AND GOD SAYS IT IS GOOD

Stargazing–Consider the Stars!

In this milestone, children will discover that the very same God who created and named the stars, created and LOVES them.

Stargazing is an amazing way to feel wonder and awe and the beauty and vastness of God's good creation.

Supplies:
Find a blanket, a clear sky, and relative freedom from artificial lights. If your child is older and/or is interested in the constellations you may be interested in looking at this online resource before you go outside: Stellarium Web Online Star Map
Also, if you have easy access to a pair of binoculars or a portable telescope, you may want to bring these; but stargazing can be done with no equipment!

Milestone

Opening Prayer:
Dear God, thank you for the stars! The night sky is so beautiful and so big and open. It makes us feel small, but it also reminds us of how amazing our world is and what an awesome God you are. Help us to find peace in the stars tonight and to remember that you love us always. Amen.

Scripture:
Lay on the blanket with your child(ren) for whatever period of time seems good. You want to stop before they get restless, but you want to give them long enough to feel the experience. Encourage them to be still and quiet, listening to the night sounds as you gaze at the stars. When you sense it is time to wrap up, read the following Scripture passage to your child.

Psalm 147:4: **[God] determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.**
Reflect with your child, saying something like: **God created the stars. God decides how many there are. God even gives the stars names!! I wonder how many stars you think God has made. I wonder what their names are. I wonder how you feel outside at night, looking up at the sky.** Allow space for the child to respond in whatever ways they would like. You are not looking for right answers, but allowing space for the child to feel the mystery of God. Share your own feelings. If you can identify a constellation or two, do so, but this is less about teaching and more about being with your child and with God together.

Follow up:
First, consider making an evening of stargazing a regular part of your routine. It is fascinating to see how the night sky changes with the seasons. If your child is interested in learning more about the stars and our solar system, consider a trip to a planetarium that is affordable and open to the public.

Notes

Here is a list of recommended children's books, most of which should be available through your public library.

- Anne Rockwell, *Our Stars*
- Gail Gibbons, *Galaxies, Galaxies!*
- Gail Gibbons, *Stargazers*
- Stacy McAnulty, *Sun!: One in a Billion*
- DK: *The Mysteries of the Universe Poster Book*
- Kelsey Johnson, *Constellations for Kids: An Easy Guide to Discovering the Stars*