



100 ways

to spend quality time with your kids



Uniting Church. **Uniting People.**

Sometimes it's hard to find the space to spend quality time with our family.

And it shouldn't be.

It's time to shake off that all too familiar 'parental-guilt', the one that's been following you like a Bogey Man taunting... I'm not as good as so-and-so's 'super-mother.'

Like you tell your children – there's no such thing as the Bogey Man, monsters or tigers under the bed.

One sure-fire way to shake off the guilt monsters is to treasure the moment - for every moment is an opportunity that won't come our way again.

Whether we're mother & daughter ... father & son ... nonna & grandson ... or uncle & niece ... the best gift we can give is our time.

If you're a bit lost on how to spend time with your child – don't worry. Sometimes it's as easy as asking them what they'd like to do – and doing it with them. **Caution:** this might mean getting a bit of paint on your fingers, mud on your hands or learning a new dance style (without mortifying your child)!

To get you started, we're providing you with 100 ways to energise your family-time.

The 100 ways booklet is a mix of free and low cost ideas for children of all ages. Some are designed for toddlers, some for primary-school aged kids and others for teens.

You know your kids the best – adapt these ideas to suit your family. But go on, challenge yourself – and your guilt monster - and try one of the 100 ideas each week.

Life moves fast. Treasure the moment.

*This booklet has been produced by the Uniting Church SA as part of the Uniting People campaign. You can find out more at unitingpeople.org.au



1 **Ask** your kids

Ask your children what they'd like to do and make time to do it.

2 **Make** the time

Whether it's a "date" with Dad ... or a girls shopping adventure, giving each of your children undivided one-one-one attention and doing something special together is a winner.

3 **Go fishing**

A great activity for dads and grandpas. Little kids love to try their hand at fishing. Teenagers may enjoy the novelty of a late night trip to the jetty. For ideas and hotspots go to fishsa.com

4 **Cook** a pizza

For a quick and fun meal together – make a pizza. Buy a base and choose your toppings or go to recipepizza.com for other ideas.

5 **Pitch** a tent

Whether you're pitching a tent in the backyard or roughing it in the outback, camping provides plenty of opportunities for fun and conversation. Teenagers may prefer camping with another family with teens, or bringing their friend along on your camping trip.

6 Find a cause

Help your child to choose a charity and undertake a simple project. Collect tinned food for UnitingCare unitingcare.sa.uca.org.au or participate in an event like Clean up Australia Day cleanup.org.au

7 Ride a bike

Little kids will enjoy a bike ride just about anywhere. Try along the River Torrens or Linear Park. Teenagers up for a challenge will enjoy the Eagle Mountain bike park.

8 Show and Tell

Have a family "show and tell" time. Make a regular time to share something. It could be a song, poem, new game, favourite website – whatever your children like to share.

9 Plant some vegies

Growing your own vegies or herbs is an excellent way to teach your kids to enjoy healthy eating and to realise how miraculous creation is.

10 Plan a dinner party

Invite another family over. Get the kids to make the invitations and plan the menu. Let them help shop, cook and decorate their own table.





11 **Paint** a picture

Finger painting or potato stamps for under 5s. Paint your own canvas for older kids. Cheap shops sell canvases for a low price. Why not create your own art exhibition and invite your extended family, neighbours or friends over?

12 **Construct** a pinboard

Make a pinboard for a bedroom wall – a great construction project for Dads or Grandpas. Create a permanent place to display artwork, certificates and invitations.

13 **Whip up** some muffins

Muffins are quick to make and taste delicious. Make some for a lunchbox treat. Select a recipe at muffinrecipes.net

14 **Play** a board game

You'll be surprised how much fun old favourites like Monopoly, Scrabble and Cluedo can be. Or if you're game, a little 'Murder in the Dark' never hurt anyone...

15 **Watch** a movie

Let the kids choose a DVD. Get out the beanbags and make up some popcorn. Sit with them and watch it together.

16 Go to the **Library**
Borrow a book or discover a new author. Many libraries have free activities during the school holidays.

17 Join in the **party**
Look out for free or cheap community events like the SA Wooden Boat and Musical Festival at Goolwa in February: woodenboathfestival.com.au Or what about a cow race at Mt Compass in January? compasscup.com.au

18 **Taste** some chocolate
Got a sweet tooth? Visit Haighs haighschocolates.com.au or Melba's Chocolate Factory melbaschocolates.com to do some tasting or buy some moulds and try making your own. Make hearts for Valentine's Day or eggs for Easter.

19 **Spend** time with a grandparent
Find something they enjoy doing and do it altogether – chess, scrabble, fishing, gardening, anything.

20 **Head** to the beach
Pack a picnic or buy some fish and chips. Sandcastles can be made any time of year.





21 **Learn** together

Get your kids to teach you something new – your teenager could show you how to use Facebook or for something different post an online prayer at prayer.sa.uca.org.au

22 **Monkey** around

How long since you've been to the zoo? Adelaide and Monarto offer a unique opportunity to get up close and personal with animals. To find out more visit zoossa.com.au

23 **Toast** marshmallows

Have a bonfire (but be sure to avoid fire bans) and toast some marshmallows on sticks.

24 **Slurp** something sensational

Pick or buy some fresh fruit. Blend up your own smoothie or juice some fresh fruit.

25 **Count**-down

Sit outside and count the cars that go past...the birds you can see... the people going by...anything you can think of. Make a game of it.

26 **Build** something

Go to your local hardware store and stock up for a building project ... perhaps build a go-kart or a cubby. Stores like Bunnings also offer free DIY workshops for over 5s.

27 **Pick** flowers

Pick and arrange flowers for someone special. Make a daisy chain. Visit the flower markets. Press or dry flowers.

28 **Create** an album of memories

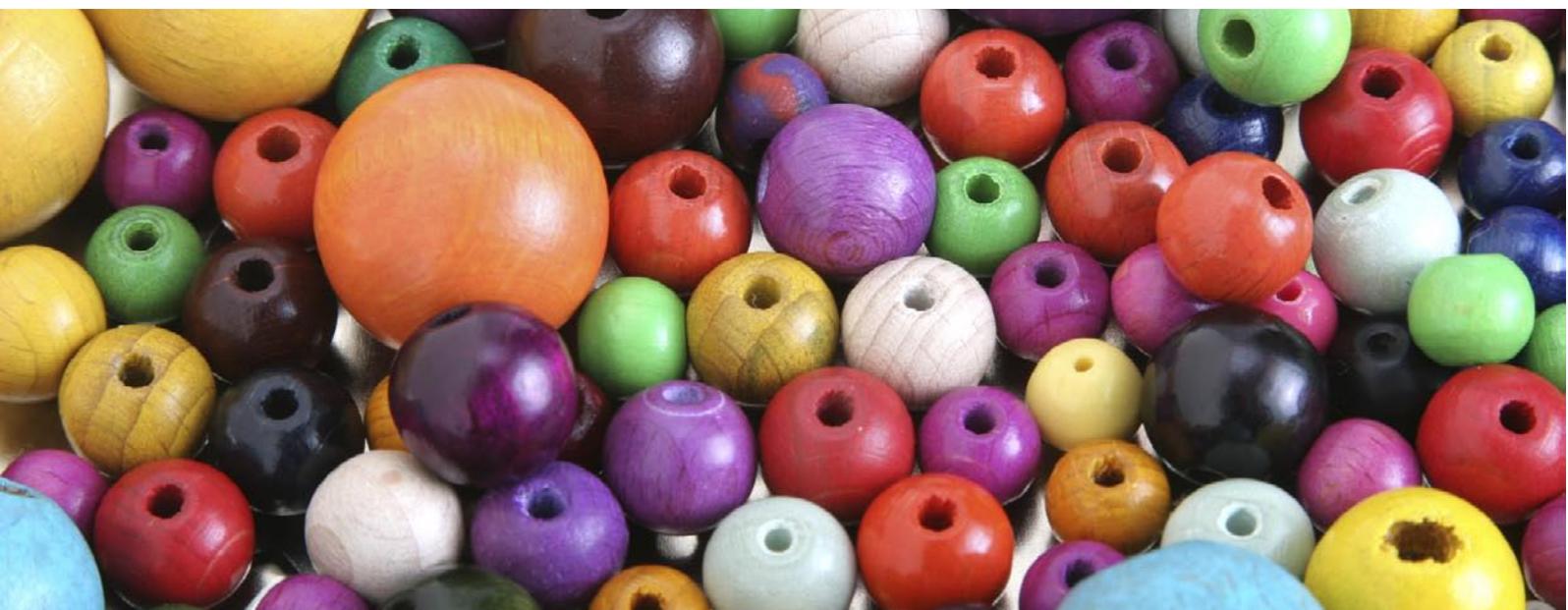
Scroll through your digital photos, let your kids choose their favourites, and get them printed or create a photobook at one of the many online photobook sites.

29 **Sing or dance**

Whether its banging pots and pans with a toddler or singing karaoke ... let your hair down and have some fun! There are a number of free karaoke websites you can join, or your child might already have Singstar on their Playstation.

30 **Make** jewellery

Macaroni necklaces for the little ones (it teaches them the fine motor skill of threading) and beads for older kids. The end result is something that can individually express who they are – and maybe even earn you some new 'bling' to wear.





31 **Roll** down a hill

There's plenty to do at the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Botanic Gardens. Why not pack a picnic? Better still . . . roll down a hill.

botanicgardens.sa.gov.au

32 **Walk** the dog

Walking the dog is great exercise for you and your pet and sometimes conversations flow more easily while you're walking. Why not join in the RSPCA's Million Paws Walk in May.

millionpawswalk.com.au

33 **Write** a letter

Got a relly interstate or overseas? Write an old fashioned letter together!

34 **Make** your own calendar

As the new year approaches, make your own calendar – an ideal gift for grandparents.

35 **See** a show

Each year between May and September the Adelaide Festival Centre offers the Something on Saturday program. There are low cost performances plus free craft workshops for 3 – 10 year olds.

adelaidefestivalcentre.com

36 Go to a **Market**

Whether you're shopping for a culinary delight at the Central Market or looking for a treasure at a weekend market – there's something for everyone. Search for "markets" at southaustralia.com

37 **Stitch** in time

Buy a ready-to-go pack from somewhere like Lincraft, and start stitching. Long-stitch is an easy starting point for younger kids. Older ones might like the finer detail of cross-stitch, or even testing out their design skills on the sewing machine.

38 **Fly** a plane

Make and fly some paper planes. For instructions for a variety of designs go to paperairplanes.co.uk

39 **Do** a science experiment

Bring out the budding scientist in your family. Search online for a fun science experiment to undertake. Websites like sciencekids.co.nz have plenty of ideas.

40 **Climb or Slide**

South Australia has plenty of playgrounds. To find one near you: playgroundfinder.com. Older kids may enjoy rock-climbing.





41 **Take** up a hobby

Take up a hobby with your child. It can be a new way to spend one-on-one time with them. Try hobby.net.au for ideas.

42 **Visit** a garage sale

Garage sales are a cheap and easy way to find new toys for your children and perhaps something for yourself. Why not make it a regular weekend outing?

43 **Go for a swim**

Whether it's a paddle at the beach or in a backyard blow-up pool, kids love playing in water. Little kids will love the free wading pool at Tusmore Park.

44 **Read** a book together

Reading doesn't always have to be done at bedtime – any time of the day is good for sharing a story. Why not use a book or magazine as a reward for good behaviour instead of sweets?

45 **Be** blokes

"Bloke time" is important – watch footy together or go to the Motorcross or Speedway. Get a small group of Dads, Uncles and boys together for the night. But don't forget – your girls might like to be "blokes" sometimes too.

46 **Make** a puzzle

Glue a picture to some cardboard and cut it out into shapes. Then try and put it back together!

47 **Model** with dough or clay

Make some playdough and entertain your children (and yourself!) for hours. Older kids may enjoy modelling clay that can be baked in the oven.

48 **Decorate** cookies

Little ones will enjoy making faces with lollies on shop-bought biscuits. Older kids can start from scratch and create something for a lunchbox treat.

49 **Record** your own show

Make a "radio show" starring your kids. Use a voice recorder or tape deck and be a DJ Hero. Send the end result to grandparents and family for their enjoyment!

50 **Look** to the clouds

Spend some time staring at the clouds and imagining shapes out of them. Can be done at home, in the car, anywhere.





51 Logon to a LAN

Teenagers who love computer games will enjoy a LAN party. Colonel Light Gardens Uniting Church hosts one regularly. For more info go to streetgeek.com.au

52 Start a sporting tradition

Make your own sport circuit in your backyard and run events with your kids – sprinting, hula-hoops, throwing a ball in the bucket. Add a trophy into the equation, and get competitive, nicely of course.

53 Toss some pancakes

Pancakes are so simple – even little children can join in. Older kids might like to sell pancakes and support UnitingCare's pancake day. sa.pancakeday.com.au

54 Discover your family tree

Get your kids to trace their family tree. Perhaps pull out some old wedding or family photos and reminisce.

55 Do some drawing

Bring out the budding artist in your family. Pre-school kids will enjoy crayons or chalk; they might also like to use some baking paper and do some tracing. Older kids might like to try charcoal or pastels.

56 Hire or borrow a sports car
Spend the day “looking cool” and drive along the coast or head for the hills.

57 Join a group
See unitingpeople.org.au for playgroups and youth groups near you.

58 Have a go
Try a new sport or recreational activity. Life Be in it offers a free activity to “come n try” each month. Visit sa.lifebeinit.org

59 Write a story
Each child can write their own. Or, for a whole family activity, tell a story, taking turns to say one sentence at a time. Older kids might like to interview a grandparent and write their biography.

60 Go op-shopping

Pre-school kids will enjoy finding cheap toys and dress-ups. Older kids may also find a “vintage-fashion” bargain.





61 Facepaint

Transform your child into a butterfly or superhero. Teach your older child how to face paint.

62 Build an indoor cubby

Drape some old blankets over some chairs, tables or couches and hang out in an indoor cubby.

63 Share and say thanks

At meal time, make a point of each sharing one good thing that's happened that day (This can also be done as prayer – "Thanks God for ...")

64 Pick your own fruit

Fruit picking is a fun and healthy activity. You can do it (for a cost and in the right season) at places like Beerenberg Strawberry Farm in Hahndorf beerenberg.com.au or download a cherry map from cherriessa.com.au

65 Burst a water balloon

There's nothing quite like a water fight on a hot day.

66 **Search** for bugs

Pull out your old “bug catcher” or make your own. Go exploring in a backyard or park – but be sure to let them go again.

67 **Blow** up

Blow some bubbles – the mix is cheap to make or buy. Or play with balloons. Nothing keeps a child’s attention like ‘keep the balloon off the ground’. Or, for older children, let loose the inner rocket scientist, outside of the house of course.

68 **Bake** gingerbread men

Make and decorate gingerbread men. They’re fun to make and tasty to eat. At Christmas time, get adventurous and make a gingerbread house.

69 **Travel** together

Get away for a weekend together. It can be as simple as a camping weekend, or as extravagant as a flight to Melbourne for a footy match or shopping spree.

70 **Share** “warm fuzzies”

Have you and your kids write notes to each other. They’re called “Warm Fuzzies” because they’re meant to make you feel “warm and fuzzy” when you read them.





71 Cook off

Find out who the MasterChef is in your household. Take turns to plan and cook your best meal for the family.

72 Visit a museum

Our State has plenty of great museums including the SA Museum with free entry. To see a comprehensive list, simply search for "museums" on the southaustralia.com website.

73 Exercise together

Little kids may like something simple like a skipping rope or ball games like tunnel ball. Older kids might enjoy going to the gym or a dance class together.

74 Share high tea

Hold a high tea and have some fun learning about old-fashioned manners and etiquette.

75 Head to the port

Head to Port Adelaide. Climb the Lighthouse, visit a museum or spot a dolphin on a river cruise.

76 Renovate or **redesign**

Makeover shows like Backyard Blitz and Domestic Bliss are really popular. Get your kids to design a new backyard, bedroom or games room and help make it happen.

77 **Watch** them ride by

Get on the roadside with a picnic and watch an event go by.

Vintage Cars baytobirdwood.com.au Sept 26 2010

Toy Run (motorbikes) mrasa.asn.au Dec 12 2010

Cyclists tourdownunder.com.au January 2011

78 Do some **research**

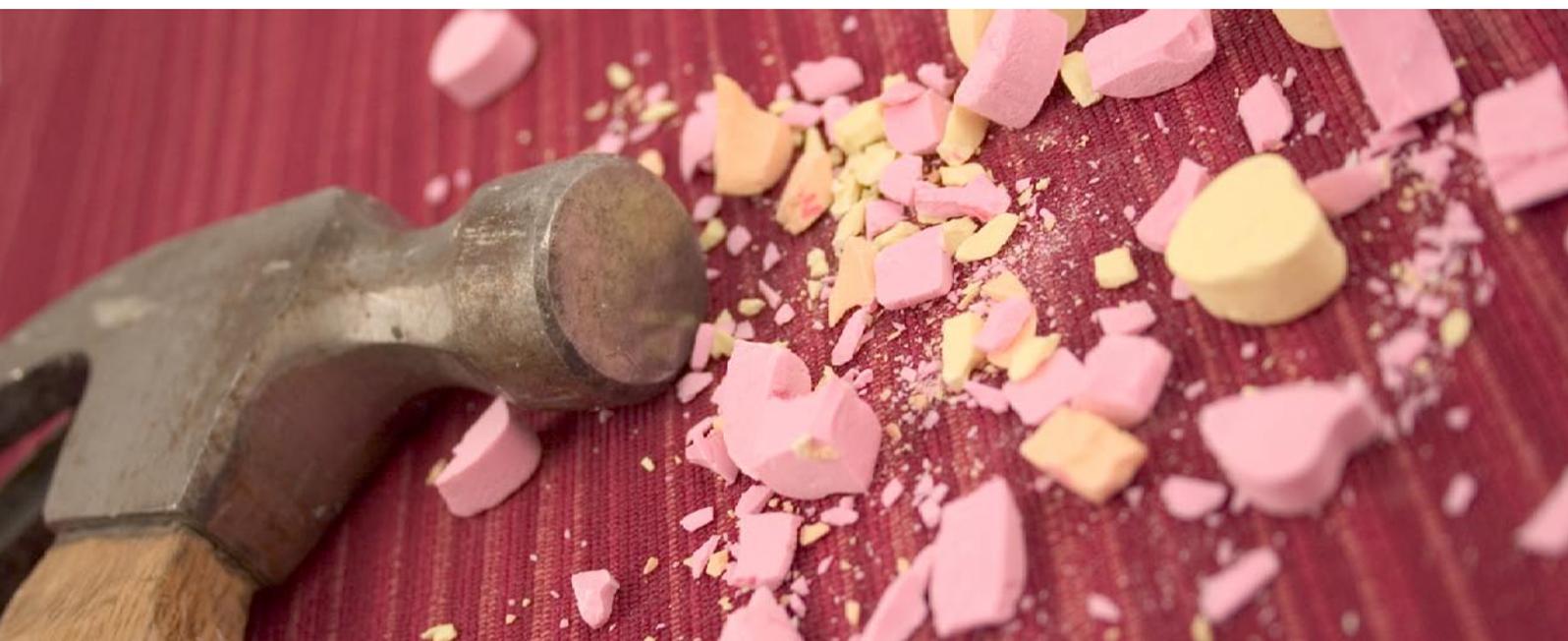
Choose a country. Research recipes online or at your local library. Select a menu, do the shopping, and then cook the meal together.

79 **Plug** in the computer

Turn playing online or video games into a proper tournament with a 12 month league table.

80 **Smash** and mash

Grab your family's favourite lollies and a tub of ice-cream. Mix the lollies into the ice-cream for a delicious treat with endless combinations.





81 **Colour** my world

Have a day where you celebrate one colour. Eat only that colour food. Make glasses with that coloured cellophane, make crafts in that colour, wear as much of that colour as possible.

82 **Construct** a domino chain

Make a long domino chain – down hallways, into rooms, down stairs - and enjoy watching them fall.

83 **Dream** of sunny days

Plan a dream holiday. You may be surprised to learn where your kids would like to go and what they'd like to do.

84 **Be** girly

Have a daughter's day... dress up, put on Grandma's pearls or look at Mum's wedding dress. Take three generations to the hairdresser or get your nails done. Share afternoon tea somewhere fancy.

85 **Make** cards or bookmarks

Bookmarks are great for kids who enjoy reading and for birthday gifts. Or handcraft your own birthday cards for a special touch.

86 **Watch** airplanes

If you live near an airport, go to the viewing site with your child and watch the planes arrive and depart.

87 **Family footy tipping**

Find out who can tip the winners in your family. See footytips.com.au for ideas on running a competition. Play for a prize, or even just your pride.

88 **Catch** a train or tram

Do something you don't normally do – take the train, the tram or the O-Bahn for an outing somewhere new.

89 **Go for a paddle**

Hire a paddleboat on the River Torrens (or there's always Popeye for the less adventurous).

90 **Eat together**

Hectic lifestyles sometimes make common mealtimes difficult. Make eating together around the table with the TV turned off a priority.





91 Have a **bat**

Whether it's for five minutes, or a week-long tournament, backyard cricket can be lots of fun.

92 **Make** a gift

Make a gift for an elderly neighbour or relative. Gifts like decorated candles or photo frames are a good idea.

93 **Go** to the drive-in

Remember the fun of going to the drive-in as a kid? Pack your pillow and some snacks and head to the Mainline drive in at Gepps Cross. Visit wallis.com.au for session times.

94 **Fly** a kite

Paper, straws, string and imagination are all you need to make a kite. Kids of all ages may enjoy Australia's largest kite festival held in March at Semaphore.

95 Treasure **hunt**

Set up a treasure hunt in the backyard. You could hide chocolate coins and give clues to their whereabouts. Or try a nature hunt for items like an autumn leaf, feather and spider web.

96 Pack a **picnic**
Pack the rug and picnic basket and head for the beach or the hills. Little kids will enjoy a Teddy Bear's picnic.

97 **Get arty**
START is held on the first Sunday of every month and it's free. 12-3pm for 5-10 year olds. To discover more go to artgallery.sa.gov.au

98 Have a **kick**
Hacky sack is an inexpensive little ball that brings a great amount of fun. A good activity for teenagers, challenging their skills.

99 **See the light**
At Christmas time, be sure to join in one of the many Christmas festivities including:
Christmas pageant cupageant.com.au
Lobethal Lights lightsoflobethal.com.au
Loxton Lights loxtonlights.com

100 **Lie** down

After all that ... lie down. Take a moment to lie in your backyard and look at the stars. Or see if someone can lend you a telescope ... or visit the planetarium at Uni SA Mawson Lakes.



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Page 3 - proud young baker
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Page 4 - Childhood Painting
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Page 5 - Boy buried up to his neck
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Page 6 - Mother & Daughter on Computer
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Page 7 - wooden beads, multicoloured
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Page 15 - Kids in Halloween Costumes
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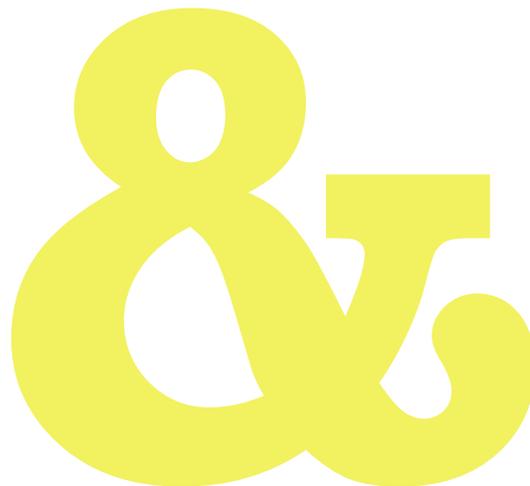
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Page 18 - Multicolored crayons
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Page 21 - Newborn Baby Girl Sleeping
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For more info go to: **unitingpeople.org.au**



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