



www.brighthorizons.com/growing

What in the World?: Birthday Tree

What do you need?: Small tree in pot, shovel, measuring tape, MY TREE Journal, camera

What you do: On your child's birthday, plant a tree. Measure how tall your child and the tree are. Write the measurements and date in the journal. Take a picture of your child beside the tree. Add this to the journal. Repeat this each year on your child's birthday.

Tips: Let your child choose the tree if possible. You could narrow the choice to two or three trees of a fast growing variety: Willows, Sycamores, or Tulip Poplar trees grow quickly. Research varieties at www.treelink.org or ask your local nursery for suggestions and planting instructions. Make it your child's responsibility to keep it well watered while it is new. You might want to give them their own watering can. Point out the root system when you loosen the burlap or take out of the pot. Talk about any fertilizer (food) or compost that you add to the hole. Let your child decorate the front of the MY TREE Journal. He/she could draw pictures of the tree through the year, especially showing its changes through the seasons. Press leaves to add.

Value: Emotional — Feeling important and meaningful, taking responsibility for a living thing, building a family ritual.

Science Rocks — Root systems, trunks, leaves, research, observation skills, what is needed to sustain life.

Variations: If you move, ask your child to end the journal by telling what the tree has meant to him. Include a last picture. And then, start a new tree in your new home!

We did it!

Name

Signature/Stamp