

Parenting Program For Parents With Babies

Introduction:

As a parent of two wonderful children and now grandparent of five precious grandchildren and a parent educator for over thirty years, I felt it was time to give back to the community many of the inspiring ideas that I have learned throughout my career. The following Parenting Program for Parents with Babies is designed to help create a connection and an attachment relationship with your baby.

The first eighteen months of life are a time of rapid growth and learning for your baby. During this time, you can influence your baby by creating a positive relationship with them and a foundation of inner strength based on love, trust and understanding.

What do you want for your baby?

When I asked parents in my parenting programs what they wanted for their baby, parents consistently said they wanted their baby to be happy. If a happy baby is one of your priorities, then this program is for you.



Research in the field of epigenetics is now proving that when you are in a happy, nurturing and caring environment, your body chemistry produces growth hormones that flow through your body creating a nourishing environment for your cells and organs. Since conception, and specifically during the first eighteen months, neural connections within the brain are being wired based on your baby's experiences and relationship interactions. Your baby is developing perceptions and core beliefs based on how they feel about themselves.

- **Am I feeling loved? Can I trust that my needs are being met? Can I relax in your love? Do I belong?**

These neural connections form a foundation of thinking, reasoning, language skills, physical movement and social and emotional behavior.

Self-Awareness Activities:

This Parenting Program for Parents with Babies is designed to follow the eleven delightful stories from the storybook, "Beaming Bright, You're a Shining Light."



Since each story follows a theme, this Parenting Program for Parents with Babies is specifically designed with one activity for each story.

Reading the "Beaming Bright, You're a Shining Light" stories to your baby offers parents an opportunity to have playful, interactive and heartfelt moments with their baby.

Every story is designed to plant seeds of wisdom and make parenting easier as you build positive experiences and relationships with your baby and all the significant people in your life. Enjoy!

What do we know about learning?

Advertisers learned long ago that we learn through repetition. This is why advertisers pay to have the same commercial run over and over again on TV and social media networks.

When babies are born, they love looking into the face of their parents. As babies do this they observe and interpret the feeling and meaning of their parent's facial expressions. Enjoy looking into your baby's eyes to build your relationship with them. Babies learn through smell, sound and touch.



Moms and dads are encouraged to have lots of skin to skin times with their baby. As your baby lies on your chest, gently massage them. They will hear your heartbeat and feel your warmth. Your loving touch gives babies a wonderful sense of belonging. Cuddle, gently rock and hold your precious baby as you talk, sing or hum to them.



As parents nurture, play and meet their babies' many needs, their baby will feel comforted, safe and happy. As you follow this attachment process consistently, when your baby turns one year old they will have learned to trust.



As babies grow, they learn by observing their parents behavior, attitudes and responses. Babies look to their parents for a smile to know that what they are doing is OK. If their parents look shocked, they will know that something is not OK.

Children are constantly observing and creating perceptions about the experiences they have with whomever they come into contact in their life.

Page Numbers After Stories and Activities:

In this program, the Page Numbers refer to the original printing of the Beaming Bright, You're a Shining Light Lesson Plans which you can view or download on the Free Downloads page.

For example:

Breathing Free Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 1

Physical Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 4

Parenting Program For Parents With Babies

It is suggested that parents concentrate on only one activity per week. In this way they can integrate the parenting concepts easily and effortlessly. They will benefit by creating even stronger connections with their loved ones.



Breathing Free Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 1

Story Theme: "I can calm and relax myself."



Breathing Awareness for Self-Regulation:



- **Create the habit of taking a deep breath in and then very slowly breathing out whenever you are upset.**

This will calm and relax your body and release serotonin, offering feelings of well-being and happiness. As you consistently self-soothe yourself during upsetting moments you will be creating new neural connections within your brain.

- **Once calm, you will be able to think more clearly and make better choices. This will benefit you each day of your life with all your experiences and relationships.**

As parent's model self-soothing skills this will help your baby to naturally regulate their emotional behavior. Your baby will also

experience the immediate benefit of being in a calm, nurturing environment.

The world today is moving very fast. A baby's nervous system is 10 to 15 times slower than adults. As parents slow down, they are helping their babies to feel safe and calm from events that are over stimulating.



If your baby becomes overstimulated watch for these behaviors. If you are holding them, they will turn their head and naturally distract themselves by looking away. They may close their eyes or put their hands over their face, they may fuss or arch their back or stiffen up and begin to cry. As you understand and respect their behavior you can allow your baby the time they need to self-soothe themselves.

Babies who are the second, third or fourth child in a family will likely grow up in an active environment. As you watch the flow of your family activities and you experience active times escalating,

introduce a "quiet time" where you cuddle up and read a story to the children, or listen to calming music or enjoy a quieter activity. This helps you, baby and young children to self-regulate themselves.



As your baby grows everything will become a new discovery. As they discover their mom's earring or necklace, they may begin pulling on it. Say kindly yet firmly, "Gentle, gentle."

Always communicate by modeling and talking about the behaviors you want to see from your babies. With repeated practice they will learn from your positive guidance.

Relationship Challenges Activity:

- **How you speak, act and feel reflects your thoughts, ideas and beliefs.**
- **How others speak, act and feel reflects their thoughts, ideas and beliefs; not yours! However, always be aware of your reaction.**

When a new baby comes home there are many changes that happen within your family environment. Being sleep deprived due to late night feedings is only one of the many changes that can cause stress and conflict to surface.

As an example, whenever a conflict surfaces within a relationship many possible thoughts and feelings arise and at times result in disrespect towards one another. Since we all recognize that we deserve to be respected and are doing the best we can, this is an opportunity to self-regulate your emotions by stopping, breathing, self-reflecting and then responding.

- **Stop, breathe, feel, acknowledge and accept all your feelings.**
- **Self-reflect and ask yourself, "What do I want or need and why?"**

The dictionary meaning of respect is to be kind, caring, show consideration, to recognize, value, appreciate, compliment, cherish and treasure.

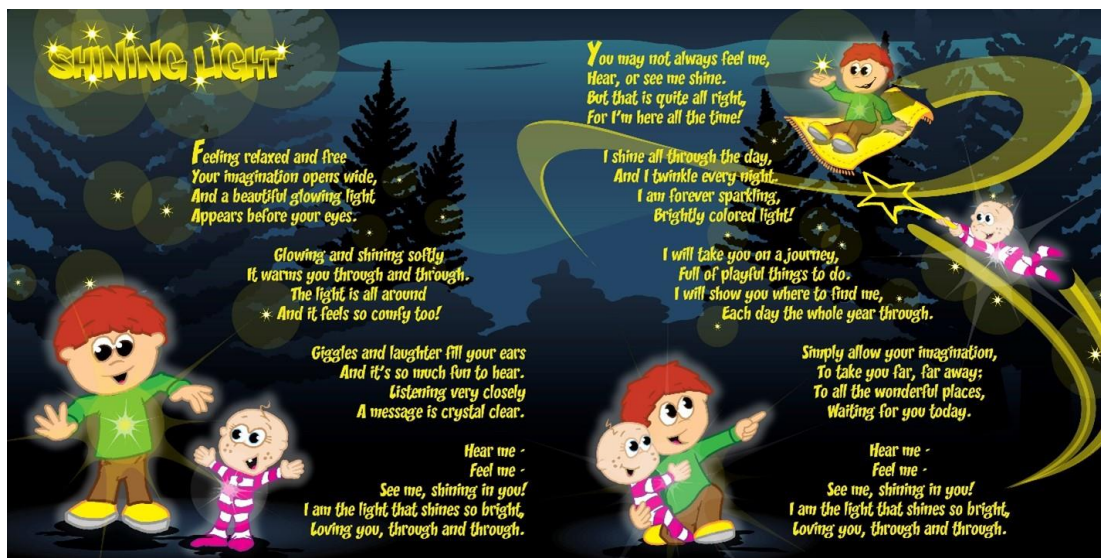
- After being self-reflective, communicate your feelings in a gentle, respectful way as you ask for what you want.

As parents improve their communication skills you will gain a deeper understanding of your own and other's thoughts, feelings and emotions. As you relate to what others are feeling you will gain a sense of empathy and a deeper bond with one another.

Shining Light Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 15

Story Theme: "I am creative."



This story is about the power of imagination.

I have done many demonstrations with parents where they have imagined themselves biting into a juicy lemon. The result was that many parents sensed the citrusy smell and experienced saliva coming into their mouth. I have asked them, "How is this possible, we have only imagined a lemon, there is no lemon in this room?"



- **The mind does not know the difference between a real or imagined event.**
- **Any time you use your imagination your mind thinks what you are imagining is real.**

I Am Creative Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 20

This activity is about discovering your creativity.

- **Ask yourself, "When have I been creative?"**

You create a new look each day with the clothes you wear. As you go through your day today, observe and discover the many moments that you create. Knowing your creativity will inspire you to use your imagination with your baby.

- **Have fun using your imagination to create different sounds, rhymes and songs with your baby.**

Couple Team Activity:

When it comes to your couple relationship, John Gottman, author of "And Baby Makes Three" talks about couples creating a team environment in their relationship. He suggests that couples work together as a "WE" instead of a "ME."

- **What team experiences can you create with one another today?**



Morning Sun Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 29

Story Theme: "What I focus on grows!"



"What I Focus On Grows":

Watching babies learn to walk is an inspiring experience. Think about a baby that has decided it is time to start walking. They have watched their parents walk and they believe they can too. They have created an "I Can Attitude." I can see and feel this baby's determination to walk.



Parents will see their baby use focused practice. They will begin by standing up and holding onto furniture. After much practice standing, they will start to walk around the furniture as they hold on.

When they have built up enough confidence, they will take the risk of letting go. Babies take steps, fall and yet have the courage to get right back up again. They will practice over and over again until they begin walking unsupported on their own.



- **It takes determination, courage, and a strong belief in yourself to learn to walk.**
- **“What I focus on grows!”**

Ask yourself:

- **What do you think about during the day?**
- **Where do you focus your attention?**
- **Do you notice more negative or positive experiences?**

The reticular activating system in the brain functions whether you know about it or not. It filters your thoughts, words and imagination bringing into your life whatever you are seeing, hearing, feeling, thinking about or believing.

Think about a time you were learning something new. You thought about it. You researched it. You practiced it. Through focused practice you learned a new concept or skill.

As adults learn about and understand the concept of, "What I focus on grows!" you can use this concept every day.

For example:

- **Think about a negative experience.**
- **How do you feel?**

It's important to breathe, feel, acknowledge and accept all your feelings. Experiencing negative moments is totally normal. There are many ways to heal and release old painful feelings and experiences. Find a way that works best for you.

- **Think about a positive experience.**
- **How do you feel?**

As you focus on moments when you feel a connection with others and everyone is kind and caring, you will feel that experience and it will grow.

Favorite Things You Love To Do Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 31



- **Talk with your baby about all the favorite things that you love to do with them, and watch your loving feelings grow.**



If you are in a couple relationship, practice focusing on all the things that you love to do together as a family and then communicate those feelings to your partner.

- **Focus on playing with your baby together and having fun.**

Keeping your relationship alive while looking after the needs of your baby is important. You are teaching your baby about relationships through your modeling.



Connect and respond with kindness as you communicate with your partner and baby. It could be that you are sharing things you enjoy or asking for assistance. Responding in playful ways creates a warm friendship and environment.

- **Talk about moments when you felt a loving connection with your family.**

Flashing Light Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 37

Story Theme: "I choose to love myself."

Flashing Light

You are looking around
When you happen to see,
A bright flash of light,
Oh! What could it be?

You stand very still
Looking up and then down,
While the flash of light bounces,
And bounces around.

Sun shines through the window
The flash is behind the chair.
Oh look! It's a mirror
Shining light everywhere!

I show you your beauty.
I show you your light.
I show you your goodness,
So pure and shining bright.

Seeing love in yourself,
is easy to do.
Just look deep inside,
For the goodness in you.

It is there, it is there!
Look closely and see.
It is waiting for you,
Ever so patiently.

Laughing out loud
As you walk to the light.
You glance in the mirror
And see me shining bright!

I sparkle in your eyes.
I glow in your face.
I beam in your smile.
I'm in every place.

Choose to love yourself
And be who you are;
A bright shining light,
A warm loving star!

Now feel the love
As the tingles flow through;
Loving, loving,
All of you.

Wrap your arms around you.
Give yourself a warm hug.
For now you have found,
Yourself to love!

Hear me -
Feel me -
See me, shining in you!
I am the light that shines so bright,
Loving you, through and through.

I Choose To Love Myself Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 44

- Love yourself just as you are.
- Each morning when you wake up say, "I love you." to yourself and your baby.

As parents model love they will be gentle, kind, caring and patient with themselves, and their little ones. Parents will see themselves from a loving perspective.





- **Listen to your body. If you are feeling tired, rest when your baby rests.**
- **Learn to have empathy and compassion for yourself and others.**
- **Ask for help and support when you need it.**
- **Ask for a hug. Huge amounts of oxytocin are released into your body when you are touched lovingly.**
- **Recognize that you are always doing the best that you can. You are learning from every experience.**

Smile, enjoy and appreciate the precious moments that appear.



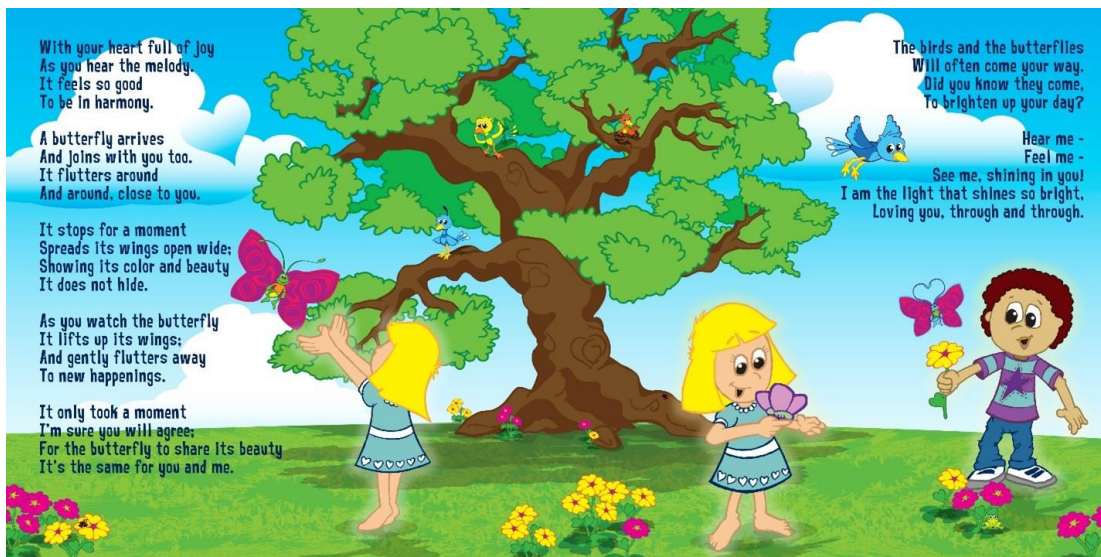
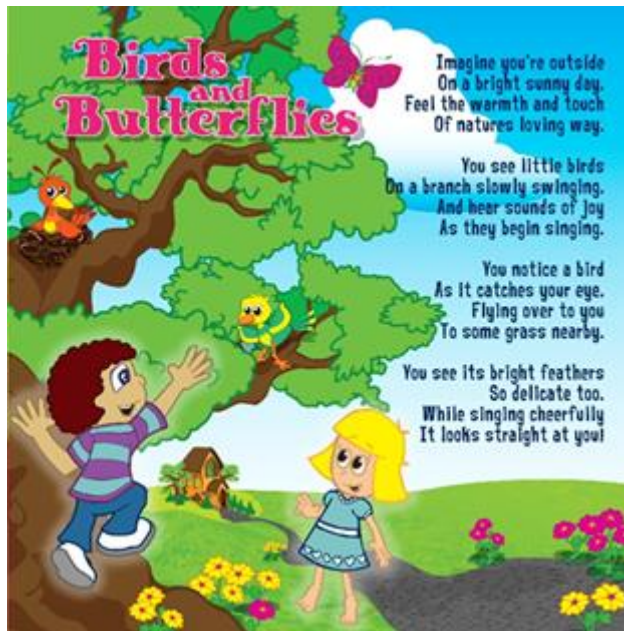
Loving yourself is a choice that you make moment by moment. As you become more unconditionally loving and accepting of yourself, you will model and give unconditional love to others.



Birds and Butterfly Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 47

Story Theme: "I appreciate nature."



I Appreciate Nature Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 53

- I encourage parents to let go of the busy world and walk in nature with your baby. It's a wonderful family time as you hear the birds and other sounds of nature. Smell the plants and trees and see the many gifts nature has to offer.



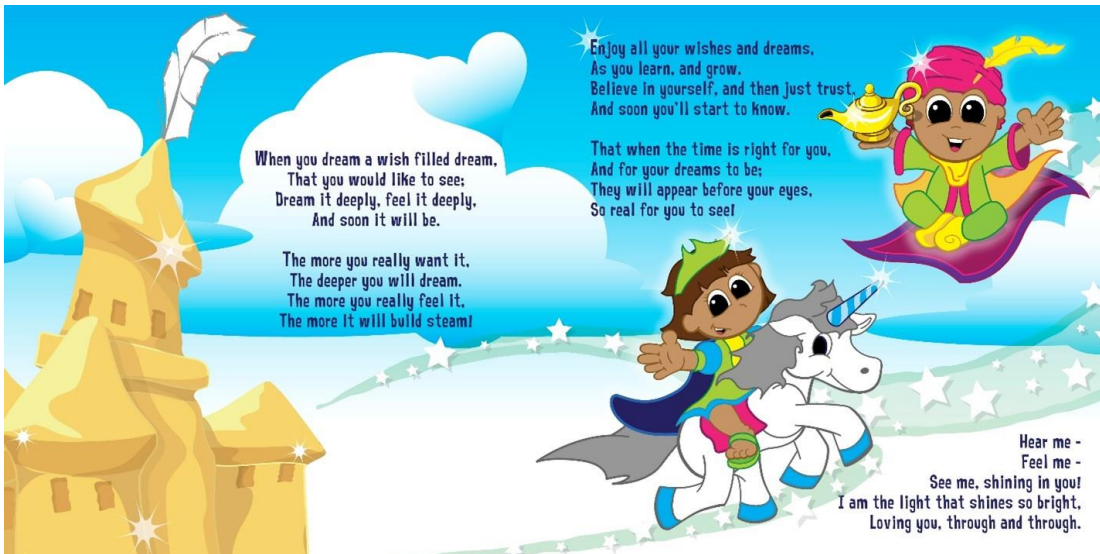
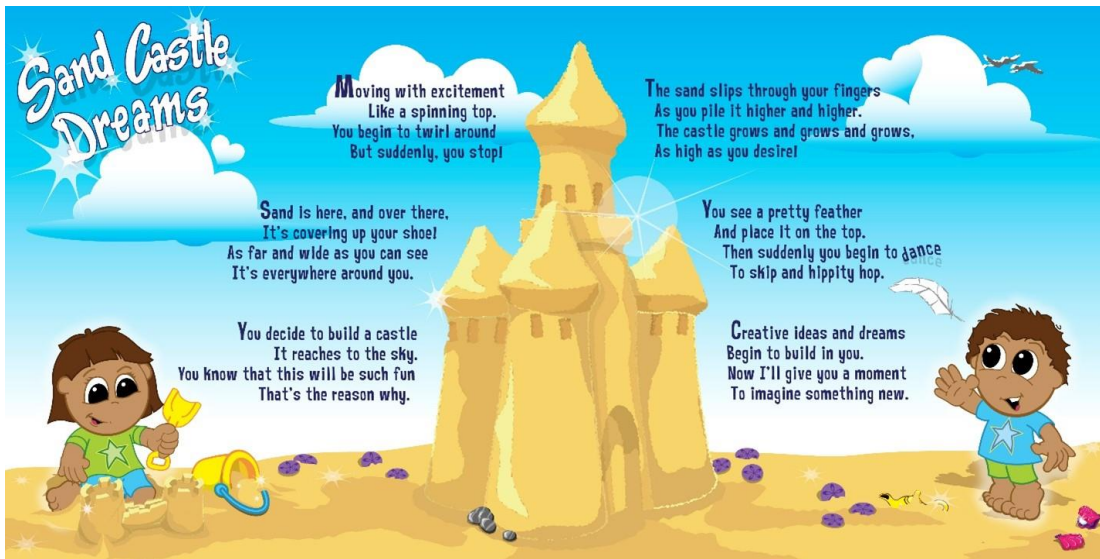
Imagine your baby a couple of years from now walking in nature with you.

When stress happens, breathe to relax and then go outdoors and watch what happens to the stress you were feeling in your body.

Sand Castle Dreams Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 59

Story Theme: "I believe in wishes and dreams."



Read “The Little Engine That Could” Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 65

“The Little Engine That Could” storybook written by Watty Piper, reminds you that as you say, “I think I can, I think I can” you will be amazed by what you can experience and accomplish. The little engine opened his heart to the children and offered his assistance even when he was unsure about his ability.

The following questions offer an opportunity to think about your own thoughts, feelings and attitudes.

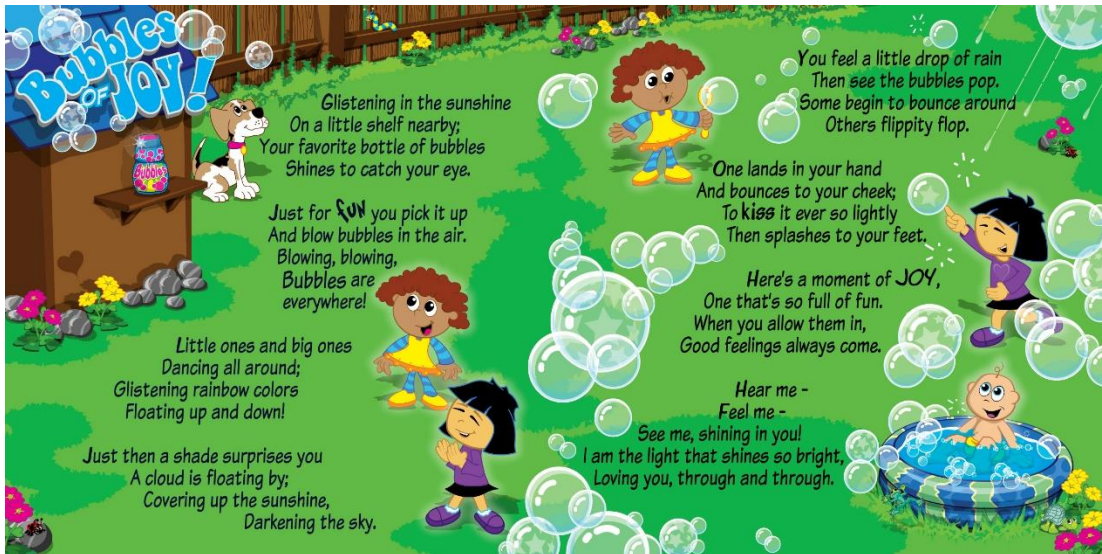
- **What attitudes do you wish to enhance in your life?**
- **What wishes and dreams do you have?**
- **Have fun thinking about a small dream and imagine it happening.**
- **Write down your dream and think about it often. Believe in yourself and see what happens.**



Bubbles of Joy Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 71

Story Theme: "I am filled with joy."



I Am Filled With Joy Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 75

- Enjoy being in the moment with your baby. Cuddle them, play with them and have fun.



There are many distractions in life that can take you away from having joy filled moments. However, as you focus on having joyful moments with your baby you will be rewarded with a strong and happy relationship.



- **Joyful, playful, fun experiences build healthy relationships.**
- **Blow bubbles and watch your baby smile.**



When stress happens, joy is a wonderful stress releaser. Move into a different environment, have some fun and watch what happens to the stress you were feeling in your body.

Rainbow Delight Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 77

Story Theme: "I feel my perfect wholeness."



I Feel My Perfect Wholeness Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 79

In this story you are encouraged to focus your thoughts, feelings and imagination on feeling your perfect wholeness.

- Studies have shown that people who do visualizations regularly are helped to calm and relax and simply feel better.
- Have fun talking with your baby about feeling their perfect wholeness from the top of their head to the tips of their toes.



Enjoy this visualization.

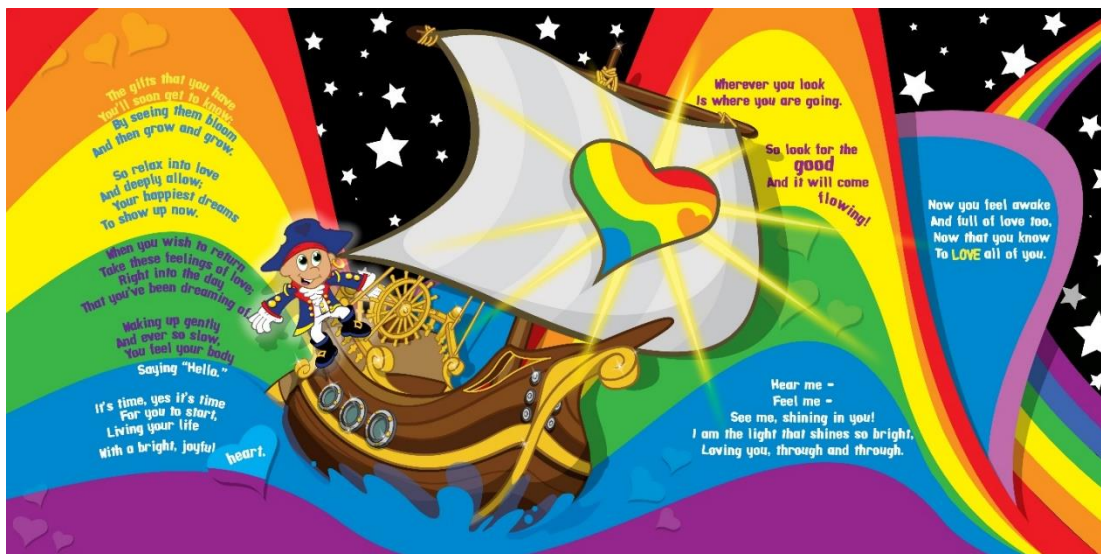
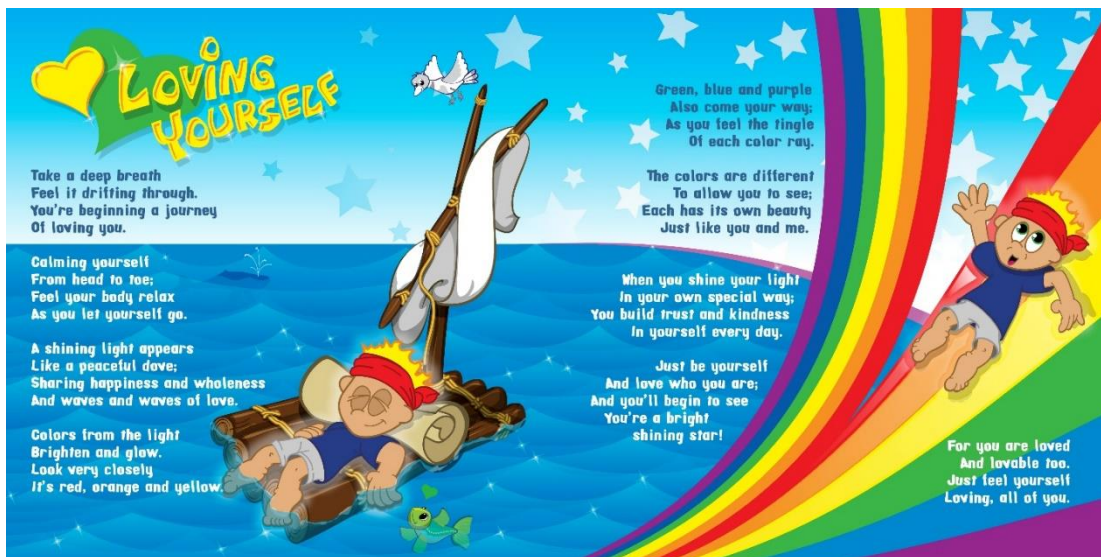
- Find a comfortable place to sit or lie down.
- Take a deep breath and let it out slowly.
- Close your eyes.
- Breathe and imagine you are floating on a fluffy cloud. Feel your body becoming lighter and lighter. Feel yourself floating along feeling more and more relaxed.
- Breathe and imagine feeling your perfect wholeness from the top of your head to the tip of your toes.
- Breathe and feel good about being you.
- Breathe and feel perfect and whole in every way.
- Breathe and wrap yourself in lots of love.

- Breathe and imagine everyone wrapped in love feeling their own perfect wholeness.
- Breathe deeply, and when you are ready, open your eyes.

Loving Yourself Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 87

Story Theme: "It's OK to be different."



It's OK To Be Different Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 93

- Appreciating your similarities and differences allows you to love and accept yourself and others unconditionally. As you do this you are learning it's OK to have different ideas.



Learn to believe in yourself. Respect and appreciate yourself for who you are and others for who they are. As you model these attitudes for your baby, they will be learning to respect and appreciate themselves and others!



- **Make a list of all the things that you appreciate about yourself and the significant people in your life.**



Differences are all around us. Differences offer spice to life.

Good Things Happen Every Day Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 99

This inspiring activity encourages you to be optimistic as you imagine good things happening every day. This playful idea offers you an opportunity to create a positive belief about what happens in your life each day.

As you experience good things happening every day, celebrate these experiences and watch this belief strengthen.

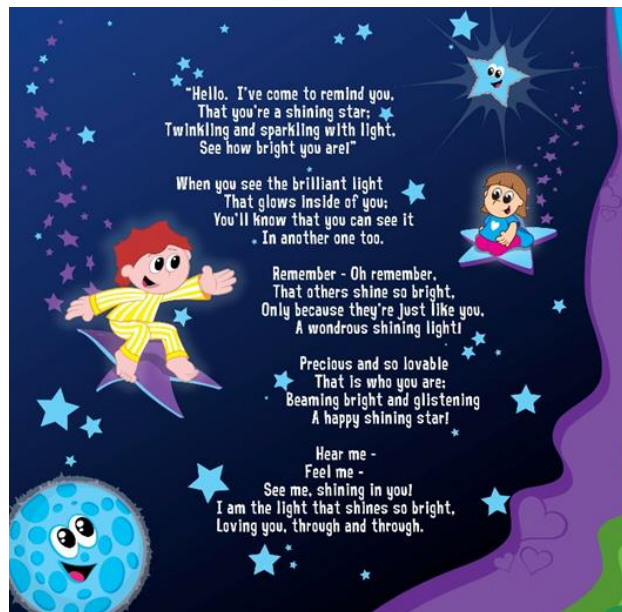
- **Make a list of all the good things that have happened for you over the last week, month or year. Spend time thinking about all these good events.**
- **Talk with your baby and celebrate with them when good things happen. Your baby will feel your joy!**



Shining Star Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 101

Story Theme: "I appreciate myself and others."



Self-Appreciation Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 105

Feeling self-appreciation for who you are and what you do each day is very important. This activity is wonderful for everyone.

However, if you ever feel that you are not being appreciated, this activity will help you to change that belief.

- **Create a moment as you put your baby to bed at night and think about all the things that you appreciated about your day.**
- **Tell your baby what you appreciate about them; their smile, their giggle, their love for one another.**



- **If you are in a couple relationship, talk about what you appreciated about your partner today.**

- Remember to talk about what you appreciate about yourself also. As you do this you will be modeling and teaching your baby the value of appreciation. Create this habit and you will experience appreciation in ways that will amaze you!

Playful Journeys

Original Lesson Plans - Page 113

Story Theme: "I have discovered a lot about me."



I Am Lovable - Art Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 115

This activity helps to strengthen your belief in your lovable, happy self.



Epigenetics is now proving that when a baby is in a supportive, nurturing and loving environment the cells in their body respond positively.



As you are kind, caring and loving with yourself these feelings are then reflected in your interactions with others. How you think and feel about yourself greatly influences how you act.

- **Whenever you discover yourself beaming and shining, feel the freedom within you at that moment.**
- **Take a quick selfie of yourself when you are experiencing happy, uplifting moments.**



- **Savor the moment or write about it in your journal.**

As you practice all the above concepts they will become a part of your everyday life. You will watch wonderful experiences happening for you and your baby. All your relationships will benefit from these simple yet dynamic activities.

As your baby becomes a toddler you can begin the **Parenting Program for Parents with Young Children**. In this program we focus on the same concepts, however the activities will be specifically designed for young children. Helping children to calm and relax themselves, establishing a fun bedtime routine and bringing out the best in your children.

Once your children reach three years old, you can begin the **101 Self-Awareness Activities for Young Children** in the Lesson Plans.

The Lesson Plans *In Action* shares how parents, teachers and caregivers have used the original Lesson Plans. It offers additional activities, inspiration and understanding about the various activities and includes children's artwork.

