

EQUIPPING KIDS WITH IMAGINATION

April 13, 2024

When I was a kid, I loved dolls. Whether they were Barbies, Polly Pockets, or Happy Meal toys, they were all equal in my imaginary world. My mom and I would spend hours acting out scenarios with the dolls. But instead of simply picking out an outfit or going to a party, the dolls planned a concert for an elderly community. They helped a neighbor in need. They put on a Christmas play. At the moment, I thought this was how everyone played with dolls. But looking back, I see where my mom's intentionality in imaginative play made a difference in my aspirations.



In *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis described imagination as “the organ of meaning.” He concluded that reason and imagination weave together to help us grasp the truth. Imagination is a powerful tool, and our kids have it in their toolboxes. Imagination doesn't make us dream so big that we don't want to face reality. It helps us dream of significant solutions to real problems, boldly identifying and chasing possibilities and imagining how Jesus would want us to face an obstacle.

Want to inspire imaginative kids? Try these ideas.

Imagine the stories of Jesus. As a family, read the collection of parables describing the kingdom of heaven in [Matthew 13](#). Make a list of all the images Jesus uses in his stories. Then, ask your children to come up with a comparison that helps them imagine the kingdom of heaven and draw a picture of it.

Imagine big dreams. As you play and talk with your kids, give them the freedom to dream big dreams. Show interest in their thoughts and ambitions. Do they want to become an astronaut? Build a rocket ship out of a cardboard box! Do they want to dance? Have a family dance party! Always make them feel that their dreams are valid and meaningful.

Imagine big possibilities. When your kids' imagination is sparked, help them explore options and think outside the box. Do they want to build a sculpture out of clay? Find clay, but see if other materials could make it even more special. Do they want to create a fort? Design it together and discuss how to make it as sturdy as possible. Let the endless outcomes make way for new ideas.

Imagine big solutions. As you walk alongside your kids in everyday life, identify challenges with your kids and find answers that reflect God's love. Does someone in their class seem lonely? Cheer them up by inviting them over for a play date. Did a storm blow your neighbor's tree down? Help them clean up their yard as a family. You'll find that God's light shines through our imaginative work! Our creativity can help us magnify God's love in the world.

With imagination and effort, we can work with God to build his kingdom on earth. Imagination starts in children's minds, and the work begins at home. Let's imagine a better future together with our kids!

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article [Nurturing Imaginative Spiritual Growth](#).

written by Areo Keller-Donahue