

27 Ways to Express Love To Your Young Child

By Lynn Louise Wonders

Young children need to feel connected, heard, seen and celebrated! Here are 50 ideas you can use to show your love for your young child inspired by the 5 Love Languages written by Gary Chapman.

Connect through Loving Touch:

1. Cuddle whenever you can!
2. Piggy-back and airplane rides on the floor or in the grassy yard.
3. Give her a back rub.
4. Snuggle up and read books together.
5. Tussle his hair when you walk by.
6. Rub lotion on her arms and legs after her bath.
7. Let hand-holding be not just for crossing the street! Take a walk, hold hands and sing a song together.

Give Your Child Your Time and Presence:

1. Build a castle of sugar cubes together.
2. Swing with him at the park – Don't just sit on the bench and watch him play.
3. Play a boardgame together like Candyland or Chutes-n-Ladders.
4. Bake cookies or make a pizza together.
5. Create a play clay station in the kitchen and roll, pound, pinch, pull, create.
6. When riding in the car, play I Spy together or sing songs.
7. Sit down at the table for meals together. Turn off the television.
8. Invite your child to be your helper when cleaning the house. Give her a "very important job" she will enjoy doing.

Use Loving Words:

1. Put simple love notes with smiley faces or hearts in her school snack/lunch bag.
2. Use encouraging words like, "You can do it!" and "Wow you worked so hard on that!"

3. Make up relaxing journey stories with your child as the main character to help your child go to sleep at night feeling loved.
4. Use a soft tone of voice when you speak to your child.

Give a Gift:

1. Put a fresh flower in water in her room.
2. Get little goodies from the dollar mart and wrap them up with ribbon.
3. Every once in a while for no reason leave a little gift on his bed for him to discover when he comes home from school.
4. Give her the gift of a special trip to the salon to get her nails painted.

Be of Service:

1. One day a month do his chore for him and surprise him with it.
2. Pack his lunch or snack with great care.
3. Help her rehearse her lines for the school play.
4. Go grocery shopping together then deliver a bag of food to the food bank.

Remember.... Children feel loved and secure when parents are consistent, encouraging and fully present! So, get down on your child's level and let her know you see her, hear her and that you care through your words, your tone, your touch and your actions!

About the Author:

Lynn Louise Wonders, MA, LPC, RPT-S, E-RYT is a licensed professional counselor, a registered play therapist supervisor, a certified professional counselor supervisor, an experienced registered yoga teacher and an early childhood specialist. Lynn has been working with young children and parents for over eleven years in a variety of settings including schools, child development centers, in community settings and in private practice. She now trains and supervises therapists in the practice of play therapy. Lynn founded P.E.E.P. (Preschool Emotion Education Program) and served as Family Services Director for two local child development centers. She has written numerous articles and led many workshops on the subjects of parenting preschoolers. Lynn is a prominent speaker in local churches,

community centers, college campuses and she provides professional supervision and training for other therapists working toward their credential of registered play therapist. She provides training for preschool teachers, in-class observations and consultations to assist teachers, parents and directors of preschools on how to best assist their students and children. Lynn is a Child Specialist trained in Collaborative Family Law, helping families through the process of divorce with optimum consideration for the impact on the children. Lynn has a private practice in East Cobb close to Roswell and Sandy Springs where she provides private therapy services and classes for children, women and couples. You can read more and reach Lynn at www.wonderscounseling.com.

