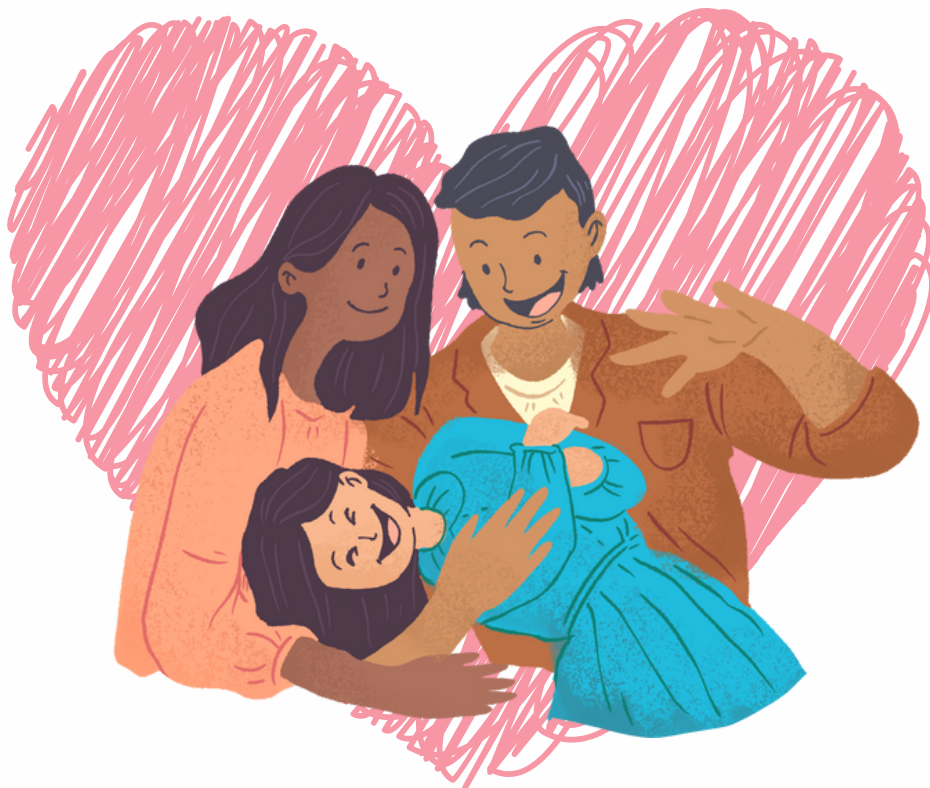


Decoding Your Child's *Love Language*



Parents and caretakers can better communicate with their children by understanding their child's **"love languages"** or how they show and receive love. Feeling loved and connected to one another is one of the most basic human needs. Figuring out your child's love language can help you build a deep bond. Read more to understand what love languages look like and how to find out which speaks to your child.



5 Love Languages

Love languages often involve mostly non-verbal communication. Here's what they tend to look like:

Acts of Service

These are all about doing things to help someone else like tying their shoes or brushing their teeth.

Receiving Gifts

Bringing a present home that reminds you of them from a store or after a trip makes them feel incredibly loved.

Words of Affirmation

Children who identify with this love language like it when you let them know that they are important and that you are listening.

Quality Time

This is all about time spent with one another. Get down on the floor, and enjoy them in their world.

Physical Touch

Hugs, cuddles, holding hands, and sitting on your lap might fill children who identify with this love language up.

Figuring Out Your Child's Love Language

Early on children don't have a defined love language. How we respond to their displays of affection as caregivers actually helps them flesh out and "choose" one by the time they are 5 or 6 years old, experts say. When your child nears this age, these tips can help you figure out which they've gravitated towards:

Observe your child

Get really curious with them and watch how they express love to others

Find voids and dislikes

Pay attention to statements that can be telling in suggestion what a child might need more of. You can also hone in a love language through a process of elimination of sorts: Pick up on what a child might not like by watching if they shy away from certain behaviors

Look for Patterns

Give children choices and see if you can find a pattern in their preferences.

Understand Your Special Needs Child

Children with special needs, such as autism and sensory issues, may naturally express love differently than children who don't experience them. No two children are the same, so be sure not to put a child with special needs in a box.

Don't Beat Yourself Up

Parents should always try to meet their child's needs when it comes to showing affection. But it's also important to avoid being too hard on yourself if you're having trouble decoding your child's love language.

At their core, love languages are about deep, authentic connection with the important people in your life, and when we are being hard on ourselves, we often take ourselves out of the moment, and as a result, out of connection. **Slow down, offer yourself, grace, drop into the present moment, just be with them, and they will undoubtedly feel your love."**

