

If your child's love language is physical touch...

Here are a few more ideas especially for parents. Pick and choose among them to try something new you think your child will appreciate.

- When you greet or say good-bye to your child, gather them into your arms and hold them. Kneel down for small children.
- Let your child hold or cuddle a soft item, such as a blanket to soothe them.
- If your child is under stress, gently stroke their head to relax them.
- Ask often if your child would like to be held or cuddled.
- Hug and kiss your child every day when they leave and return from school, as well as when you tuck them in at night for younger children.
- Stroke your child's hair or rub their back when they tell you about a difficult day or are upset.
- Shortly after disciplining your child, take a moment to give them a hug to show them the discipline was based on the consequences of their wrongful choices but that you still love and cherish them as your child.
- Snuggle closely together on the couch when watching television together.
- Give each other a high-five or similar congratulations whenever you catch your child doing something positive.
- Purchase a gift for your child that is touch-oriented, such as a soft pillow, blanket, or sweater.
- Have "tickle fights" with your children, being careful not to allow it to become a stressful activity for your child.
- Play games or sports together that require physical touch. This will allow both shared time together and touch that is meaningful without appearing forced.
- With younger children, read stories together with your child on your lap.

- Sing action songs together with your children that require touching and action, such as clapping hands, spinning, or jumping. Many of today's children's videos make this even easier.
- When your child is sick or gets hurt, spend extra time holding them and providing comfort.
- Occasionally yell out a "group hug" for your entire family, regardless of how small or large the family size. To add more humor, include family pets such as the dog or cat.
- Give "kissies," even if your child thinks he or she is too old for it.
- Hold hands during family prayers.

If your child's love language is words of affirmation...

Here are a few more ideas especially for parents. Pick and choose among them to try something new you think your child will appreciate.

- Put a Post-it note in their lunchbox with some encouraging words.
- Make a habit of mentioning something specific you've observed that highlights your child's accomplishments. Examples include, "I really appreciated how you showed kindness to that other child," or "I really enjoyed the positive attitude you had during the game."
- Ask what your child wants to do or be when they grow up. Then encourage them in ways that help them pursue these dreams. If your daughter says, "I want to be a veterinarian when I grow up," say things like, "I think you'd be a good vet."
- Record yourself on audio or video telling your child how much he or she means to you. Even better, make this a habit for when you have to go out of town or on a special holiday such as a birthday.
- If you are artistic, create a painting or drawing that shows how much you love your child.
- Take a picture or other creation your child has created and frame it in a special frame with a note of why it means so much to you.
- When you have to be out of town for work or other reasons, leave a series of short notes for your child, one for each day you are apart.
- Call your child at home whenever you think of them just to say, "I love you."
- Create a special name of affection for your child that is only used between the two of you.

- Make it a habit to say, "I love you" whenever you tuck in your child or leave one another.
- Place their artwork in areas they recognize as important to you such as the refrigerator, the office, or special scrapbook.
- When your child is feeling down, share five reasons why you are proud of them.
- Leave a note on a cereal box, bathroom mirror, or other place you know your child will look. A simple "Daddy loves you," or "Mommy loves you," in a unique location can be very powerful.
- Get a picture keychain and put photos of your children in it. Talk about the photos with family or friends when your children are present.
- Create an encouragement jar that you and your child can use to drop in notes of praise and read together on a regular basis.
- Draw a large picture or words of encouragement using sidewalk chalk on your driveway, either together or as a surprise for them to see later.
- When a child makes a mistake trying to do something helpful, first use words to recognize that you knew of their good intentions.

If your child's love language is quality time...

Here are a few more ideas especially for parents. Pick and choose among them to try something new you think your child will appreciate.

- Instead of spending time with your child after your errands, include your child in your daily activities such as laundry, grocery shopping, or washing dishes. Though it may take longer, the time together will make up for the inconvenience.
- Stop what you are doing to make eye contact with your child as they tell you something important.
- Cook something together for a snack, such as cookies or brownies.
- Find silly things to laugh about and laugh a lot about them.
- Give older children single-use cameras to record meaningful occasions.
- When a younger child is showing you something, crouch down to their eye level, or gather them into your arms.
- Have your child tell you of places they would like to go and why. Then surprise them occasionally by letting them choose one or arranging it for them ahead of time.
- Make a snack for yourself when you make one for your child. Then talk about their day together as you eat.
- Turn off your television show to watch your child's favorite show with them.
- Go to the toy store and play with some fun toys with no intention of buying anything.
- If you have more than one child, arrange for care of the others and take your child out to a quick breakfast before school or for a milkshake after school.
- Ask very specific questions about your child's day that do not have a yes or no answer.
- When taking your younger children to a park or playground, spend the time actually playing with them instead of watching from the park bench. Pushing your daughter on the swing or

riding the slide with your son creates lifelong memories and communicates love.

- Instead of television, focus on arts such as singing together or finger painting.
- Schedule a specific "date time" with each of your children individually. Write it in your planner and don't allow other priorities to take its place.
- Surprise your child with tickets or a trip to a special place. A camping trip, basketball game, or trip to the mall can build lifelong memories. Add pictures of the event to further strengthen this surprise.
- If possible, take your child to your workplace one day. Introduce your child to your coworkers and take your child to lunch with you.
- Create "traditions" with your child of a certain place you regularly go, perhaps to eat ice cream or to play at a particular park.
- Set aside a special place in the house where you go to play. A walk-in closet can serve as a "castle," while a place in the garage can serve as your "workshop."
- Have a campout together, even if it is simply a tent in your yard. Include flashlights and special camp foods to make the event complete.
- Focus family vacations to include significant time being together versus a trip focused on divided parent and child activities.
- Occasionally take family walks or bike rides together. Seek opportunities to spend time together that also include exercise.
- Share more meals together as a family. Many families eat very few meals together or eat in front of the television. Make dinnertime a special occasion with lots of talk about the day. Family prayer can also strengthen this time.
- Spend a few extra minutes putting your child to bed at night. Bedtime stories, talking about the day, or praying together at night can each be part of your everyday pattern.

- For older children, spend time doing homework together. This both improves their grades and creates additional quality time.
- Plant something together. For those with outdoor oriented children, time together in a flower garden, planting summer vegetables, or landscaping the yard can create lifelong positive memories.
- Make photo albums together, either in a book or on your computer. Talk together about the memories you shared in the process.
- On a rainy day, open up a photo album that has pictures of your child's earlier life. Sit together and talk about the fun and emotion of the events in the pictures.

If your child's love language is gifts...

Here are a few more ideas especially for parents. Pick and choose among them to try something new you think your child will appreciate.

- Keep a small collection of inexpensive gifts packed away for your child. Then give them one at a time as you sense there is a need.
- Select presents that fit the interests of your child.
- Carry snacks or small candies you can give out as a "treat" when away from home.
- Make a special meal you know your child likes, go to a special restaurant, or make their favorite dessert.
- Start a collection of unique gift boxes and wrapping papers that can be used to package even the most simple of presents.
- When away from home, mail a small package to your child with their name on it.
- Give personally made coupons for your child good for some of their favorites, such as a free spaghetti dinner, an extra half hour of time with you before bedtime, or a small gift next time you are shopping together.
- Keep a "gift bag" of small, inexpensive gifts your child can choose from as a reward for doing something positive.
- Make after school snacks memorable by serving them on a special plate.
- Be on the lookout for personalized gifts with your child's name on them. Save them for a rainy or difficult day as an encouraging surprise.
- Give your child a "song," either one you make up or a special song you select that reminds you of them.
- Create a scavenger hunt for a gift that includes a map and clues along the way to the main surprise.
- Hide a small gift in your child's lunchbox.

- If you are away from your child a few days, leave a small package for each day with a special gift and note reminding how much you love them.
- Instead of spending money on a larger gift for a birthday, host a birthday party at a special event location.
- Consider a gift that lasts, such as a tree you can plant together or a board game you can play together in the future.
- Buy or make your child a special ring or necklace to wear that is just from you.
- For young children, find "nature gifts" such as wildflowers or special stones wrapped in a special paper or box.
- For a birthday or Christmas, shop together for a special gift that includes your child's opinion in the process. This special gift plus personal involvement in the decision can create a highly-meaningful gift.
- Give hints leading toward a special upcoming gift. A "count-down" of notes such as, "Only four more days until present day," help create huge anticipation and a tremendous amount of love for those who especially enjoy receiving gifts.
- Keep a chart and some fun stickers to keep a record of accomplishments. Reward your child with a gift after a set number of stickers are earned.

If your child's love language is acts of service...

Here are a few more ideas especially for parents. Pick and choose among them to try something new you think your child will appreciate.

- Help your child practice for their sports team, such as pitch and catch for baseball or shooting free throws for children participating in basketball.
- Sit down and help your child as they work on homework.
- Make a favorite snack when your son or daughter is having a difficult day.
- Instead of just telling your younger children to go to bed, pick them up and gently carry them and tuck them in their blankets.
- For school-age children, help them select their outfit for the day as they are waking up in the morning.
- Occasionally wake up a half hour earlier to make a special surprise breakfast for your children.
- Begin teaching your child the importance of serving others through regular involvement together in a local community group or church ministry.
- For younger children, set up your child's favorite toys while they are taking a nap or are at school so they can immediately play with them (with you!).
- When running late to an appointment or meeting, help your child quickly finish what they are doing so you can both be ready faster instead of just telling them to hurry.
- During a time when your child is sick, go the extra step by setting up their favorite movie, reading them stories, or making their favorite soup.
- Connect your child with one of your friends or family members who can help them in an area of interest such as dance lessons, soccer, piano playing, or scouting.

- Choose one special area in which you determine to always serve your child above and beyond normal expectations. Examples could include making sure there are always marshmallows in your child's hot chocolate, making sure their favorite teddy bear is in their bed at bedtime, or having all of the paint supplies ready when they are ready to paint.
- Start a "birthday dinner" tradition where you make your child any meal they want on their birthday.
- Make a list of several of your child's favorite things they do with you. Then periodically do one of their favorites when they least expect it.
- Create flash cards for your child's upcoming test or quiz. Work together with your child until they feel confident with the material.
- Prepare a special snack in your child's lunch or for dinner, perhaps with foods cut into special shapes or that include your child's name.
- Assist your child in fixing a favorite broken toy or bicycle. Simply taking the time to repair it communicates love to a child whose love language is acts of service.