

Creating a Learning Environment for Babies, Ones, and Twos

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Enlist teachers who are committed to teaching Bible truths, willing to receive training, and understand that younger preschoolers learn through play and first-hand experiences. Focus on providing an environment rich in sensory activities. Because preschoolers handle and mouth most items, disinfect toys and equipment with a diluted bleach solution (one-fourth cup bleach to one gallon of water), mixed fresh for each session. Then, provide opportunities for:

Seeing . . .

- Clean, uncluttered floor space for playing, crawling, moving, exploring.
- Age-appropriate toys, books, homeliving items, blocks, art materials (twos), puzzles, and nature items.
- A Bible and Bible-related pictures.

Hearing . . .

- Soft music from preschool LifeWay Sunday School music CDs.
- Variety of sounds from toys, bells, chimes, rhythmic claps, taps, and so forth.
- Calm, happy voices of teachers repeating simple words and phrases as they talk and sing to preschoolers.
- Age-appropriate Bible phrases, story conversation, and prayer thoughts.

Smelling . . .

- Pleasant smells from freshly sanitized teaching materials, equipment, bed linens, and room surfaces.
- Aromas from nature items, such as an orange or empty spice container. (Supervise carefully.)
- Absence of teachers' use of strong perfumes or lotions.

Touching . . .

- Variety of textures, including rough, smooth, slick, hard, or soft.
- Safe, age-appropriate toys to explore, open, close, stack, fill, dump, push, pull, carry, and sort.
- Teachers who are gentle as they hold, cuddle, rock, and diaper children.

Tasting . . .

- Clean, safe teethingers and toys for mouthing.
- Parent-provided bottles and foods for babies and ones.
- Simple snacks of crackers, cereals, water, or juice.
- Special food experiences such as bananas or applesauce.
(Don't forget: Always check for allergies.)