

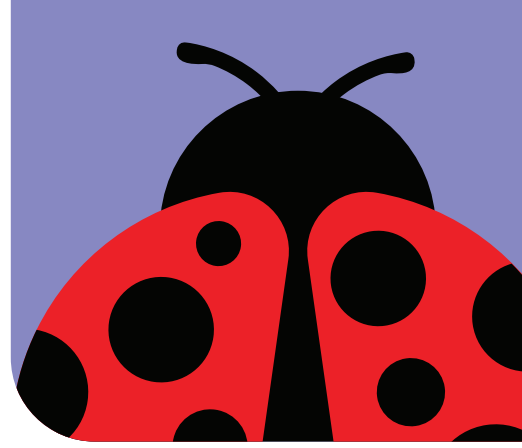


Happy and sad will certainly come and go in our lives – but being aware of what gives us joy will keep us moving forward when we're having one of those alarm-hitting, bus-missing, backpack-forgetting kind of days. This month, let's talk about joy – about what keeps us afloat when things seem like they might never go our way. What does your family do to seek joy?

### **JOY:**

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

## Joy DECEMBER 2022



### SAY IT:

Joy means finding a way to be happy, even when things don't go your way.

### KNOW IT:

#### ASK A GROWN UP:

- What are some things in life that make you happy, even when things aren't going your way?
- Have you ever known someone that seems to have joy all the time?

#### ASK A KID:

- Can you think of anyone in your class or family that has joy? How does it make you feel to be around that person?

### SEE IT:

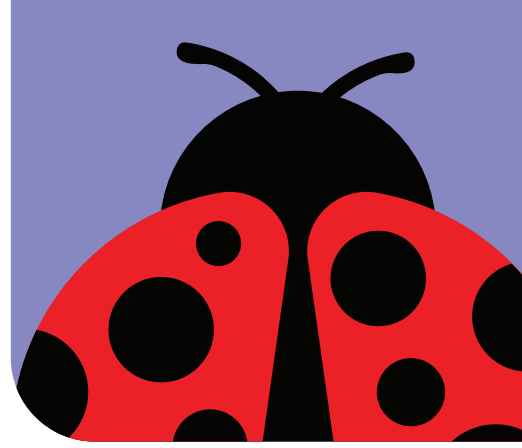
Most of us have seen the movie *Despicable Me* where we get to meet the joy filled little yellow critters, Minions. Watch this video of the song "Happy", by Pharrell Williams and talk about what it would be like to have the kind of happiness and joy that the Minions seem to have. If you want to make it real fun, come up with a dance to do with motions to the song. See if singing and dancing as a family can help you add a little joy to your day. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOWDb2TBYDg>

### BE IT:

Think about some of the things that bring joy to your family and friends. Take some time or spend a little money to give some small gifts that you think will bring joy. Make a card, bake some cookies, do an extra chore or service project, give them a small piece of candy. Pay attention to people who are having a bad day and think about what you can do to bring some joy to their lives.

# PHASE

Joy  
DECEMBER 2022



## 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.

# december 2022

JOY // LADYBUG // PERIWINKLE

**The ladybug is a bright beetle** with visual charm – a good luck symbol in many cultures. The most common species in North America, brought from Europe in the mid-1900s, boasts a shiny red body with seven black spots.

Technically, ladybugs aren't bugs – they're beetles. The 400,000 or so species of beetles make up a quarter of all animal life on earth! About 5,000 of these are ladybugs. Like other insects, beetles have two pairs of wings, but their front pair forms a hard shell. The back pair is used to fly. Also, beetles have four developmental stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult.

A ladybug's bold colors attract many human fans. Those bright colors and spots are designed to ward off predators. These cute critters can also secrete foul-tasting fluid from their joints, if their appearance isn't warning enough.

Ladybugs are highly valued because they help control populations of aphids, which can destroy crops. Farmers and gardeners love them! A female ladybug deposits her eggs near aphid colonies. When these hatch, the larvae eat lots and lots of aphids. Adults eat them too. Over its lifetime, a ladybug can consume 5,000 aphids.

Ladybugs are prized around the world. In England, they are called ladybird beetles. And the French call them "Bête à bon dieu" – beasts of the good God.

Just before winter, however, not everyone is happy to see large numbers trying to get inside houses and apartments. Why do ladybugs gather on windowsills? They are simply looking for a warm safe place to overwinter. When spring comes, they'll be ready to get back to life outside, eating those aphids.

***JOY: Finding a way to be happy, even when things don't go your way***



**Ladybugs eat harmful insects and are considered symbols of good luck.**

# december 2022

JOY // LADYBUG // PERIWINKLE

Periwinkle as a color gets its name from the delicate flower by that name (Vinca minor) and its blue-violet hue. Sometimes this color is called lavender blue. PANTONE® created “Very Peri” as its Color of the Year for 2022, praising its “spritely, joyous attitude and dynamic presence....” Pantone Color Institute's Executive Director Leatrice Eiseman said in a video call with CNN, “It is literally the happiest and the warmest of all the blue hues.” Periwinkle is the color of friendship and fond memories. It is associated with optimism.

*JOY: Finding a way to be happy, even when things don't go your way*