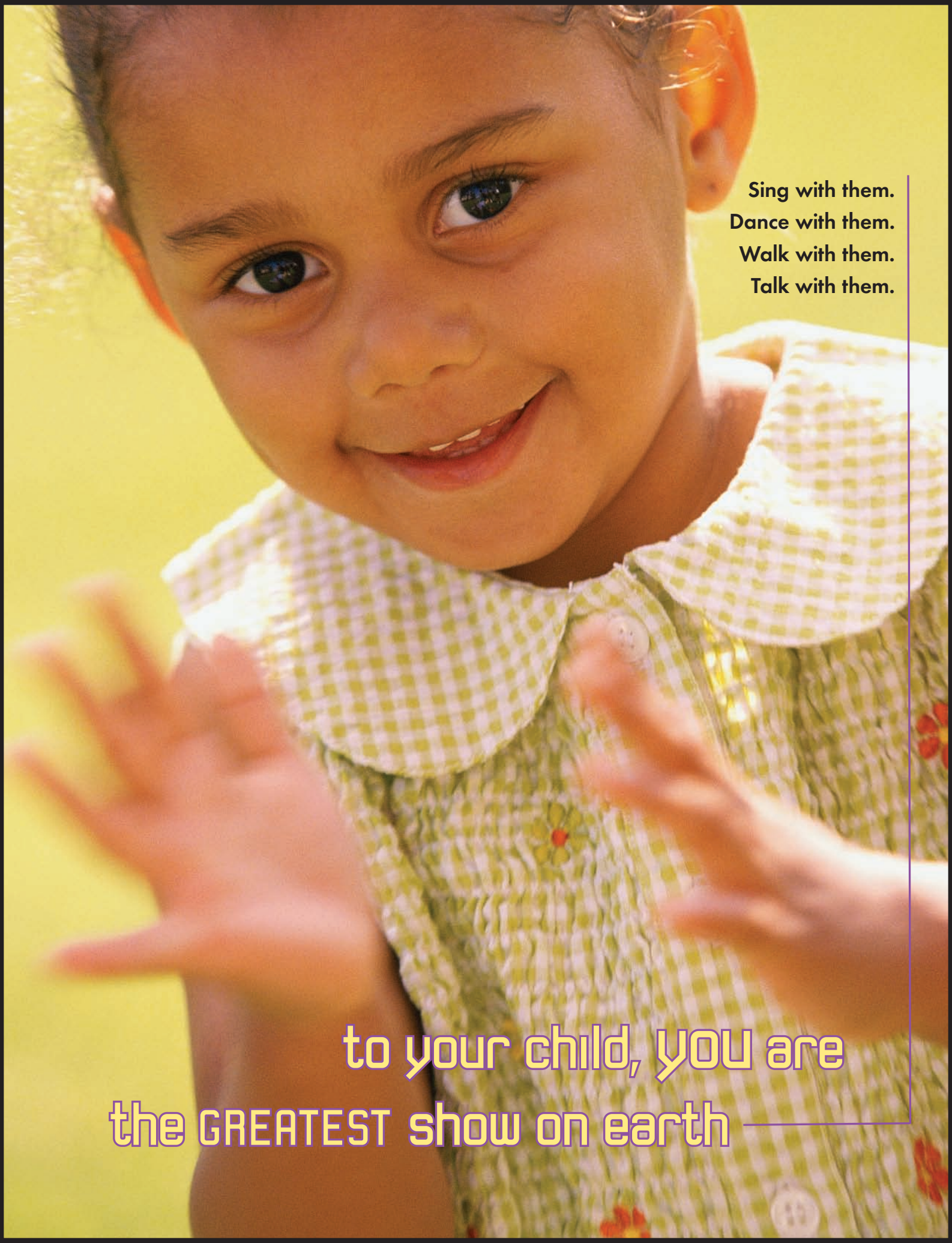
Sing with them.
Dance with them.
Walk with them.
Talk with them.
to your child, YOU are
the GREATEST show on earth

how to grow a happy family – no matter what the size

Amy, with her family

"My husband, Peter, and I came from very different worlds. I was an only child. He was one of nine children—all very close and incredibly loving. I'd never known a family like his—but I liked it immediately.

Peter has taught me a lot about growing a happy family. The most important lesson has been to spend time having fun together. So everyday we find time to do things as a family. Sometimes we just chase each other in the back yard or go to the park and play. When weather keeps us inside we run around the house and play hide and seek. It's easy to enjoy each other's company without spending a lot of money.

Sunday is our designated family day. It's the best day of the week for our kids. The first thing we hear is 'It's Sunday!'—and then the fun begins. We make breakfast together, eat as a family, and then decide on a family activity. Sometimes we just clean the house together or watch a movie in our pj's. It's not really about what we do, but just doing it together.

I used to be uptight about things being in the right place or having the children perfectly clean. But I've relaxed a lot. Sometimes it's more fun to just act silly. We dance and sing together in our less-than-spotless house and then all collapse in giggles at each other. I know the bond we are forming with each other is more important than a tidy house.

When we get together with family and friends the children come along, too. We might have a big dinner together. Or maybe put music on and dance or play dress-up and take pictures. The older children sometimes put on plays and entertain everyone or do each others hair. We talk and laugh, play and sometimes work together. And we help and support each other in difficult times, too. Never in my life have I experienced so much love.

Growing a happy family helps our children but it also helps us. When we do things together we fall in love all over again. I love seeing my husband laugh with the kids. I never knew what I was missing!

Twenty years from now I want my children to share the amazing love Peter and his family have. I think we're off to a great start!"

Amy's Tips for Growing a Happy Family

- Have fun spending time together as a family.
- Designate a day as Family Fun Day.
- Support each other in good times and bad.
- Relax—don't sweat the little things.

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