

Making Connections

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April Waybright

Parent Partner

Region 5

1200 Harrison Ave.

Elkins, WV 26241

1-800-449-7790

Kara Ramsey

Parent Partner

Region 6

PO Box 1620

Lewisburg, WV 24901

1-866-229-0461

How can the Parent Partner assist you ?

Provide families with:

- Helpful resources
- Support while receiving Birth to Three services and after the transition process at age 3
- Information needed to make referrals
- Information on child development

The 5 Love Languages of Children

Different kids crave different kinds of attention and affection. Dr. Gary Chapman, author of *The 5 Love Languages* and *The 5 Love Languages of Children*, believes that we all express love, and experience it through physical touch, gifts, words of affirmation, acts of service and quality time, but each of us has one way that matters most to us. Our job as parents is to know how to communicate with each of our children so they genuinely feel loved.

The first step in identifying your child’s primary love language is to pay attention to how he shows you love. Why? We all tend to offer affection in the way we wish to receive it. As we get older, we learn that the Golden Rule can backfire in our relationships because we need to give love unto others in the way that works best for them. But since kids generally don’t pick up on that, they offer the brand of affection they crave. The other piece of the puzzle is what your child requests.

What do the love languages look like and what can you do to show your kid how much you love them:

Language	What we see	What can you do	Common Pitfalls
Physical Touch	When you come home, does your child run to the door, grab your leg and climb all over you? If children are constantly in your space, touching you, or playing with your hair, that is a signal that they need to be touched more.	Snuggle on the couch Ask your kid if she wants to sit on your lap Offer hugs and high fives. Holding hands Rough house play Have a secret handshake Good morning/night hugs	A slap or spanking is hurtful to any child, but it is devastating to one whose primary love language is touch.
Gifts	Someone whose primary love language is gifts tends to care about how a present is wrapped, and he often remembers who gave him what for months or years after the fact, may have trouble getting rid of things someone gave him, even if he hasn’t looked at them in ages.	Your child sees a gift as a symbol of your love. Although it’s fine to keep a closet full of wrapped dollar-store toys, you don’t need to spend money. Leaving a precious object for the child to find (rock, flower, car, crayon or others) Stickers Hanging their artwork Have a “precious things” table for their creations	Be careful about overdoing gifts. Give kids gifts that are appropriate for their age and that will be helpful to them, rather than just what they want. Resist the temptation to shower children with presents instead of also using the other love languages.

<p>Words of Affirmation</p>	<p>For kids who listen intently and speak sweetly, your loving words matter most. If your child beams whenever you praise her or offers you lots of sweet feedback she probably relishes words of affirmation.</p>	<p>Babies and Toddlers – at eye level</p> <p>Tell them “You are the best thing in my life. You are so important to me.”</p> <p>Gossip with a favorite stuffed animal about how wonderful your kid is</p> <p>Older children</p> <p>Little notes in their lunch box</p> <p>Texts</p> <p>Even a bracelet with something like “my hero” printed on it</p>	<p>Insults cut deep it is particularly important for these kids to hear the words “I love you” standing alone, rather than, “I love you, but ...” that can imply that your love is conditional.</p>
<p>Acts of Service</p>	<p>Acts of service is the most peculiar-sounding love language, but kids who speak it appreciate thoughtful gestures, he may beg you to tie his shoes for him, fix a broken toy, or fluff his pillow. As a result, parents of these kids often end up feeling like servants.</p>	<p>Make exceptions to a general rule (helping the child to pick up toys)</p> <p>going above and beyond (such as warming clothes in the dryer on a cold morning)</p> <p>Encourage self-reliance and expect them to do what they can for themselves, the best act of service you can provide is teaching him, step-by-step, how to be more</p>	<p>Do not jump at every request, sometimes a thoughtful response will do, even if it’s to deny an ask. And watch out for how those exceptions to rules pile up – how many times have you picked up the toys alone, stop and rethink it!</p>
<p>Quality Time</p>	<p>These children feel most valued when you choose to spend time with them.</p> <p>A child who often says, “Watch this!” or “Play with me,” is begging for quality time.</p>	<p>Just being together</p> <p>Offer your undivided attention</p> <p>Create “special time” it can be short, but let your child choose the activity</p> <p>One-on-one time or chat</p>	<p>For the child craving quality time, isolating them in time out away from you, that’s a severe punishment to her. says Also, don’t assume that spending extra time together means that you need to abandon your to-do list. Have them help with it or even read beside your child when she’s absorbed in her own play will let her feel your warm presence.</p>

Though Dr. Chapman believes that love languages are like personality traits that stay with us for life, your child's preference might seem to change from moment to moment and stage to stage. A toddler who craves snuggles may grow into a 7-year-old who likes to roughhouse. A kid who basks in praise might become skeptical of your reassurance at some point and instead just need a little quality time.

Stay tuned in to what your child's reactions and behaviors say about the type of love she needs in any given moment and there's no doubt that you'll continue to connect—and reconnect—as she grows.

Article Adapted from – Cornwall, G. (April 2, 2019). The 5 love languages of children. Retrieved from <https://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/advice/love-languages-of-children/>.

Lets Get Crafty!

Rainbow Celery Experiment

Learn about capillary action with this simple and colorful rainbow celery experiment. This experiment allows you and your child to talk about the circulatory system and "capillary" action. The small "vessels" in the celery stalks carry the water and color to the leaves, like the way blood travels through your body.

Materials

- Leafy celery stalks
- Mason jars or drinking glasses filled with water
- Food coloring
- Scissors (optional)

Directions

Take it Further: Cut a single stalk of celery into three pieces and submerge each section into a different cup of colored water to see if the colors mix or blend in the leaves. Write down the reactions!



5 Areas of Attention: Is My Child Developmentally Ready for Sustained Attention, Focus, and Multitasking?

In Kenneth Lane's book, *Visual Attention in Children*, he discusses the five areas of attention and how they all relate to visual observation and how a child responds to stimuli within their environment (sound, sight, smell, taste, touch). These five areas of attention differ from [Types of Attention](#), but they can still be related, especially if your child struggles with attention and focus. As your child develops, their attention span will grow, which will help you determine if their behavior is age appropriate or potentially delayed. When attention and focus is difficult for a child in the classroom, and their friends and peers are able to sustain their attention, it may be a sign that they need help in areas of [proprioception](#), [vestibular](#), visual and gross motor. To better help you understand your child's attention milestones you can monitor them in these five areas of attention to determine how they are performing in each area.

Selective Attention

This type of attention is your child's ability to select from multiple factors or stimuli and focus on one item. It is selective process that occurs because the child is actively filtering out other distractions. Selective attention takes practice for your child to ignore all unneeded distractions, which is difficult if they struggle with issues like Sensory Processing Disorders because they are so sensitive to background noise and chatter. Remember that selective concentration not only filters out external influence (e.g., noise), but also internal information (e.g., thoughts).

Sustained Attention

This type of attention is what your child needs to focus on a task for a long period of time. It is the ability to concentrate on one activity or stimulus for a continuous stretch of time. It can be challenging not only for a child, but for an adult as well, especially if the task is boring or undesirable. Consequently, a child's level of sustained attention will vary. There are endless factors that contribute to the degree of how long a child can hold their focus. In [one study](#), the maternal behavior towards a toddler or child was a major factor in the length and stability of a child's sustained attention. A key aspect of this type of attention is the capacity to re-focus if distracted.

Focused Attention

This first area is your child's basic response to specific visual (sight), auditory (hearing) or tactile (touch) stimuli. It is your child's brain function that allocates cognitive resources to focus on external or internal information or stimuli. With that focus, the brain can process the data. Your child's attention span is their ability to keep their mind focused through attentive observation or active listening. By providing [visual cueing](#) opportunities for your child, you can increase the efficiency of your child's focus and attention on external information. Visual cues can be used to direct attention, emphasize, or enhance a position in place or target. For instance, a **bold** or underlined word, a laser pointer directed to a part of a presentation, or a flashing sign in a busy city. These types of visual [cues](#) are everywhere in our world. Your child is automatically attracted to these types of visual cues seen and processed through their visual system.

Shifting Attention

Another term for this area of attention is alternating attention. This type of attention is when your child has the ability to shift their focus and move between two or more tasks that have different cognitive requirements. It is different from multitasking because your child must stop one task to focus on a completely different task. It is interesting to watch a child's attention develop as they begin to have the mental flexibility to practice this type of attention. They will get more proficient in being able to alternate their attention back and forth between tasks.

Divided Attention

This area of attention is where a child can process two or more responses to two or more demands simultaneously. People are not mentally designed to attend in this manner, which makes [sharing attention difficult](#). Unlike shifting attention, where you change from one task to a completely different task, using divided attention means that you attempt to perform the tasks at the same time. Another term for this area of attention is *multi-tasking*. When this type of attention is needed, your child focuses only a part of their attention on each task. In a sense, they are splitting their attention versus alternating attention. Your child is able to multi-task successfully due to muscle memory and habit. This muscle memory and/or habit allows your child to complete a part of the task without conscious effort, while also focusing their energy on another task or other part of the task, which makes it seem like they are doing more than one task simultaneously.

Attention is often the beginning of other cognitive capacities.

Your child must first learn how to attend and progress to sustained attention so he or she can process the information for meaning and understanding. If your child cannot physically attend or if they have to concentrate on attending over learning in the classroom, it is a sign that they may be [delayed or struggling](#) in other areas. Eventually, sustained attention should lead to learning with a purpose.

<https://ilslearningcorner.com/2016-05-5-areas-of-attention-is-my-child-developmentally-ready-for-sustained-attention-focus-and-multitasking/>

5 AREAS OF ATTENTION



FOCUSED ATTENTION

When your child's attention is focused on visual (pictures) or auditory (hearing) information.

SHIFTING ATTENTION

When your child begins one task and stops to shift their focus on another task.



SELECTIVE ATTENTION

When your child attends to one specific task while filtering out other distractions around them.



SUSTAINED ATTENTION

When your child can attend and focus on a task for a continuous stretch of time.

DIVIDED ATTENTION

When your child can multitask, focusing only a part of their attention on multiple items at the same time.



HAPPY EASTER!

