DECEMBER 2025 | LAUGHING KOOKABURRA

JOY

Finding a way to be happy even when things don't go your way



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NEWSLETTER



Joy
DECEMBER 2025

SAY IT:

Joy: Finding a way to be happy even when things don't go your way

KNOW IT:

ASK A GROWN-UP:

- What are some things that bring you joy?
- Describe a time when you chose to have joy, even though things didn't go your way.

ASK A KID:

- What are some things that bring you joy?
- How can you choose to have joy, even when things don't go your way?

SEE IT:

It is usually easy to be joyful when things are going our way, but what about when things get tough? It is important to focus on the people and activities in our lives that bring us joy. Even when things get challenging and we have a lot of work to do and we are facing some problems we don't really know how to fix…we can choose to have joy. In the movie *Despicable Me 2*, Gru is a pretty mean and grumpy character, but he breaks out of his negativity when he finds something wonderful in his life to focus on.

Watch this clip of Gru choosing to be joyful and happy as he thinks about the things that bring him joy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mdr8vI37MvY.

BE IT:

As a family, make a list of ten things that bring you joy. Talk about the things, the people, the songs, the shows, or the activities that bring you joy. Make a conscientious effort to spend time every day this month enjoying the things and people that you have identified. Create a habit of being joyful together, even when things aren't going your way. Choose to be a family that focuses on joy every day.

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PHASE

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By the time kids hit upper elementary, they begin to realize their first major crisis: **Friendship**.

This isn't just something that happens to our fourth and fifth graders. Believe it or not, research is beginning to show that by kindergarten many kids are testing the power of their influence and seeking connections with friends at any cost.

Meaning, as soon as they become aware there are other people in the world besides them, they start making decisions based on the sort of friends they want to attract.

Here are a few ways you can help your elementary kids develop friendships.

- Help them develop self-confidence.
- Widen the circle of people around them to include adults you trust.
- Ask questions about what's happening in their friendships.
- Don't freak out! Every Phase is new for your child and you as a parent, so there will be some bumps in the road.

So don't miss it. Developing friendships is a part of being a kid, and each one is learning as they go.

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december 2025

JOY // LAUGHING KOOKABURRA // MAGENTA

At dawn and dusk, the laughing kookaburra of Australia fills the woods and forests with chortling sounds, chuckles, and hoots. The middle of its song sounds like human laughter. A well-known children's song written in 1932 says of this bird, "Merry merry king of the bush is he…"

Native to forests and woodlands in Australia, these large birds are really communicating specific messages. They might be declaring boundaries of their territories, which they keep all year. Shorter calls are used to attract a mate, warn an intruder, or find a family member.

Though they are in the same family as kingfishers, kookaburras primarily eat small animals and insects rather than fish. They even eat snakes up to three feet long. They might even steal food from a snake!

They are diurnal, meaning they're active during the day. Kookaburras roost about 12 hours each night, more if the weather is wet or cold. Their basal metabolic rate slows down at night to conserve energy.

Laughing kookaburra pairs stay together for life and use the same nest, usually a hole in a tree, each year. Their grown young stay on to help for a few years before going out on their own. They help keep eggs and baby chicks warm, help feed them, and help guard the family territory.

These birds make most of their calls before dawn. When laughing kookaburras appear in indigenous Australian stories and legends, they are often associated with calling forth the first star of morning or the sun, bringing light to the darkness.

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When the sun rises in Australia, so does the song of the laughing kookaburra.

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JOY // LAUGHING KOOKABURRA // **MAGENTA**

Though magenta doesn't have its own wavelength on the visible color spectrum (with red at one end and violet at the other), it was introduced as a dye in the mid-1800s and has been popping everywhere ever since. It's a color linked to imagination, creativity, and optimism, and a touch of glamor. It also connotes emotional balance, with its combination of blue (calm) and red (energy). When Pantone selected a magenta as its Color of the Year in 2023, it was described as "an animated red that revels in pure joy."

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