

PHONE TIME



By Jennifer Maddy

(Based on a true story)

"I can do and say happy things each day"

(Children's Songbook, 163).

Zoe got out of bed and put on her fuzzy slippers. It was Saturday! That meant extra time for games on Mom's phone!

Zoe went into the family room and snuggled into a chair with the phone. She loved playing games. When she was tired of one game, she opened another. And then another.

After a while Mom came in. "Zoe, I think it's time to put it down," she said.

"Not yet!" Zoe said.

"You've played enough today," Mom said. "Why don't you go outside or color a picture?"

Zoe didn't want to play outside or color. She frowned as she handed Mom the phone.

The next Saturday when Mom came in and asked for the phone, Zoe looked sad again. The same thing happened the next week.

Finally Mom said, "I don't think playing on the phone so much is making you happy. Next Saturday you can play for a little while, and then you need to do something else."

Zoe tried not to think about next Saturday.

But Saturday came. Mom set a timer, and when it went off, Zoe knew her phone time was up. She trudged into the backyard.

The sun warmed Zoe's face. It made her feel a little better. She looked down and saw daisies in the flowerbeds. Zoe smiled a little. *When did those get there?* She picked a few and tied the stems together to make a necklace. Soon Mom was calling her for lunch.

The next Saturday, Zoe felt a little sad when Mom took the phone. But she went to her room and colored a picture. Mom said it was beautiful.

A few weeks later when Mom came into the family room on Saturday morning, Zoe had just put down the phone.

"Are you already done?" Mom asked.

Zoe nodded. "Can I go play in the sprinklers?"

Mom smiled. "That's a great idea. Let's find you a towel."

Zoe laughed as she skipped through the sprinklers. Then she pretended she was a mermaid. She liked playing games on the phone, but there were a lot of other fun things to do on a Saturday morning. ♦

The author lives in Utah, USA.

Let's go play outside.

Race you to the sprinklers!

