

The Five Love Languages of Children

Authors, Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell, M.D., write; “For a child to feel love, we must learn to speak her unique love language. Every child has a special way of perceiving love. There are basically five ways children (indeed, all people) speak and understand emotional love. They are: **Physical touch, words of affirmation, quality time, gifts, and acts of service.**”

All parents try to communicate love to their child/children. Sometimes the message of love we try to send our child is received and they “get it” and other times, it is missed. Since *Love* is the foundation for raising a secure, independent, and responsible adult, we need to make sure we keep a child’s “emotional tank” full. The more we learn about how a child’s love is expressed and how he/she needs love expressed to him/her, the more likely we are to be successful in our role as a parent.

Some key points are:

- ❖ Keep a child’s “emotional tank” full
- ❖ Use all five love languages with each child- one primary language will “speak” the loudest to your child
- ❖ The child’s behavior often tells a parent what love language the child is needing

Source: The Five Love Languages of Children by Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell, M.D.

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Physical Touch

- Can be a hug, kiss, pat on the back,
- As children get older, they may enjoy more vigorous kinds of physical touch such as “bear hugs”, or “give me fives” or riding piggyback.
- Holding a child while reading a story

Words of Affirmation

- Words of praise, “Great catch! You really know how to play baseball!”
- Words of affection, “I love you, Honey”
- Words of encouragement, “I bet with your great mind, you can figure that out!”

Quality Time

- Quality time if **focused** attention
- Sometimes quality time is just being together
- Try to spend time with each child
- Positive eye contact
- Plan for quality time
- Play first, then do chores
- Doesn't have to be but a few minutes together

Gifts

- The English word “*gift*” comes from the Greek word “*charis*”, which means “*grace*” or “*undeserving gift*”. The idea being that if a gift is deserved, then it is payment.
- A true gift is an expression of love, and is universal

- The “emotional tank” must be full for the gift to be received as love- otherwise; children feel that you are “buying” their love.
- Not all gifts have to come from a store- handing your child an interesting rock that you found, or some wildflowers that you thought were pretty can be meaningful gifts.

Acts of Service

- Parenting is a service oriented vocation.
- Acts of service does not mean doing “everything” for your child.
- Acts of service can become a model for your child’s service and responsibility
- Acts of service should be appropriate for the age- making your four year olds bed is an act of service, but an eight year old can make their own bed.
- Let children see you do acts of service for others
- When you make a child’s favorite dinner, you are doing an act of service for them