

Family Support NEWS BRIEF

A publication of



CENTER FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES



The Five Love Languages and Children

Do adults and children experience and express love in different ways? Is identifying, understanding, and expressing love languages important to a child's development and the family's well-being? If you answered yes to these questions, then you agree with authors Dr. Gary Chapman and Dr. Ross Campbell. Dr. Chapman and Dr. Campbell, authors of "The 5 Love Languages of Children: The Secret to Loving Children Effectively," explain how children and adults express and experience love through primarily one of five main love languages: physical touch, words of affirmation, quality time, acts of service, and gifts. When parents

and caregivers identify and know their child's love language, it can be very beneficial in their everyday interactions.

Does your child really like to snuggle, stand close to you, give high fives, or even have a playful wrestling match? These may be clues that the child's primary love language is physical touch. The physical touch love language is when children express their love by physical closeness, touch, and tactile activities with their bodies. Sitting near a child while reading; doing a fun, playful handshake; practicing a sport; and petting and hugging a friendly pet are several ways to engage and support the physical touch love language.

"I love you. You rock! I appreciate your efforts," are words a child may love to hear if their love language is words of affirmation. Children with this love language express and experience love through praise, appreciation, and encouragement. Parents and caregivers can support children saying kind words, giving cards and notes, and creating a nickname of affection. It is important to remember that when a child makes a mistake, acknowledge the mistake, but also acknowledge their efforts with positive, affirming words, and provide positive feedback. In other words, use a strength-based approach.

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Quality time is another love language. This is when a child feels and experiences love by being in the presence of loved ones and friends. The child enjoys emotional closeness and extra attention. Parents may need support to create opportunities to engage in quality time activities with their children, for example, allowing the child to help around the house, taking walks together, reading to each other, attending a sporting event together, or simply having quality, one-to-one conversations.

The fourth love language is acts of service. This is when a child expresses and experiences love when being served or helped and enjoys serving others. Some ways to express this love language include helping a child with a task, preparing their favorite meal, and helping them tie their shoes. Parents and caregivers may put in extra energy and enthusiasm as they serve the child and may ask the child for tips for how they like to be served and how they like to serve others.

The fifth love language is gifts and is when a child loves to give and receive presents or a special gift of choice. Gifts could also be creating a song or a special meal for a child. It does not include when a child cries and whines for a toy or an item.

It is important for family support professionals to help parents and caregivers identify and understand their child's love language. One way that parents can identify their child's love language is to pay close attention to how the child loves the parent or caregiver. As the parent observes, write down the ways and refer to the love language descriptions as a reference. Another way is to ask the child, "How do you know that I love you?" Listen carefully to how the child responds. As parents listen to the replies, it will help parents identify and support their child's love language and communicate love to their child. Family support professionals can help parents teach their children strategies that help children master their love language.

Parents may identify their own love language, as well as their child's, by completing the online [Five Love Languages Quiz](#). The quiz helps individuals identify and better understand each of the five love languages and offers various activities for each love language. When parents and caregivers understand their own love language and their child's, it can be useful in daily interactions.

When parents support their child's love language, they also are practicing many of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors. Knowledge and communication of the five love languages may help to increase the parent's capacity to cope effectively with the everyday stressors and practice parental resilience. For example, when parents learn to express the love language of the child and not their own love language, it may help resolve problems, miscommunications, and build trusting relationships. As parents learn more about the love languages, this helps them understand their child's development and appropriate behaviors of children. When children and adults understand their own love language and the love language of siblings, relatives, classmates, or others, this helps build social connections.

With dedication, creativity, and commitment, family support professionals can help parents support and show love to their child in the child's love language, as well as

understand their own love language. It may take time for parents and caregivers to learn, but in the long run, it will help build trust, belonging, appreciation, confidence, and help children and adults be the best versions of themselves.

Sources

1. Blevins, A. 50 Ways to Love your Child Using the Five Love Languages. Retrieved from: <https://encouragingmomsathome.com/50-ways-to-love-your-child-every-day-using-love-languages/>
2. Campbell, R. & Chapman, G. (2016). The 5 Love Languages of Children: The Secret to Loving Children Effectively. Moody Publishers. (2022).
3. Love Language Quiz. Retrieved from: <https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/love-language>
4. Parry, J. (2021, Feb. 8). How to Connect with Your Child Using the Love Languages. Retrieved from: <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/connect-child-activities-love-languages>
5. Simply on Purpose. (2022, Feb. 9). 5 Love Languages for Kids: A Simple Guide to Using Love Languages. Retrieved from: <https://simplyonpurpose.org/5-love-languages-for-kids-a-simple-guide-to-using-love-languages/#::~text=How%20Love%20Languages%20Apply%20to,will%20manifest%20in%20different%20ways>.
6. Transform Yourself Through Movement. How We Communicate with Children through the 5 Love Languages.

Family Support Webinar

What you need to know about the Families First Prevention Services Act of 2019 (FFPSA)

Monday, Oct. 17

1-3 p.m. (EDT)

This webinar will include a video clip describing FFPSA, information about the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Plan, and Parents as Teachers evidence-based model alignment with the intent to provide prevention services with families. Participants will be able to submit questions during registration.

Presenters: Jon Rubin, Chief of Staff, Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth, and Families; and Tiedra Marshall, Director of Expansion, Parents as Teachers

[Register for FFPSA webinar](#)

Community Connections Across The Pond: Celebrating 30 Years

On Tuesday, Nov. 8 from 9-10:30 a.m. EST, Pennsylvania Parents as Teachers – USA (PA PAT) and Parents as First Teachers – United Kingdom (PAFT) will meet to commemorate our 30-year anniversaries!

About Pennsylvania Parents as Teacher in the United States

The Parents as Teachers evidence-based home visiting model was introduced in Pennsylvania as one of the components of Family Centers as “a new way of doing business” – a philosophy, a process, and a place. Beginning with 13 pilot sites in 1992 and 1993, the number of Family Centers with PAT programs grew to over 40 sites by 2004. There are now 56 PAT affiliate programs with different “homes” in Family Centers, schools, and health and human service organizations throughout Pennsylvania.

About Parents as First Teachers in the United Kingdom

Parent as Teachers was brought to the U.K., in 1991, by Pam Holtom, a school principal, who wanted to give more children the best chance of school and life success. Pam believed parents wanted the best for their children but often welcomed additional support to achieve their hopes. Having started in the school system, the program spread to three of the four nations of the U.K., via Family Support and Early Help.



PENNSYLVANIA
Parents as Teachers®

Welcome to our monthly article to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Pennsylvania PAT. This month we will focus on PAT as originating from a bioecological model and its role as an intervention to improve parenting quality and provide enriched learning opportunities for children.

Here is a research article that you may find helpful in demonstrating the connection between PAT, early life stress, and behavior problems.

Methylation of the Glucocorticoid Receptor Promoter in Children: Links with Parents as Teachers, Early Life Stress, and Behavior Problems.

Findings indicate that future research may provide more insight on the epigenetic effects of social interventions (including PAT) in the context of early life stress and the hypothalamus–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis. The HPA axis plays a key role for adequate responding to, coping with, and subsequent recovery from environmental threats.

[Read Methylation article](#)

Source: Development and Psychopathology, December 2020

In-Person “Be Strong Parent Café” Training Institute – Space Still Available!

If you are interested in providing place-based Be Strong Parent Cafes in your community, there is still space available for a few teams to attend the Parent Café Training Institute in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, Oct. 26-27.

Please [contact Rijelle Kraft](#) for more information.

Parents as Teachers Online Courses

Foundational and Model Implementation

For new parent educators and new supervisors of affiliate programs

Monday, Oct. 17 – Friday, Oct. 28

Monday, Nov. 7 – Friday, Nov. 18

Foundational 2: 3 Years Through Kindergarten

Monday, Nov. 28 – Friday, Dec. 2

Register for courses at the National Parents as Teachers’ [training website](#). Questions regarding registration for PAT trainings? Contact [Jennifer Esposito](#).



Family Support Team

Family Support at Center for Schools and Communities provides training and technical assistance to Parents as Teachers providers, Children's Trust Fund grantees, and the Strengthening Families Leadership Team.

Karen Shanoski

Family Support and Community Engagement Director
(717) 763-1661, ext. 139

Rijelle Kraft

Family Support Managing Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 221

Jennifer Esposito

Family Support Data Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 161

Julia Mallory

Family Support Project Specialist
(717) 763-1661, ext. 169

Alexia Brown

Family Support Technical Assistance Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 146

Christine Felicetti

Family Support Coordinator
717-763-1661, ext. 104

Pennsylvania Parents as Teachers

at Center for Schools and Communities

Children's Trust Fund

Strengthening Families

Family Support at Center for Schools and Communities

275 Grandview Avenue
Suite 200, Camp Hill, PA 17011
(717) 763-1661

centerforschoolsandcommunities.org

Safe Kids Corner



Halloween Safety Tips

Walk Safely

1. Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks. Look left, right, and left again, when crossing and keep looking as you cross.
2. Put electronic devices down, keep heads up, and walk— don't run—across the street.
3. Teach children to make eye contact with drivers before crossing in front of them.
4. Always walk on sidewalks or paths. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible. Children should walk on direct routes with the fewest street crossings.
5. Watch for cars that are turning or backing up. Teach children to never dart out into the street or cross between parked cars.
6. Join kids under age 12 for trick-or-treating. If kids are mature enough to be out without supervision, tell them to stick to familiar areas that are well lit and trick-or-treat in groups.

Costumes for a Safe Halloween

1. Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors
2. Choose face paint and makeup whenever possible instead of masks, which can obstruct a child's vision.
3. Have kids carry glow sticks or flashlights to help them see and be seen by drivers.
4. When selecting a costume, make sure it is the right size to prevent trips and falls.

Drive Extra Safely on Halloween

1. Slow down and be especially alert in residential neighborhoods. Children are excited on Halloween and may move in unpredictable ways.
2. Take extra time to look for kids at intersections, on medians, and on curbs.
3. Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully.
4. Get rid of any distractions—like your phone—in your car so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings.
5. Turn on your headlights earlier in the day to spot children from greater distances.
6. Popular trick-or-treating hours are 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. Be especially alert for kids during those hours.

Source: [Safe Kids Worldwide](http://SafeKidsWorldwide.org)