

Fruits that are special

Now is the time of year when there's a lot of fresh fruit on the trees and in the shops. It tastes wonderful, is good for our health and colourful to look at. There's another kind of 'fruit' that's good for us too...

Thinking and talking about fruit

Watermelon, peaches, raspberries, strawberries, pineapples, mangos, to name just a few... there are so many delicious fruits to choose from in the shops.

The next time you go food shopping, take your child and choose with them a selection of their favourite fruits. As you choose, look at the packaging or labels, and notice where the fruit has come from. Was it grown in this country, or elsewhere? Think of all the people who have been involved in bringing it to your shopping trolley.

When you get home and eat some of the fruit, think about how it grows – did it grow on a tree, or on the ground, or on a bush?

Talk about how the fruit does you good – it's full of vitamins and fibre that keep us healthy.

Say thank you to God for fruit, for the pleasure it brings when we eat it and for the good it does to our bodies.

A different kind of fruit

Fruit is a great image for the good things we do in our lives. You want your children to make good choices as they grow up, 'to be a credit to you'.

At school your children might talk about values. Some of these values are in the Bible and are talked about as 'fruit' in our lives.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control". (Galatians 5).

How can we help our children grow these fruits in their lives? Which do you think are the most important?

As you eat fruit with your children, remember that most fruit takes a long time to grow. All that you do on your journey of faith to help your children develop fruits of the spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control – also takes a long time. Some may not fully develop until they are grown up.

Fruit-match activity

If you'd like to explore this idea with your children, how about choosing three or four of the "fruits of the spirit" and matching them to real fruits?

For example, love can be matched to strawberries (they look like hearts), joy could be your child's favourite fruit, match goodness to a banana as it's so nutritious.

Make a fruit salad together and take turns telling each other which one to eat. With each fruit, say a small prayer to ask God to give you that "fruit" in your life.

For example, when eating a strawberry, you could pray: "Dear God, thank you for this yummy strawberry, and help us to be more loving, Amen."

Or when eating a banana: "Dear God, thank you for all the goodness this banana will give my body. Please help me to do good things for those around me, Amen."