

God Made Families

Bible Basis: Genesis 15:1-6; 18:1-14; 21:1-7

God made the human family the most basic building block of human society. When families are strong, society tends to be strong. In Abraham's day, the strength of the family unit depended significantly on having a viable male heir who would carry on the family lineage while also inheriting, managing, and defending the family's wealth. Although Abraham was a wandering nomad, by the time he settled in Canaan, he had acquired great wealth and honor (Genesis 13:2; 14:17-24). In Abraham's mind, however, all these blessings meant little without a son to inherit it all. In his despair, Abraham considered adopting one of his male servants to be his heir instead.

God had a different plan. He promised Abraham that he would have a biological son and more—more descendants than the stars in the sky! At the time, this seemed ridiculous to Abraham and his wife, Sarah. Both were beyond normal childbearing years, and Sarah had been barren all her life. But God was preparing Abraham to learn a special lesson and serve a special role. The lesson was that nothing is impossible with God. God is able to give a barren woman a child and build not only a family out of that child but an entire nation—the nation that would later be called Israel.

Abraham's special role in human history, however, extends beyond being the patriarch of this special nation. By believing God for the impossible, Abraham would become not only the father of a huge and influential nation, but also of all people of the world who believe in Jesus for salvation (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:11; Galatians 3:26-29).

Four Lessons on God Made Families

Lesson	Emphasis	Page
1	God made families, and he made my family, too.	13
2	God made families, and families help each other.	27
3	God made families, and families can worship together.	41
4	I'm happy that God made families.	55

Parent Page

God Made Families

For the next four weeks, the toddlers and 2s class will be learning from the story of Abraham that God made families. The children will use their five senses to discover how families are similar and how they are different, and to celebrate the joyful knowledge that God gave us families because he loves us.

Use these Parent Page ideas to help reinforce the point that God made families.

Tips for Ts and 2s

A toddler's world centers around family life. Often a child's perception of God is strongly influenced by the way he or she relates to parents and other caregivers. Harsh and demanding or forgiving and loving—family dynamics help lay the groundwork for a young child's relationship with God. This month, focus on the love God gives us through our families.

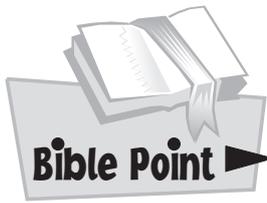
Together Time

- Declare this Family Fun Month! Plan unique “together times.” Visit a local children's museum, go on a woody hike and collect natural “treasures,” toss rocks into a pond, and make time to snuggle up with colorful storybooks and a snack. Set aside one hour each day for this special family time, and end each together time with a thank-you prayer to God for your family.
- Do simple household chores together to reinforce the fact that families help each other. As your child helps you sort silverware, sweep the floor, rake leaves, or dry dishes, he or she will experience the joy of working together and the importance of helping one another.
- Sing this song from class with your toddler:

God Made Families (adapted from Genesis 1:26)

(sung to the tune of “Frère Jacques”)

God made families (*wiggle your fingers*),
God made families. (*Wiggle your fingers.*)
Yours and mine (*point to a friend, then to yourself*),
Yours and mine. (*Point to a friend, then to yourself.*)
I will love my family. (*Put your hands over your heart.*)
I will love my family (*put your hands over your heart*)
All the time (*wiggle your fingers*),
All the time. (*Wiggle your fingers.*)



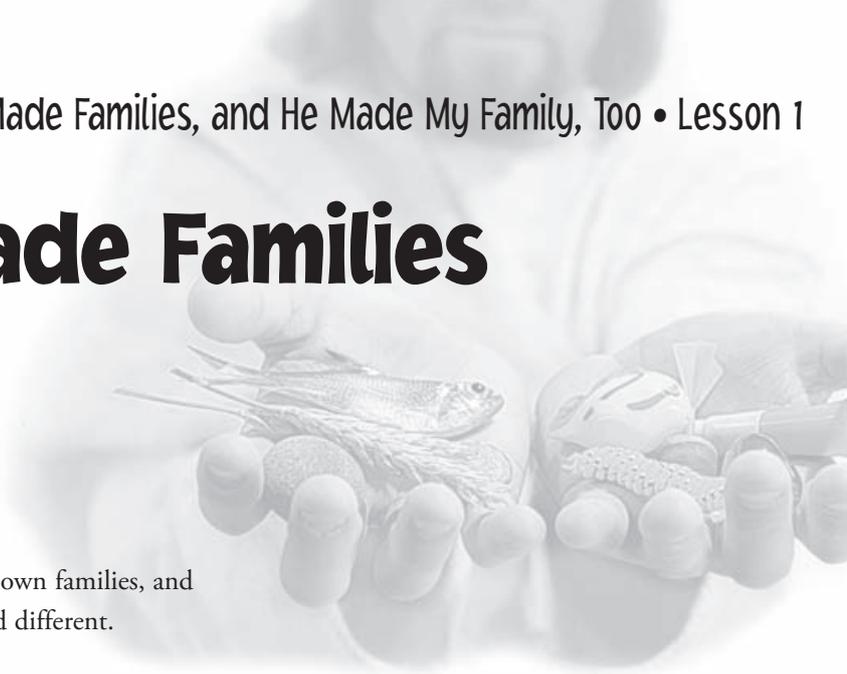
God Made Families

Bible Verse

God made families (adapted from Genesis 1:26a).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- realize that God made families,
 - understand that God made their own families, and
 - explore how families are alike and different.



Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

- God made families, and he made my family, too.

Genesis
15:1-6;
18:1-14;
21:1-7



In the first passage for this lesson, Abram had recently won a big military victory; he wasn't likely afraid of any foes. What was bothering Abram, and what God addressed, was Abram's continuing lack of a son to be his heir. So in response to God's words of comfort, Abram poured out his heart. When God assured Abram by restating his promise that Abram would have his own son, Abram responded in faith.

In the second passage, it may seem strange that the three men were "standing nearby" (18:2), but this was customary for strangers in that time and place. They were not free to just approach someone else's tent in the desert.

Many scholars believe that these men were angels, though the text doesn't directly say so. The fact that they knew Sarah's name may support the idea that they were angels, and in Genesis 18:10, it becomes clear that one of them was at least speaking for the Lord.

For many years, God had been promising a son to Abraham. Now for the first time, God predicted the time of the birth: Within one year, the son of the promise would be born. We see in the third passage that God keeps his promises!

Prayer

- Read Proverbs 3:5-6.
- When is it hard for you to trust God's plans for your life?
- How can you trust God more?
- Pray: Dear Lord, help me to trust you every day of my life. And please help me to model that trust for the students I teach.

Before the Lesson

- Collect items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart on the next page.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Arrival Activities Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Welcome Time —Receive a warm welcome from the teacher and Cuddles the Lamb.	Name tags (p. 8), marker, tape or safety pins, CD player	 
	Option 1: Mommy and Daddy Dress-Up —Dress up as different family members.	Dress-up items such as coats, hats, dresses, ties, purses, and scarves	
	Option 2: Infant Isaac —Make a soft, pretend baby to cuddle and carry.	Socks or knee-high stockings, pillow stuffing or paper towels, facial tissues, tape, markers	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they help clean up the room.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Bible Song —Sing a song about the Bible.	Bible, CD player	
	God Made Families —Interact with sensory items on the StoryBoard as they hear the story of Abraham's family from Genesis 15:1-6; 18:1-14; 21:1-7.	Bible, bread and honey sandwiches, stuffed dolls from Option 2, wet paper towels, newspaper, tennis ball	 
	Thank You, God —Sing a song thanking God for their families.	CD player	
Bible Activities	Interactive Bible Bulletin Board —Review the Bible story with Cuddles the Lamb as they create a bulletin board together.	Family patterns (pp. 24-25); scissors; tape; green, blue, and red construction paper	
	Sing It Out —Sing a song thanking God for their families.	CD player	
	Bible Craft —Decorate soft baby blankets for them to wrap their dolls in.	Light-colored felt squares, markers, stuffed dolls from Option 2	
	Bible Game —Sing an action song, and care for their dolls.	Stuffed dolls from Option 2	
 Closing	Family Fun —Say a prayer, and have a snack.	Jelly, bread, gingerbread-man cookie cutters, napkins, spoon	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Arrival Activities

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: name tags (p. 8), marker, tape or safety pins, CD player



- Play “God Made Families” (adapted from Genesis 1:26a) (track 6) from the CD as children are arriving.
- Use Cuddles the Lamb to help you greet each child by name and with a warm smile.
- Tape or pin a name tag to each child’s clothing.
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► God made families.**
- Place Cuddles out of sight so the children won’t be distracted by him during the next activity.

Option 1: Mommy and Daddy Dress-Up

SUPPLIES: dress-up items such as coats, hats, dresses, ties, purses, and scarves

Provide a variety of dress-up clothes that represent clothing different family members might wear. For example, set out dresses, purses, and scarves for mommies, grandmas, or sisters. Provide coats, ties, and hats for daddies, grandpas, and brothers. As children arrive, invite them to dress up as members of their families, and then encourage each child to tell who he or she is pretending to be. As children play, make comments such as “Families have lots of different people in them just as there are lots of different children in our room” and “I’m glad that God made mommies and daddies and grandmas and grandpas.”

Say that ► God made families. Tell children that they’ll hear a story today about a special family that God made.

Option 2: Infant Isaac

SUPPLIES: clean socks or knee-high stockings, pillow stuffing or paper towels, facial tissues, tape, markers

Set out markers and stuffing material such as pillow stuffing or paper towels. Hand each child a sock. Help children stuff their socks until each is about the size of a medium potato. Explain that they’re making pretend babies to hold and cuddle. As children work, tell them that today they’ll hear a Bible story about a family with a special baby. Explain that some families have babies and some don’t because each family is different. Explain that ► God made families, and every family is special.

After the socks have been stuffed, knot or rubber band each one at its open end, and then help children draw a face at the other end. Fold a facial tissue diagonally to make a “diaper”; then tape the diaper to the “doll.” Write each child’s name on the back of his or her doll. Encourage children to cuddle and care for their pretend babies.



The Lesson at a Glance chart gives you a quick overview of the lesson and lists the supplies you’ll need for each activity.



If some children choose not to do Option 2, ask adult helpers to make extra dolls so each child has one. The dolls will be used throughout the lesson.

■ Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



As Arrival Activities draw to a close, gently mention that it will soon be time to clean up. Encourage children to help you pick up things in the room as you lead them in singing “Let’s Pick Up All Our Things” (track 2). Use the CD and sing the song to the tune of “Looby Loo.”



**Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things
And put them all away.**

**Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Let’s put it all away.**

**Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things.
It’s time to stop our play.**

teacher tips

Safety is essential when working with young children. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission suggests craft supplies and toys should be no smaller than a 50-cent piece (to avoid choking). Make sure electrical outlets are covered, electrical cords are hidden, and all chemicals are out of reach of the children.



Bible Story Time

■ Bible Song

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Say: **Who made families? ► *God made families.* How do we know that? The Bible tells us.** Show children the Bible. **The Bible is God’s special book. The Bible tells us about God. Let’s learn a song about the Bible.** Using the CD, lead children in singing “God’s Special Book” (track 3) to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”



**This is God’s special book.
Yes, it’s God’s book you see!
I learn about all God has done
And his love for me!**

(Repeat.)

Bible!

■ Bible Story: God Made Families

SUPPLIES: Bible, bread and honey sandwiches, stuffed dolls from Option 2, wet paper towels for cleanup, newspaper, tennis ball



Before class begins, prepare the StoryBoard by following the assembly instructions provided in the Learning Lab. The purpose of the StoryBoard is to provide an interactive, sensory learning opportunity for your toddlers and 2s. Please attach the sensory items securely so the children can touch them without the danger of pulling the items off or putting them into their mouths.

Before this activity, prepare bread and honey finger sandwiches for kids to eat later. Set the bread and honey sandwiches and the figure of baby Isaac behind the StoryBoard.



Panel 1



Fold back the StoryBoard so that children see Panel 1. Say: ► **God made families, and today we'll learn about a special family.** Point to the picture of Abraham. **This is Abraham. Let's say hello and pat Abraham's beard and headdress.** Let children touch Abraham's beard and headdress. Lead them in saying, "Hello, Abraham!" Then ask:

- **How does Abraham's beard feel?** (Soft; scratchy.)

Say: **Abraham loved God. Put your hands over your hearts to show how much Abraham loved God.** Pause while children respond. **But Abraham was sad. Show me a sad face.** Make a sad face and encourage the children to imitate you. **Abraham was sad because he didn't have any children in his family. Abraham had a nice wife named Sarah. But they didn't have a little boy or girl to love. Let's learn a rhyme about Abraham and Sarah.** Say the following action rhyme, and then encourage toddlers to follow along as you slowly repeat it twice.

Abraham and Sarah felt no joy (*make a sad face and shake your head*);
They had no little girl or boy. (*Hold your hands palms up and shake your head.*)

Abraham and Sarah wanted a family. They knew that ► God made families. Abraham prayed and asked God for a baby. **God told Abraham to go outside and count the stars in the sky.** Point to the stars on Panel 1. **Look at all the stars! We can't touch real stars, but we can touch pretend stars!** Hold the StoryBoard down so the children can touch the stars.

God told Abraham that he'd have as many children as there are stars. There are a lot of stars on our StoryBoard! Let's count them. Point to the stars as you count aloud. Stop after you've counted to 5. **Oh, there are too many stars to count! God promised Abraham more children than he could count. What a big family that would be!** Spread your arms out to the sides, and have children do the action, too.

God promised Abraham a baby, but when would God give Abraham that baby to love? Let's see.



If you have very young children in your class, let them simply find and touch the StoryBoard pictures and sensory items. Repeat the Bible Point often, and reinforce learning with hugs and smiles.

Toddlers are old enough to learn how to take turns. Reinforce their patience by making comments such as "I like the way you're sitting quietly" and "Let's watch while everyone has a turn."



It's important to say the Bible Point just as it's written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.

Panel 2



Help children wash their hands. Open Panel 2. Say: **This is Abraham and Sarah's tent. Yoo-hoo, Sarah! Let's peek in the tent and see if Sarah's home.** Let children lift the tent flap and peek inside.

Sarah's cooking something yummy because Abraham has special visitors. Let's taste what Sarah's making.

Give each child a bread and honey sandwich to enjoy. Have wet paper towels handy for cleanup.

Ask: • **What is Sarah making?** (Bread.)

• **How does the bread taste?** (Good; yummy.)

Say: **Sarah's making bread for Abraham and the visitors. While the bread is baking, Abraham is caring for his sheep. Let's pat one of his sheep.**

Ask: • **How do sheep feel?** (Soft; fuzzy.)

Say: **I'll pretend to be Abraham, and you'll pretend to be my sheep.**

Follow me! Encourage children to crawl after you and say "baa!" Pat your "lambs" and tell them you love them. Then return to the StoryBoard.

Now it's time to turn back into boys and girls and listen to our Bible story. Point to the men on Panel 2. **Abraham and the visitors sat under a shady tree. We can touch the tree and leaf.** Let children touch the tree and leaf.

God sent the three special visitors to tell Sarah and Abraham that God made families and that God would give them a baby. Let's clap! Pause. **But Abraham and Sarah thought they were too old to have a baby. Sarah laughed! We can laugh like Sarah.** Lead children in a hearty belly laugh.

Sarah didn't think she could have a baby—but God can do anything! Let's see if God gave Abraham and Sarah a baby to love.

Panel 3



Unfold Panel 3. Open Sarah's arms. Say: **Close your eyes. We'll count to 3 and see if God gave them a baby.** Have toddlers close their eyes. As you count to 3, slip the figure of baby Isaac into Sarah's arms. **One, two, three—open your eyes. What do you see? A baby! God gave Abraham and Sarah a baby boy named Isaac! Sarah is holding the baby. We can hold our pretend babies, too.** Hand out the stuffed dolls

children made in Option 2. Encourage children to hold their babies gently.

Babies are so nice because they grow up to be boys and girls like you! Abraham and Sarah were happy to have baby Isaac to love. God made Abraham's family, and God made our families, too. Let's play a game to remind us that God made families.

Have children put their babies "to bed" against the wall until later. Then remove the *porcupine ball* from the Learning Lab. Gather a tennis ball or other ball of approximately the same size. Wad a piece of newspaper into a ball. Sit on the floor and have all three balls handy.

Have the children join you in a circle on the floor.

Say: **I have three things on the floor in front of me. Look at them with me.** Hand the balls to three different people. Encourage the children to pass the balls around so that other friends may feel and touch them.



BIBLE POINT



BIBLE POINT

Ask: • **What three things did I just show you?** (Balls; toys; paper.)

• **What is the same about these three things?** (They're all balls; you can roll them; you can play with them.)

• **How are these three things different?** (They don't look the same; they feel different; they're different colors.)

Say: **You know, the three things I showed you are the same because they are all balls, and we can roll and play with them. But they're *different* in some ways, too. They look different and they're used for different things. That's kind of like families. Families are all the same because they have people in them. But families are all different, too, because they have different people in them! ▶ God made families, and God made my family different from your family.**

I'm going to roll one of these balls to you. When you catch the ball, tell us the name of someone in your family. You might say, "Mommy," "Daddy," "Grandpa," "Grandma," "Sister," "Brother," "Cousin." Then you can roll the ball back to me. I'll roll it to someone else who will tell us the name of a family member. We'll roll the ball lots of times to make sure we get to name lots of people in our families! Ready?

Roll the *porcupine ball* to a child. Encourage that child to name a family member. Then have him or her roll the ball back to you, and continue the process until everyone's had a few turns to roll the ball.

Say: **Our families are all different. But one thing is the same—God made all the people in all the families in the world. Listen while I tell you about a verse from the Bible.** Open your Bible to **Genesis 1:26a**, and show children the verse. Say: **The Bible says that ▶ God made families. God made us to be like him. I'm so glad that God made people and that ▶ God made families!**

Let's sing a fun song to thank God for making the people in our families!

■ Thank You, God

SUPPLIES: CD player



Using the CD, lead the children in singing "Thank You, God" (track 4) to the tune of "This Old Man." For extra fun, do the motions in parentheses.



Thank you, God. (*Point upward.*)

I love you (*cover your heart*),

And I love my family, too. (*Slowly open your arms out wide.*)

Thank you, God, for everything you do. (*Turn around in a circle.*)

My family sends a kiss to you! (*Blow a kiss upward.*)

(Repeat.)



Say: ▶ God made families. Isn't that wonderful? It's good to thank God for our families. Another thing we can thank God for is Jesus. God sent Jesus to be our special friend. When we believe in Jesus, we can become part of God's family. That's great news!



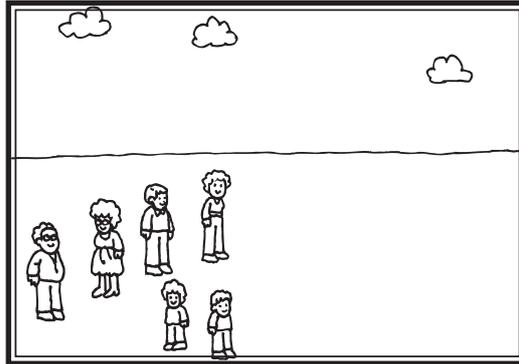
Important: Put the StoryBoard away and out of reach of children.



Bible Activities

■ Interactive Bible Bulletin Board

SUPPLIES: family patterns (pp. 24-25); scissors; tape; green, blue, and red construction paper



Before class, cover the bottom half of the bulletin board with green construction paper and the top portion with blue construction paper. You may wish to add a few trees or clouds. Photocopy and cut out the family member patterns. Be sure there's a family member pattern for each child. You'll also need a small red construction paper heart for Cuddles to hold. Tape the heart to Cuddles' foot. The family pattern pictures will be removed in Lesson 3, so use removable tape to attach them.

Before class, cover the bottom half of the bulletin board with green construction paper and the top portion with blue construction paper. You may wish to add a few trees or clouds. Photocopy and cut out the family member patterns. Be sure there's a family member pattern for each child. You'll also need a small red construction paper heart for Cuddles to hold. Tape the heart to Cuddles'



Bring out Cuddles the Lamb.

Cuddles: *(Waving the paper heart)* Hi, boys and girls! See what I have? Do you know what it is? Can you guess?

Teacher: My, you're excited, Cuddles! You're hopping up and down like a bunny. Children, what is Cuddles holding? *(Lead toddlers to tell you that Cuddles is holding a paper heart.)* Where did you get such a pretty heart, Cuddles?

Cuddles: My daddy gave me this heart. Isn't that nice? My daddy loves me, and I love him, too.

Teacher: You have a nice family, Cuddles. We've been talking about families, and we learned that God gave Abraham and Sarah a baby for their family. That made them happy!

Cuddles: My daddy made this heart, but who made families?

Teacher: Children, can you tell Cuddles who made families? *(Encourage children to tell Cuddles that ►God made families.)* God made families, and our families are all different and are all special. Would you like to help us put a family on the bulletin board, Cuddles?

Cuddles: Yes, I like being a helper! (*Have Cuddles hand each child a picture of a family member.*)

Ask for the following family members, and then help children tape each one to the bulletin board. Each time a child places a picture, lead him or her in saying the Bible Point.

Teacher: Mommies are special. Who has a picture of a mommy? (*Tape up the pictures of mommies.*)

Daddies are special, too. Who has a picture of a daddy? (*Tape up the pictures of daddies.*)

Brothers are nice. Who has a picture of a brother? (*Tape up the pictures of brothers.*)

Sisters are nice, too. Who has a picture of a sister? (*Tape up the pictures of sisters.*)

Families are all different, but we know that ► **God made families** and he made our families, too. Let's sing a song about families.

Set Cuddles out of sight.

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■ Sing It Out

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead the children in singing "Thank You, God" (track 4) with the CD. Sing the song to the tune of "This Old Man." For extra fun, do the motions in parentheses.



Thank you, God. (*Point upward.*)

I love you (*cover your heart*),

And I love my family, too. (*Slowly open your arms out wide.*)

Thank you, God, for everything you do. (*Turn around in a circle.*)

My family sends a kiss to you! (*Blow a kiss upward.*)

(Repeat.)

■ Bible Craft

SUPPLIES: markers, light-colored felt squares, stuffed dolls from Option 2

Set out markers. Hand each child a square of craft felt. Let children use markers to decorate their "blankets" with colorful scribbles and designs. As children are working, ask questions such as "How do families care for babies?" and "Who gives families children to love?"

When the children have finished decorating their blankets, hand out the dolls they made in Option 2. Invite toddlers to wrap their pretend babies in the blankets and cuddle them. Say: ► **God made families, and families love their children and care for them just as Abraham and Sarah cared for baby Isaac. Let's play a game and care for our pretend babies.**



■ Bible Game

SUPPLIES: *stuffed dolls from Option 2*

Say: **It's a lot of work and a lot of fun for families to care for babies! Let's sing a song and care for our pretend babies.**

Lead children in singing "Baby Bundles" to the tune of "The Mulberry Bush." Sing the words without the *CD*, and use the dolls children made in Option 2 to act out the accompanying motions.



This is the way we hold the baby, hold the baby, hold the baby. (*Hold dolls against your shoulders and gently pat them.*)

This is the way we hold the baby in our family.

This is the way we rock the baby, rock the baby, rock the baby. (*Hold dolls and make rocking motions.*)

This is the way we rock the baby in our family.

This is the way we hug the baby, hug the baby, hug the baby. (*Give dolls gentle hugs.*)

This is the way we hug the baby in our family.

If there's time, sing additional verses such as "feed the baby," "bathe the baby," or "pat the baby." When you've finished, whisper: **I think our babies are sound asleep. Let's tiptoe to the wall and lay the babies in their pretend cradles. Shh. Don't make a peep. Babies are nice family members, aren't they? Abraham and Sarah were glad to have baby Isaac. And we're glad that** **►God made families.**



BIBLE POINT ►



Closing

■ Family Fun

SUPPLIES: *jelly, bread, gingerbread-man cookie cutters, napkins, spoon*

Help children wash their hands and then gather at the snack table.

Ask: • **Who made families?** (►God made families.)

Say: **God made your family, and God made my family. We can tell God "thank you" for making families who love us. Let's hold hands like a family.**
Pray: **Dear God, thank you for making families. We love our families, and we love you. In Jesus' name, amen.**

We know that only God makes real families. But we can make pretend families! Hand each child a slice of bread on a napkin. Let toddlers use gingerbread-man cookie cutters to cut out family shapes. Help toddlers add dabs of jelly for eyes, noses, and mouths. As you enjoy the treats, encourage children to tell about their families.

When you've finished, have toddlers throw their napkins in the wastebasket. Let children take their pretend babies and blankets home.



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the “Parent Page” handout (p. 12) for this module, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this module’s topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ *Baby Bundles*

Repeat the action song you learned in the Bible Game. Without using the *CD*, sing the song to the tune of “The Mulberry Bush.”



SING

**This is the way we hold the baby, hold the baby, hold the baby.
This is the way we hold the baby in our family.**

**This is the way we rock the baby, rock the baby, rock the baby.
This is the way we rock the baby in our family.**

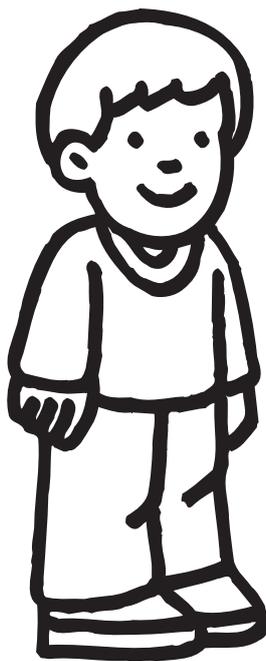
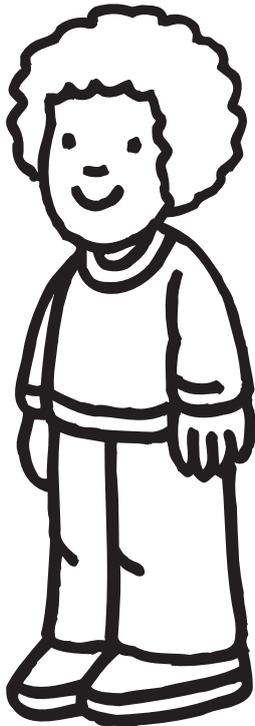
**This is the way we hug the baby, hug the baby, hug the baby.
This is the way we hug the baby in our family.**

■ *Giggles 'n' Wiggles*

Have children lie with each child’s head on the tummy of the child next to him or her. Remind children that Sarah laughed when God said he’d give her a baby. Explain that you can play a funny game and laugh like Sarah laughed. Gently tickle the children’s chins as you encourage toddlers to laugh. The movement of one toddler’s tummy under the next child’s head tends to cause contagious laughter. Remind children that ► *God made families*, and even though Sarah laughed, God gave her a baby to love.

Patterns

Cut loosely around each pattern instead of cutting exactly on the outlines.



Patterns

Cut loosely around each pattern instead of cutting exactly on the outlines.

