

Your Toddler Group Needs You!

Have you ever sat in a parent and toddler group wondering how to get involved? Maybe you've been thinking about it for a while, but you haven't taken it any further, or perhaps the idea hasn't occurred to you until now.

Most parent and toddler groups are run by volunteers and are usually always looking for someone willing to help out. I've lost count of the number of conversations that have taken place between my husband and his mum (a parent and toddler group leader) about ways of getting more mums,

dads and grandparents involved with the running of the group.

The extent of your involvement is up to you – it doesn't have to be full-time or every week. Perhaps, for instance, you could come at the end of the session and help to put the toys away or run the Hoover over the toast and biscuit-covered carpet before the next group arrives!

We know that many of you have hidden talents that are just waiting to burst out. Maybe you're a secret Mr (or Mrs) Maker and can do lots of fantastic things with bits of sticky tape and pipe cleaners. You may have a singing voice that would get you through to the final of The X Factor, or maybe you're a secret Annabel Karmel and a dab hand in the kitchen. Whatever your talent – big or small – your parent and toddler group needs you!

Tea, Coffee and Toast Time

Would you be prepared to help out with refreshments? You'll find a warm welcome in the kitchen and your reward will be a free cup of tea and piece of toast!

Craft Table

You've probably noticed that the harassed looking person who's glued to the craft table always has at least ten toddlers competing for his or her attention. Each

child wants their craft completed first, but 'crafty lady' only has one pair of hands! If you get a thrill from coming up with simple crafts for toddlers and making them 'come alive' then here's the chance to indulge it and offer your help!

Song Time

Song time in parent and toddler groups can have a tendency to feel uncomfortable. Will I fit in? Will I know the songs? Will I be left sitting on the floor on my own because my toddler wants no part of it? It only takes one or two parents singing to get the whole group taking part and whether or not you are someone who has a voice like Mary Poppins your toddler will love it when you love it!

Toddler Time

Perhaps the most important thing of all is that your toddler wants you to take part. They love the fact that you are at the craft table helping them, because however good 'crafty lady' is, she's not you. They love the fact that you are sitting on the floor (or chair) singing nursery rhymes, because it's your voice that soothes them when they are upset, and, finally, no one, but no one, makes tea and toast like their mum or dad!



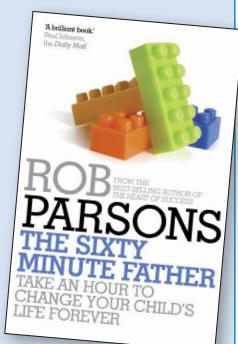
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