



July 2018

# parenting CHRISTIAN kids



## Harness the Power of Music That Honors Jesus

### POWERSOURCE

#### ASK GOD:

1. To guide your decisions about your family's music choices.
2. To use music to help your children learn about and connect with God.
3. To make a lasting impact on your kids' hearts and lives through music.

If your children attend vacation Bible school during the summer, you'll likely hear some catchy tunes. Most ministry programs incorporate kid-friendly songs because they realize that music affects mood, learning, and retention. You can capitalize on the power of music in your home, too.

By the time kids are 18, they have an estimated 10,000 songs in their heads. Parents can ensure that a large portion of those tunes honor Jesus and change hearts and lives.

Music—especially when combined with movement—provides a strong learning vehicle for these reasons:

- Rhythm and melody are tools our brains use to grasp and

store concepts for a very long time. Add movement, and the memory solidifies even more.

- Whatever children learn through music will have a significant impact on their beliefs, values, and perceptions for life.
- Songs our kids hear and sing teach them who God is. Appealing, age-appropriate songs that are filled with spiritual truths transform kids and help them worship God.

We are what we sing! What kids learn through music and movement, they'll believe; what they believe will determine who they are and what they do. Don't miss out on the transforming power of God's truth learned through music!

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## Keep a Song in Kids' Hearts



### TEACHABLE MOMENTS

#### Name That Joyful Song

You'll need one empty water or soda bottle per person. Choose one person to blow across their bottle to "play" part of a worship song. Everyone else tries to guess the song's name. When the song is revealed, play or sing it together. Let everyone have a turn.

Note: Players may want to name a category before they begin playing a song. For example, children's church song, popular Christian song from the radio, hymn, youth group song, praise team song, choir song, and so on.

After playing, read aloud Psalm 100:1-2. Ask: **What do you think the Bible means when it says to "come before" God with joyful songs? Describe how you feel when you sing joyful songs to God. Why do you think God want us to sing to him? Describe your favorite places to sing songs to God.**

Say: **It's nice to think we've made God glad by singing joyful songs to him today!**

Close in prayer.

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According to Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, integrating music into children's daily life can help you connect with them. It can also make your home more harmonious. A 2013 study published by the British Psychological Society showed 4-year-olds who sang and played music had improved cooperation and problem-solving skills. Kids were 30 times more likely to be helpful after they sang and played a percussion instrument compared to kids who didn't. The Bible also reveals the importance of music. David played his harp to calm King Saul (1 Samuel 16:23), and Jesus and his disciples sang hymns together (Matthew 26:30). Use these ideas to strike a chord with your kids.

**Memorable Melodies** Help children learn Bible verses with raps, chants, or cheers. Setting Bible verses to song or giving verses a rhythm can help kids remember them better. Along with knowing the words, be sure to help your kids really understand what each verse means.

**Little Lyricists** Have older kids come up with new words to tunes they already know. For example, they can write a short song about how God wants us to treat others using the "Old MacDonald" tune.

**Finger Fun** With younger children, use action songs or finger plays with music to illustrate a story. Do a quick online search by topic to find many lively ideas.

**Mood Lifters** If your kids are very excited or unmanageable, play music with a slow tempo to help regulate their emotions. Play peppy music to lift children from doldrums if they seem tired and lethargic.

**Listen Up!** Use music to help children develop good listening skills. Ask kids to listen to music and identify repetitive phrases, notes that sound good together, or notes that are dissonant (sound bad to them).

**Sing a New Song** During the summer, attend a church or church service that uses music you're not accustomed to. Afterward, discuss your reactions and feelings toward different styles of worship music.

**DJ the Drive** Before a road trip, have each family member create a playlist of their favorite Christian songs. On the drive, take turns being the DJ and song leader.

**Consider Your Selections** Simple, catchy, easy-to-sing music is the most effective for kids. Avoid songs with difficult lyrics or overly complex concepts. If kids are confused, they won't get the message you want them to.

**Form a Band** Praise God as a family by creating your own musical instruments from household items. Then keep the beat while you sing praise songs together.

**Dance Moves** Read aloud 2 Samuel 6:14-15. Ask: "Why do you think David danced with all his might? (Read more of the passage to find out.) What makes you want to dance?" Have each family member come up with a creative dance move. Then combine all the moves into a routine and perform it to a favorite worship song.

"... be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts."

—Ephesians 5:18-19

# MEDIA MADNESS



## MOVIE

**Title:** *Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation*

**Genre:** Animation, Comedy, Family

**Rating:** PG

**Cast:** Adam Sandler, Selena Gomez, Andy Samberg, Kathryn Hahn

**Synopsis:** The family of monsters embarks on a cruise so Dracula can get a much-needed break. He falls in love with the ship's captain, who turns out to be a descendant of his sworn rival. Mavis, Drac's daughter, must save her dad and all the monsters.

**Our Take:** Previous installments in this series have been funny—and low on the “spooky” factor. The PG rating is for action and rude humor. Use the movie as a springboard to discuss family interactions, as well as the joys and challenges of family vacations.



## MUSIC

**Title:** *Camila*

**Artist:** Camila Cabello

**Synopsis:** This pop music singer-songwriter had a breakout year in 2017 and is now opening for Taylor Swift's stadium tour. Cabello's single “Havana” hit No. 1 on the Billboard charts less than a year after she left the girl group Fifth Harmony. The 21-year-old Cuban-Mexican singer has spoken out about growing up as an immigrant.

**Our Take:** Cabello's self-titled album is mainly about romantic relationships. Although much of the content is implied rather than explicit, many of the lyrics are sexual in nature. Preteens may or may not pick up on everything Cabello sings about. Be aware: If your kids are interested in her music, check it out for yourself beforehand.



## CULTURE & TRENDS

**Skip-Gen Trips** Step aside, multigenerational vacations! The new traveling trend is “skip-gen,” with grandparents and grandkids taking special vacations together. These trips let retired Baby Boomers spend time with their grandkids, who often live in another state. ([abcnews.go.com](http://abcnews.go.com))

**On-the-Go Fashion** You've probably heard of food trucks, but now fashion is going mobile too. Some fashion trucks cater to moms-to-be and children, providing new or gently used clothing as well as fashion advice. (*various websites*)

## QUICK STATS

**Parents of the Year** Fifty-one percent of moms and 39% of dads say they're doing a very good job raising their children. ([time.com](http://time.com))

**Underage Warning** Grade-school kids given sips of alcohol by trusted adults are four times as likely to binge-drink later, as opposed to kids who abstain. ([realsimple.com](http://realsimple.com))

**Keep 'Em Cool** An average of 37 children die each year from being left in hot vehicles. ([kidsandcars.org](http://kidsandcars.org))

## Games, Sites & Apps

### Harry Potter:

#### Hogwarts Mystery

This free, single-player role-playing mobile game is like *The Sims* for wizarding fans.

Players complete tasks to replenish their energy but soon hit “paywalls” requiring money. Some reviewers say the game's purpose is to get players to conduct microtransactions.

### Code Monster

Learning to code is a hot trend, and now kids can gain coding skills online at their own pace. At [crunchzilla.com/code-monster](http://crunchzilla.com/code-monster) kids can see code alongside what the code actually does. Prompts help users learn commands as they play with the code. The free site has 59 lessons in Javascript programming.

### Wow in the World

Curious kids (and their parents) will enjoy this NPR podcast, which focuses on science, technology, and innovation. The hosts use comedy and conversation to delve into topics ranging from the human body to outer space. The target audience is children ages 5 to 12.

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