



GCAPP PARENT TOOLKIT:

How to Express Your Love

Every child receives and expresses love in different ways. Understanding and responding to your child's unique *love language* deepens connection, builds trust, and strengthens your relationship. Below are the five love languages for children, with practical examples to help you express love in ways your child truly understands.

1. PHYSICAL TOUCH

When your child's primary love language is physical touch:

- Give a warm hug before sending them off to school.
- Comfort them when they're sick with cuddles, a pat on the back, or holding hands.
- Offer a high-five or "tickle time" after they accomplish something.
- Create special rituals like a morning bear-hug or good-night handshake.

2. WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

If your child values words of affirmation:

- Send a quick text or note during the day: "I love you & I'm proud of you."
- Write a small heartfelt note inside their lunch or lunchbox.
- Verbally express how much you love and appreciate them: "You are important to me."
- Create your own meaningful phrases or family "cheer" that convey your love consistently.

3. QUALITY TIME

When quality time resonates most with your child:

- Set aside a regular time each day just for the two of you electronics off.
- Take a walk together, read them a bedtime story, or help with their homework while fully present.
- Have dinner together at the table without distractions.
- Surprise your child with a special outing or "just-us" moment that shows you chose them.

4. RECEIVING GIFTS

If your child's love language is receiving gifts:

- Hide a small meaningful item in their lunch box (a sticker, note, fun eraser) with no strings attached.
- Create gifts together (friendship bracelets, painted rocks) that reflect their interests.
- Choose gifts with intention aligned with what they love or what speaks to them.
- Send a care package or small surprise when you're away from home to let them know you're thinking of them.

5. ACTS OF SERVICE

When acts of service primarily express love to your child:

- Help fix a broken toy or repair something they care about together.
- Volunteer together or serve in your community, showing them what service means.
- Assist them in practicing a sport, hobby, or skill your support says "I believe in you."
- Perform little tasks for them that show you're paying attention, e.g., packing their bag, organizing their space, or helping set up a project.

NOTE

According to experts Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell, children, like adults, typically have a primary love language — but they may value more than one and their preferences can shift as they grow.

By paying attention to how your child asks for love and what they respond to most, you can fill their "emotional tank" and foster a sense of belonging, security, and confidence.

SOURCE:

Adapted from *The 5 Love Languages of Children* by Gary Chapman & Ross Campbell.

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