

Prenatal Parenting Program

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 Prenatal Parenting Program is designed to inspire you to create positive experiences for you and your unborn baby.

What do you want for your baby?

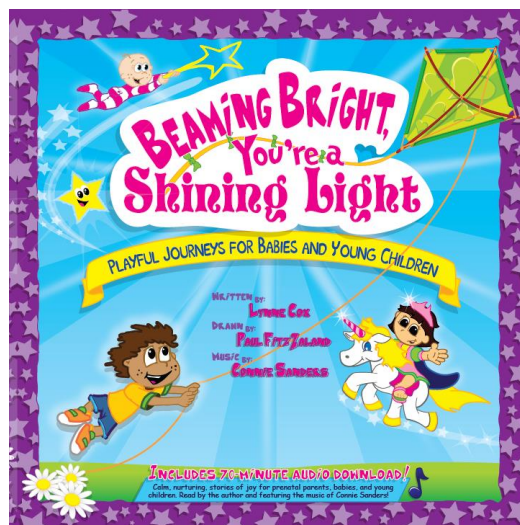
When I asked parents in my parenting programs what they wanted for their baby, parents consistently said they wanted their baby to be happy. If a happy baby is one of your priorities, then this program will help you reach your goal.

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. During pregnancy these growth hormones cross to your baby through the placenta.



Self-Awareness Activities:

This Prenatal Parenting Program 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 Prenatal Parenting Program is specifically designed with one activity for each story.

Reading the "Beaming Bright, You're a Shining Light" stories to your baby in the womb offer parents an opportunity to have joyful, heartfelt moments with their unborn baby.

Every story is designed to make your parenting journey easier as you build positive experiences and relationships with your unborn 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.

As prenatal parents understand this, they will learn that their unborn baby is already growing and learning through many repetitive daily experiences.

A baby in the womb at 6 - 7 months hears and knows the voice of their parents. When our son was rushing to an ultrasound appointment he arrived just after the monitors had been hooked up to his wife and baby. As soon as our son walked into the room and spoke to his wife, who was 20 weeks pregnant at the time, his unborn son's heart rate increased significantly on the heart rate monitor. His unborn son recognized his dad's voice immediately.

Your unborn child listens and feels as you interact with the significant people in your life. As parents create nurturing experiences with their babies in the womb, they are forming a bond and connection with their baby.

Page Numbers After Stories and Activities:

In this document, 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

Prenatal Parenting Program

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

Breathing Free Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 1

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



Breathing Awareness for Self-Regulation:



A baby in the womb feels what mother feels. When a mother is calm and relaxed, her unborn baby will feel calm and relaxed.

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

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

While you are pregnant your baby will gain the many benefits of your self-soothing. Once calm, you will be able to think more clearly and make better choices. This habit will benefit you every day of your life with all your experiences and relationships.

Relationship Challenge 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 the demands of the busy world along with daily challenges appear, stress and conflict can surface in a relationship. Whenever there is a conflict in your 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.

- **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.**

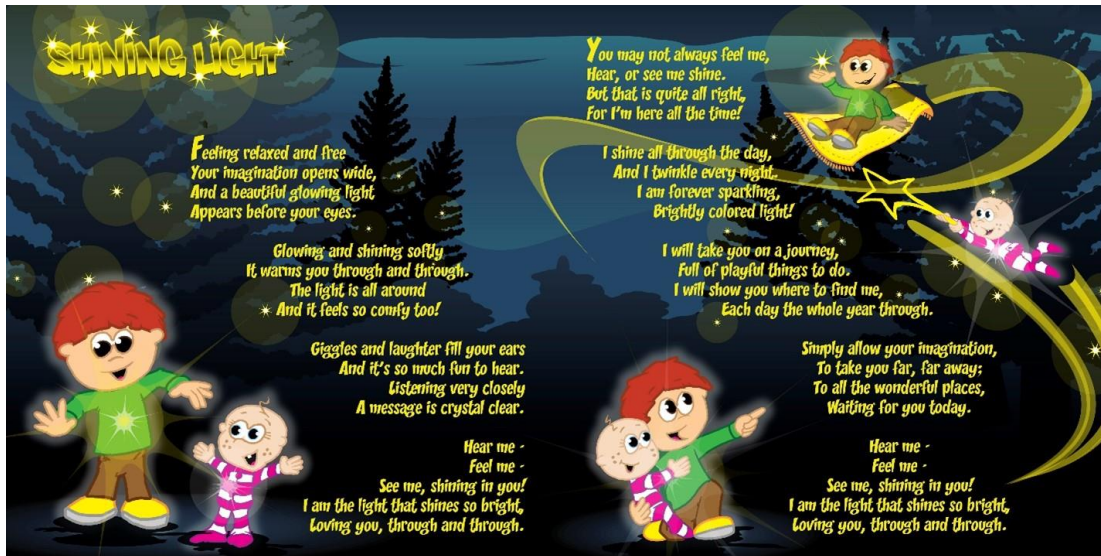
As prenatal parents improve their communication skills you will gain a deeper understanding of your own and others' thoughts, feelings and emotions. As you relate to what others are feeling you will gain a sense of empathy and a deeper bond with one another.



Shining Light Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 15

Story Theme: "I am creative."



The Power Of The Imagination:

This story is about the shining power of the 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 and 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. When you contact a friend or have lunch with them. It's a moment you have created.

- **As you go through your day today, observe and discover the many moments that you create. Knowing you are creative will inspire and empower you.**

For pregnant moms, in a couple relationship, here is a quote from John Gottman, author of "And Baby Makes Three." "Couples who did well after the baby arrived became a team early on, during the pregnancy. Each one didn't just think about "ME." They thought of themselves as "WE." They made sacrifices for the "team" that they would never have made before becoming pregnant.

Men played a central role, and the "ME-to-WE" men were easy to spot. They praised their women, they loved how their pregnant women looked, and they supported their women throughout the pregnancy."

- 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”:

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.

- **“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.

As adults learn about and understand the concept of, “What I focus on grows!” they can use this concept every day. For example:

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

It is 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?**

Whatever you think about, feel or focus on will grow. 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 unborn baby about what you are positively experiencing and feeling.

- **"I can feel and see you growing bigger and bigger in my tummy."**
- **"I can feel your little hand and foot as it moves around in my tummy."**



- **Have fun imagining, seeing, hearing and feeling all the favorite things that you will be doing with your baby once they are born.**



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

Keeping your relationship alive and strengthened while pregnant is very important.

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

- **Talk about moments when you felt your love and friendship really connected.**

- "What I focus on grows!"



Flashing Light Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 37

Story Theme: "I choose to love myself."

<p>Flashing Light</p> <p>You are looking around When you happen to see, A bright flash of light. Oh! What could it be?</p> 	<p>Laughing out loud As you walk to the light. You glance in the mirror And see me shining bright!</p> <p>I sparkle in your eyes. I glow in your face. I beam in your smile. I'm in every place.</p> 
<p>Sun shines through the window The flash is behind the chair. Oh look! It's a mirror shining light everywhere!</p> <p>You stand very still Looking up and then down, While the flash of light bounces, And bounces around.</p> 	<p>I show you your beauty. I show you your light. I show you your goodness, So pure and shining bright.</p> <p>Seeing love in yourself, is easy to do. Just look deep inside, For the goodness in you.</p> <p>It is there, it is there! Look closely and see. It is waiting for you, Ever so patiently.</p> 



I Choose To Love Myself Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 44

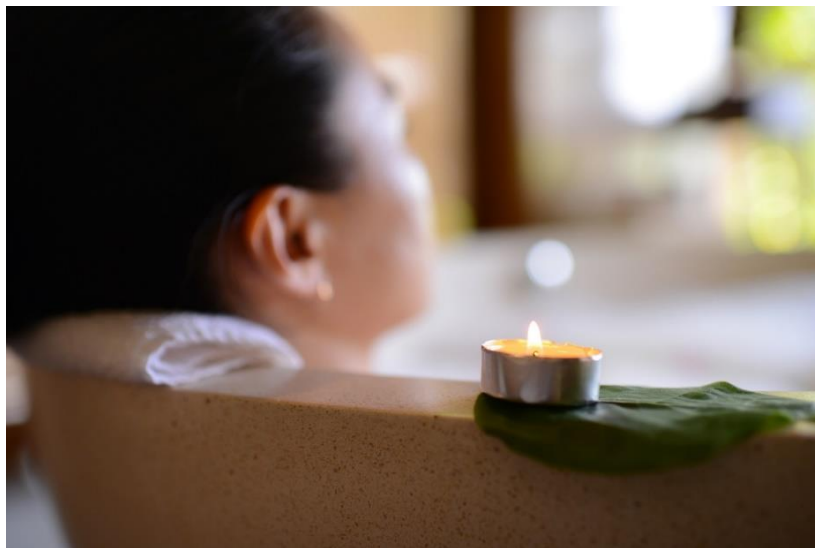


An unborn baby within mom's tummy experiences everything that the mom experiences. As you strengthen your love for yourself and

you tell your unborn baby how much you love them, your baby will benefit from your self love.

As prenatal parents softly touch their tummy, huge amounts of oxytocin are released into the mommy and baby's' body. This hormone creates feelings of relaxation. Relax into these loving feelings.

- **Be gentle, kind and caring with yourself. See yourself from a loving perspective. Love yourself just as you are.**
- **Each morning when you wake up say, "I love you." to yourself and your unborn baby.**
- **Loving yourself is a choice that you make moment by moment. As you become more unconditionally loving and accepting of yourself for all your characteristics, you begin to model and give unconditional love to others.**
- **Listen to your body. If you are feeling tired, rest.**



- **Learn to have empathy and compassion for yourself and others.**
- **Ask for help and support when you need it.**



- **Recognize that you are always doing the best that you can. You are learning from every experience.**

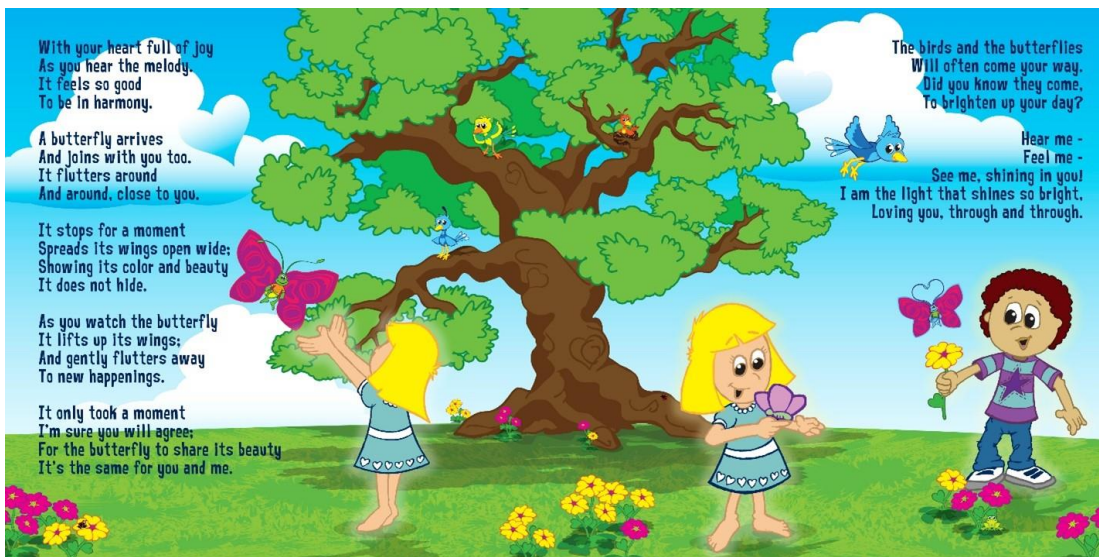
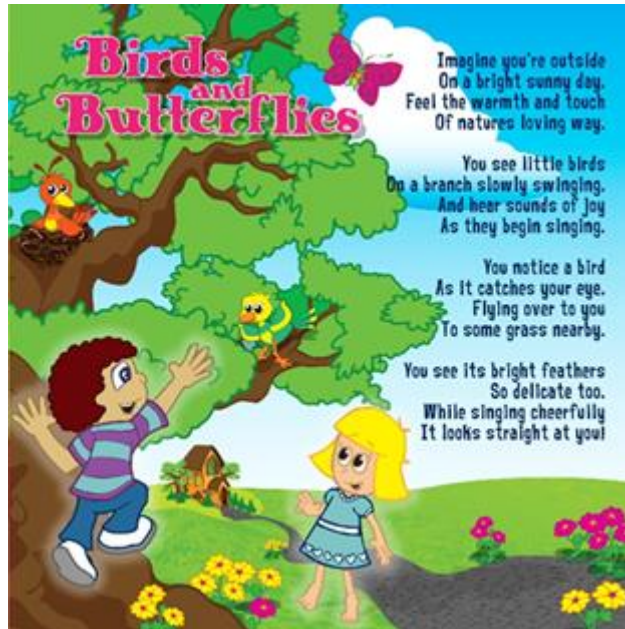
Smile, enjoy and appreciate the precious moments that appear.



Birds and Butterfly Story

Original Lesson Plans - Page 47

Story Theme: "I appreciate nature."



I Appreciate Nature Activity:

Original Lesson Plans - Page 53

As prenatal parents walk in nature it's a wonderful opportunity to let go of the busy world and to appreciate and enjoy the sights, smells and sounds that are all around you.

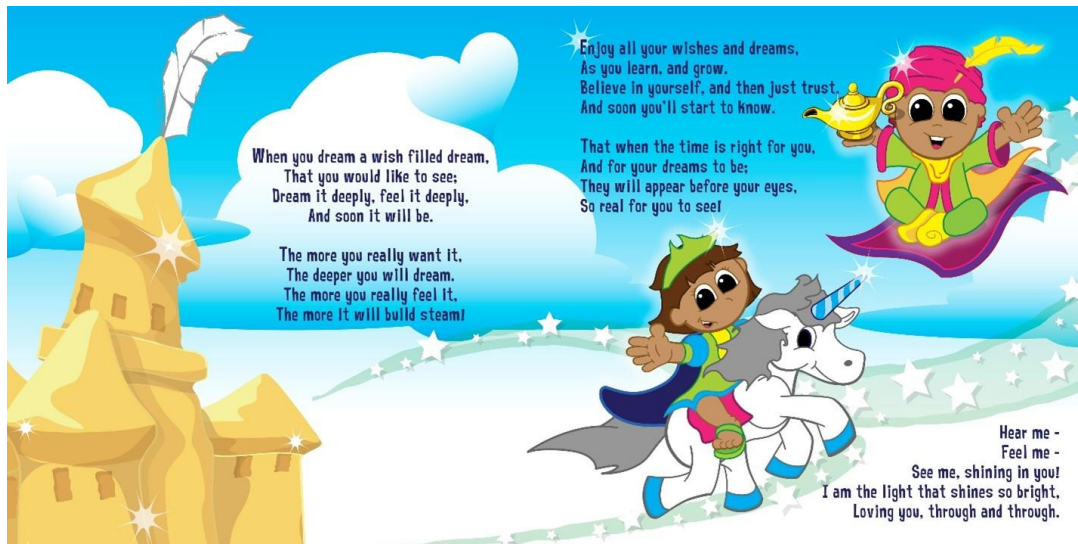
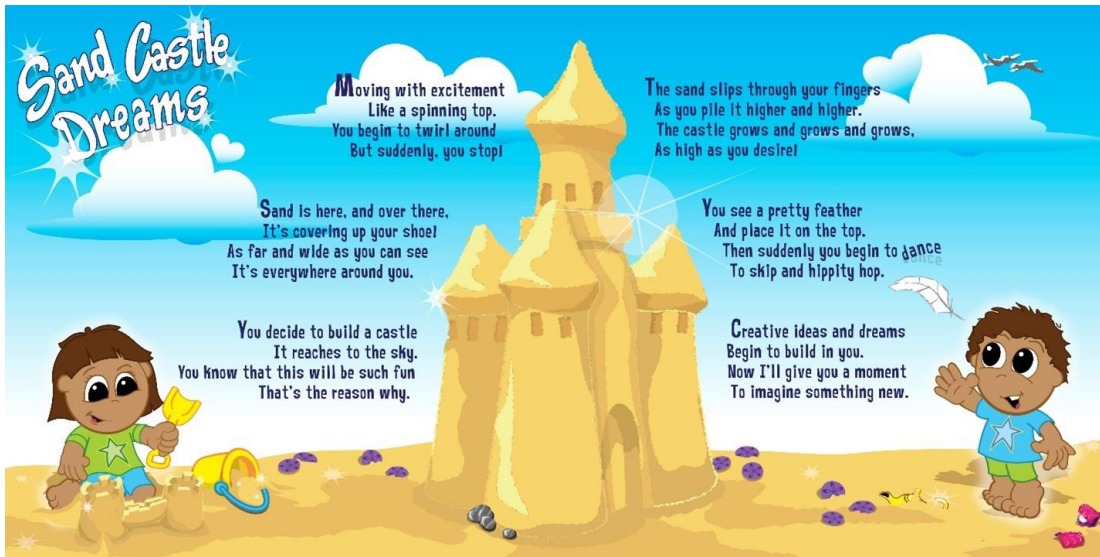
- **Imagine your child a couple of years from now walking in nature with you, discovering all the many surprises that nature offers.**
- **When stress happens, breathe to calm and relax, then go outdoors and watch what happens to the stress you were feeling in your body.**



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.

This story encourages all who read it to focus on the words, “I think I can, I think I can” whenever we are approaching a challenge.

- **What attitudes do you wish to enhance in your life?**
- **What wishes and dreams do you have?**
- **Have fun thinking about a dream and imagine it happening.**



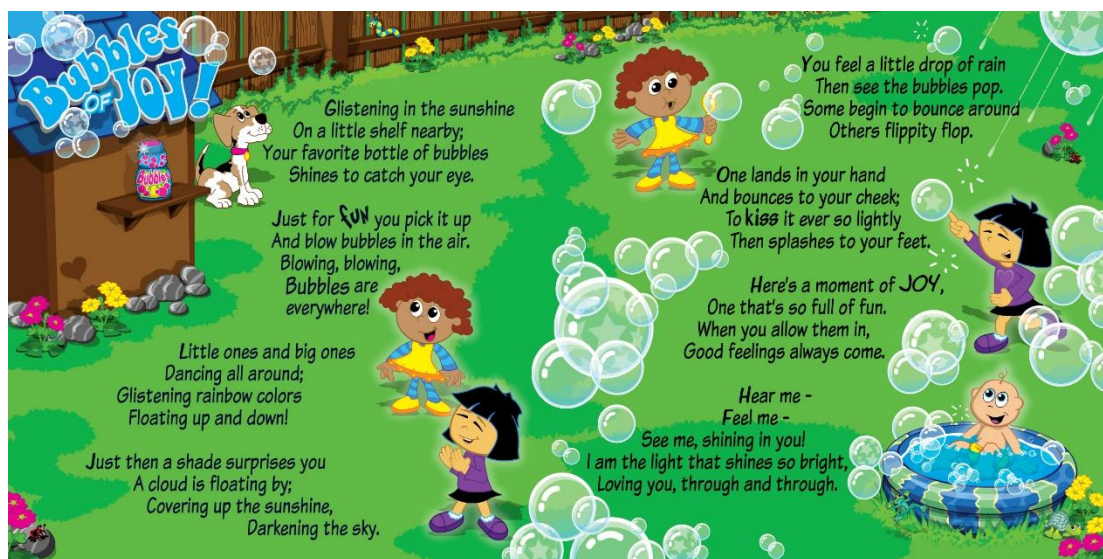
- Write down your dream and look at it often.
 - Believe in yourself.
 - Create an "I Can" attitude.
 - Be patient and watch your dream show up!



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 72



There are many distractions in life that can take you away from having joy filled moments.

- **As prenatal parents become aware of moments when they feel joyful, know that at these moments your baby is also experiencing feelings of joy! Joyful, playful, fun experiences build happy relationships.**

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.

- Have fun imagining you and your baby being perfect and whole in every way.



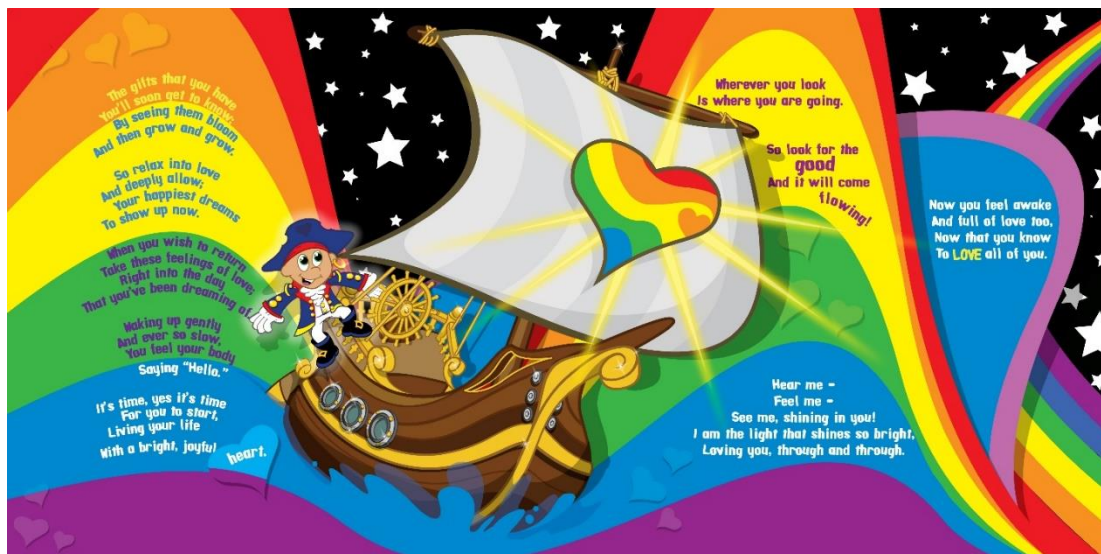
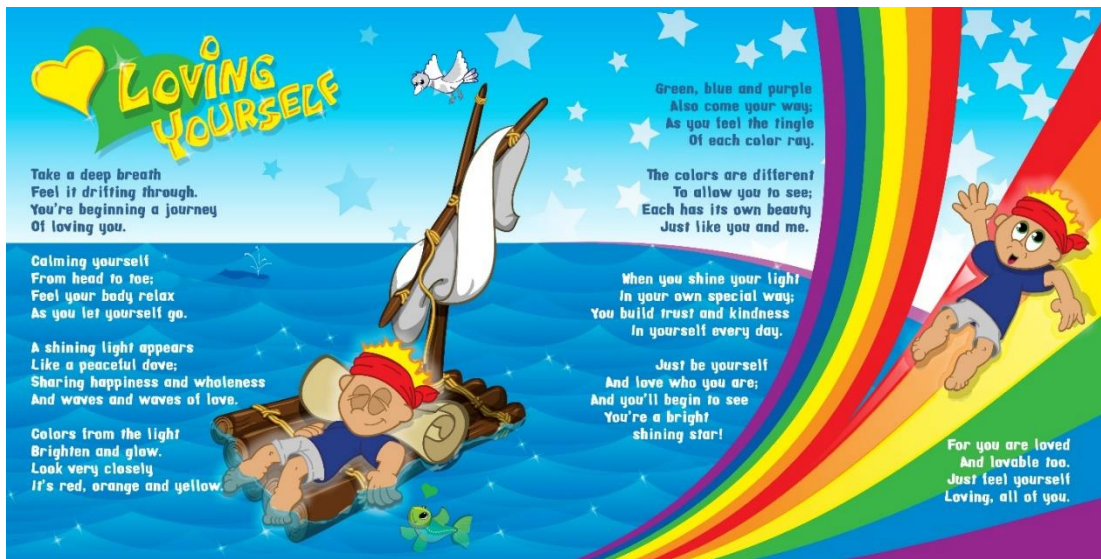


- Find a comfortable place to sit or lie down.
- Take a deep breath and let it out slowly.
- Close your eyes.
- Breathe and imagine you are floating on a fluffy cloud. Feel your body becoming lighter and lighter. Feel yourself floating along feeling more and more relaxed.
- Breathe and imagine feeling 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 own 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.**
- **Once your baby is born you will be modeling these attitudes for your baby. They will be learning to respect and appreciate themselves and others also!**



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.

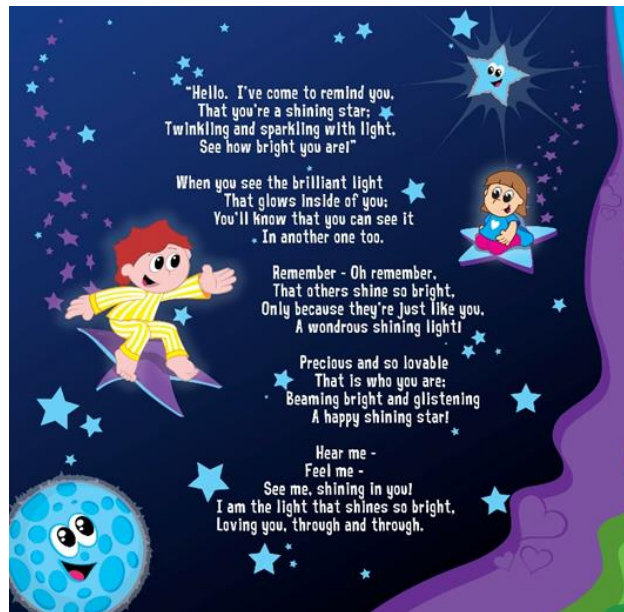
- **Make a list of all the good things that have happened for you over the last week, month or year. Spend time thinking about all these good events.**
- **Each time prenatal moms celebrate something good happening, your baby will feel your joy!**



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.

The following exercise is wonderful for everyone. However, if you ever feel that you are not being appreciated, this exercise will help you to change that belief.



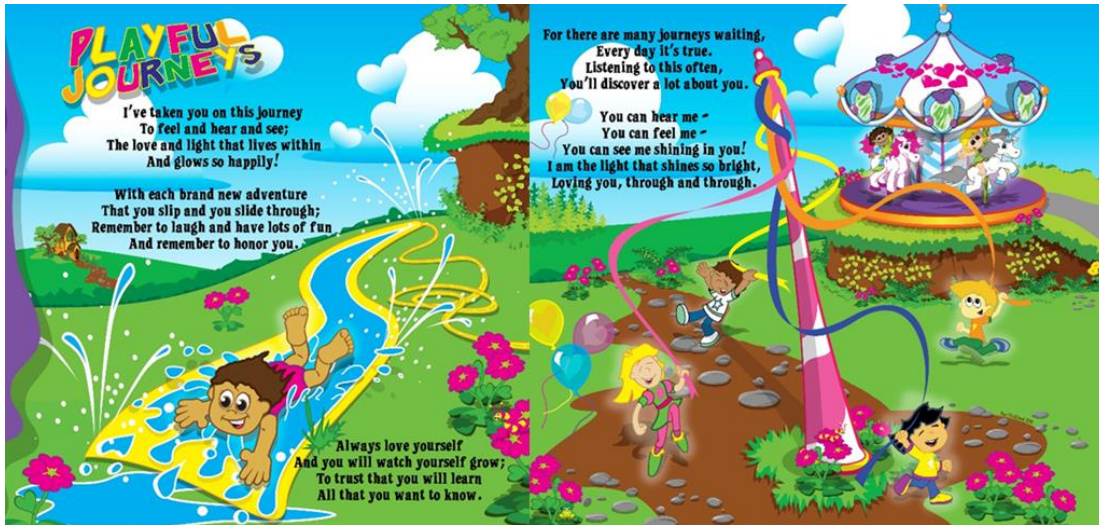
- Each night before you go to sleep, create the habit of appreciating yourself each day. With consistency you will begin experiencing appreciation in ways that amaze you.
- Also appreciate others for the help you have received.



Playful Journeys Story

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. 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 picture of yourself when you are experiencing happy, uplifting moments.
- Savor the moment or write about it in your journal.



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



As you practice these 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.

Once your baby is born, you can begin the **Parenting Program for Parents with Babies**. Many of the same concepts will be expanded upon and are designed to help create a connection and an attachment relationship with your baby.

The first eighteen months of a child's life is a very important learning time. This is a time when you can influence your baby by creating a positive relationship with them and a foundation of inner strength for them based on love, trust and understanding.

