

Godly Play is...

A very different way of doing Children's Ministry.

A getting ready, a story or lesson, a reflection, work and a feast.

A deep place spiritually but also a safe, quiet, protected space for children to explore their faith and work with issues.

Frequently Asked Questions

Since Godly Play is so different from 'traditional' Sunday school programs or other religious education programs, parents often have questions. Here are just a few of them to help. Please don't hesitate to ask us any more you might have.

What age is Godly Play for?

Godly Play was originally created for ages 3-11yrs but over the years it has been used more and more for all ages including adults in retirement homes and ministers retreats. Because it is based on the Bible it is always relevant.

Why do you think this method works? What evidence is there that shows Godly Play is effective in bringing children to a living faith in Jesus?

It works because it trusts in the participation and guidance of God, through action of the Holy Spirit. It does not just trust in this but gives space for this to happen. Godly Play brings out an inquisitiveness that we as humans naturally have in us all. It is hard if not impossible to measure someone's spirituality however leaders have been working with children using Godly Play for many years with great stories of children responding to Jesus. In our own experience children are eager to read more of the Bible, get baptised and are talking about faith with parents and leaders. This is exciting.

What about children that can't do or don't like craft? Or children who are older and too mature for playdough etc?

Godly Play does not have a set 'craft time'. Godly Play has an open 'work time' where the child may choose their own work. It may be a craft project or it may be prayer, reading, playing with blocks or sand or other sensory materials. This freedom gives the child space to express themselves freely and openly to God. For this reason a child may not bring something physical home every session. Older children actually enjoy using materials that they don't usually get the use of any more.

Why is the name of Jesus not used?

Jesus is named when the lesson is particularly on Him. The only time Jesus is not mentioned is in the introduction to each of the parables. This has two main purposes. 1. To contain the focus on the lesson Jesus was trying to get across rather than on Himself and His story. 2. To allow children the privilege and blessing of discovery for themselves. Often this will be discovered by the child during the 'wondering'

How does my child get to understand what the Bible is and how to read it?

Once again there are a number of ways. Firstly through the room set up itself which is laid out with the Bible stories available visually for the children. Secondly there are specific lessons on the Bible and during their work time children are welcome to explore the Bible and can work with a leader to help them if required.

What if my child doesn't connect with the story and just does his/her own thing? How does he/she then learn about the Christian faith?

Sometimes it can take a child time to adjust to having the freedom to choose their own work. They are so used to being told what to do with their time at school and home that they take time to realise what this time can mean for them. If a parent has any concerns we encourage them to talk to us and work with us to find a solution.

Godly Play @ Home

In Sunday school we only have your child for maybe 1 hour each week. You spend much more time with your child than this, so we encourage you to explore and talk about God at home.

One way is by going over stories at home. Ask the child what the lesson or story was about for the session. Read it in the Bible together. Perhaps come up with questions you wonder about together and help your child to use resources to find answers.

When they bring home work don't just say how wonderful it is but ask them if they would like to talk about it with you. Remember you can use any objects to retell the stories at home!



The 10 'Best Ways' For Parents

How to help children to get the most out of their Godly Play experience



1. Our sessions take place during the 10am worship service at Meadows Uniting Church.
2. Please help your child to be on time. They won't want to miss a minute!
3. The Godly Play circle is built slowly and lovingly, to welcome each child, one at a time. When children arrive, they wait outside the door while the leader helps them to get ready to join the circle.
4. If you come out to the hall please say your goodbyes then at the door, and know that the leaders are ready to make the time a safe and welcoming time for every child.
5. When you pick your child up, keep in mind that young children will not always be able to tell you what they learned, because what they learned was how to learn about the powerful language of the Christian people.
6. Also remember that children will not always be able to show you a physical product for their 'work' that day, because sometimes what they've learned cannot be put into words even by adults. In Godly Play we focus on the relationship with God and the depths of relationships in the community of children.
7. Please don't come into the room during class because we want the Godly Play room to be a special place for the community of children. Even the teachers keep their profile low during a session.
8. We are happy for you to come in and sit on a session if you let us know in advance and then you are welcome to be a part of the circle.
9. We are currently seeking more leaders to help out. Please contact me if you are interested.
10. The best way to know more about Godly Play is to experience it for yourself in your own session. Please consider attending a workshop where you can experience the whole session from beginning to end. Please contact me for details.

For More Information

Contact

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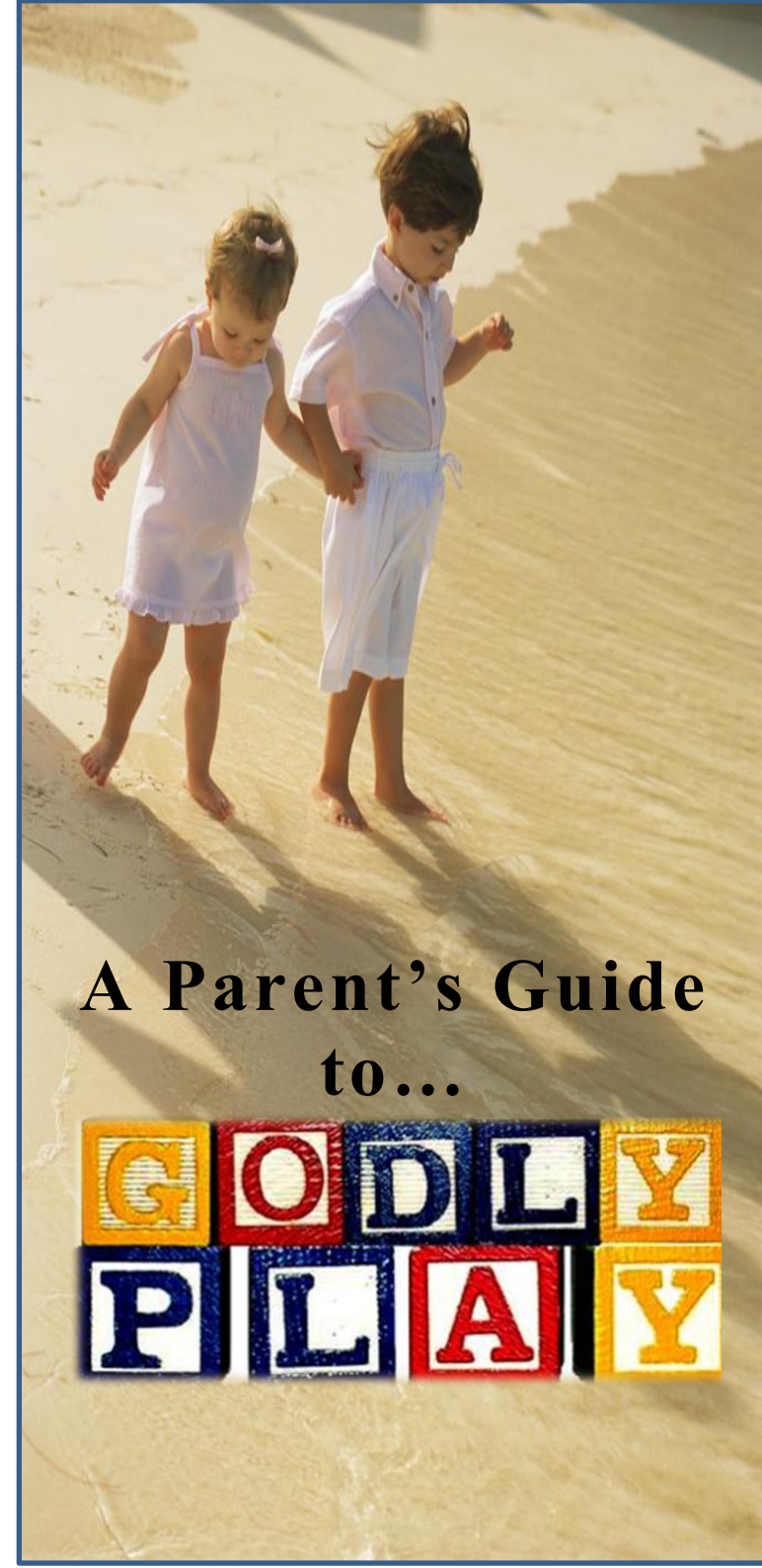
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Visit

www.godlyplay.org.au

Read

Godly Play
by Jerome Berryman
or
Children's Spirituality
By Rebecca Nye



A Parent's Guide to...

