

Helping You Navigate Your Journey Through Parenting The Five Love Languages *Part 2 of 2*



BY KIM DEMARCHI

In my article last month, I introduced the book, *The 5 Love Languages of Children*, written by Gary Chapman. In his book, he distinguishes five ways that children (and adults) prefer to be shown love. We

usually tend to express love to others the way we prefer love to be expressed toward us. However, we need to express love to others the way THEY feel loved. It is our job as parents to figure out what love “language” speaks the loudest to each of our children. They are all unique and individual. They will each have a preference.

The 5 Love Languages are: Quality Time, Gifts, Acts of Service, Physical Touch, and Words of Affirmation. The first three were covered last month and the later two are presented below.

Words of Affirmation

Kind words are always welcome, but for a child whose love language is Words of Affirmation, they are like food for the soul. “Thank you so much for handing your sister her toy” might make your child’s eyes light up. “I appreciate how kind you are to me”. There’s a reason we have cheerleaders at games; people like to hear words of affirmation. Words are a powerful way to communicate love and care. Some children feel the greatest sense of connection and value when they hear us say something nice about them. This is one of the easiest things to do. Words alone can make your child feel greatly loved.

Some ideas:

- When you wake her up, say “Good Morning Sunshine”.
- Tell her you missed her laugh today.

- When he gets into the car, tell him how glad you are to see him.
- Use terms of endearment “sugar pie”, “Smiley Riley”, “sweetpea”, “buddy”.
- Always say I love you (this is not the child to forget to tell). Make “I love you” the first thing you say when you connect at the beginning of the day and the last thing you say when you turn off the light.

- Use words for encouragement

“I notice the way you shared the toy with your brother.”

- Become your child’s cheerleader

“Of all the little girls in the whole wide world, I got the very best one.”

- Leave your child “love notes”.

Place a sticky note on the mirror.

Draw a smiley face on his lunch napkin.

Xs and Os on a slip of paper for her to discover in the pocket of her coat.

Use a chalk paint marker to write on window, sliding glass door or mirror.

- Let him overhear you saying complimentary things about him to other people.

- At bedtime when it’s quiet, tell your child what you like about him.

“Can I tell you something I really love about you? I saw you today help your friend. You are a caring person with a kind heart.”

- Read aloud storybooks about love. There are so many storybooks about how much a parent loves a child. These are great for all children but especially for those kids who can’t seem to hear it enough times and in enough ways.

Guess How Much I Love You, No Matter What, I Love You Stinky Face, I Love You the Purplest, Love You Forever

- Make up a song about your child. You can use a familiar tune and change the words. Or choose a favorite song about

love that you sing to your child.

You Are My Sunshine, What a Wonderful World, You’ve got a Friend

- Write a poem for your child. It can be a limerick or an acrostic poem using the letters of her name to start words that describe your child’s

- Record a message of love to your child.

Picture frame

Stuffed animal

Storybooks that you record your voice reading

Physical Touch

All children need loving touch, but some crave it more than others. For many children, some loving touch will fill his love tank and make him feel connected to you.

- Hugs, Cuddles, Kisses

Bear hugs

Sandwich hugs

Butterfly kisses

Eskimo kisses

Goldfish kisses

Backrubs

Foot rubs

- Casual touch - loving touch while doing other things

Let her sit on your lap while you’re reading a story or watching a show

Carry her

Give piggyback rides

Wheel her like a wheelbarrow

Holding hands when walking

- Play with her hair

Tousle as you walk by or in greeting

Brush her hair or massage her head

- Play contact sports/activities with your child

Guard him as he’s dribbling the ball

Tackle as he runs by

Wrestle

Roughhouse

- Hand games & greetings

Make up handshakes and greeting rhymes

Play a clapping game with your child - “say say oh playmate”, “three sailors went to sea, sea, sea”

High Fives (give me five, up high, down low...too slow, cut the cake...bellyache, etc.)

Fist Bump

- Physical play

Write/draw letters, numbers or shapes on her back with your finger and she has to guess what you drew

Thumb wrestle

Arm wrestle

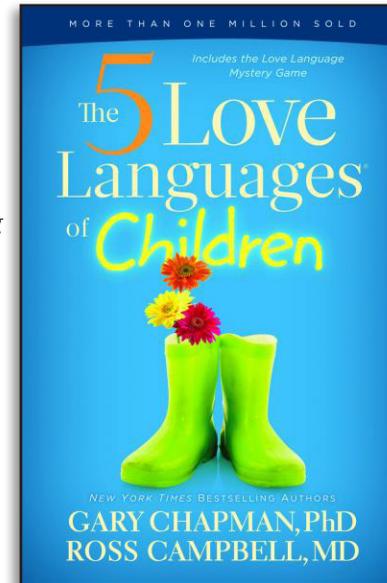
Twister

London Bridge

Ten Little Piggies

Ring Around the Rosy

All children need to feel a connection to their parents. Knowing your child’s love “language” can make all the difference in your relationship with your children. You know you love your children, and now you can make sure your children know it too!



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