homework is important.

Do the Voices

What you're reading is important, but so is how you're reading it. One of the best ways to get your kid to understand the context of what's happening in the book is from your delivery. They're depending on you to be their emotional translator. Try giving each of the characters silly

voices. And make sure to do all of the sound effects. Children's writers put those in there on purpose.

Get the Kid(s) Involved

One of the biggest benefits of reading to your child is promoting their own literacy. The more you read to your child, the more they'll understand and appreciate the importance of reading. And what better way to do that than by involving them in the process?

As they get older, let them start picking out the books to read. As they develop favorites, they might want to try reading aloud to you. Encourage them and gently guide them when they make mistakes. As you read, ask them questions about the book, like "And then what happened?"

Right now, my daughter is only five-months-old. So she's some time away from reading books for herself. I get her involved by letting her hold on to the pages of the book, which she inevitably attempts to eat. At least I can say she's been consuming literature from a very young age. (I'm sorry for the bad pun, but I have a quota of dad jokes to hit.)

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For more blog posts and parenting resources, visit: **ParentCue.org**

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