



To a child, love is spelled T-I-M-E

Our children are wired to connect to us. We also want to be close to our parents – even as adults! And in spite of their challenging behaviours, our children have an innate desire to be close to us. It is the quality of this connection, perhaps more than anything else, that matters most for resilience.

In *9 Ways to a Resilient Child* I describe how important it is to understand our children's love languages. How do they like to be loved? Take a look at the list below and consider how your children like to be loved:

1. Spend time with me
2. Understand me
3. Touch me
4. Tell me
5. Show me



Every single person on the planet – and especially our children – respond to the two languages of time and understanding. They are universal. They work for you, and they work for your children. An old saying reminds us that 'To a child, love is spelled T-I-M-E.' I know of no intervention more powerful than simply spending time with another person to create a strong and positive relationship. And we all want to be understood. It is critical to healthy and happy relationships.

There are some people who love to be touched, squeezed and hugged, and some who don't. There are some people who love to be told they're loved, and praised and acknowledged, and some who don't. And there are some people who love us to do things for them and give things to them, and some who don't. (And there are some who love all of the above!)

As we spend time with our families we can tap into their love languages and strengthen relationships and resilience. Your activities this week are designed to help you strengthen your relationships.

ACTIVITY 1: Family Time

This month, set aside one morning or evening each week that is purely family time. No devices, no distractions and no interruptions. Talk with each other, play some games or participate in an activity where everyone is involved and interacting. Make it your family night, your “Super Saturday”, or whatever else you might call it, and get involved in spending time together as a family.

Our family time each week will be: _____

This week we will: _____

ACTIVITY 2: One-On-One

If your children are old enough, arrange for a one-on-one date with them this week, and at least once a fortnight ongoing. It should be low-cost or no-cost, and be about nothing more than spending time together.

My date night/time with my children will be: _____

Activity ideas: _____



Spend **TIME** with me
UNDERSTAND me
TOUCH me
TELL me
SHOW me

ACTIVITY 3: Love Notes

Leave at least one love note in your child's lunch box this week (or on their pillow) so you can tell them they are loved. Use the notes provided on the next page or make your own!

ACTIVITY 4: Touch Me

Make a rule that for a week, each time you walk past one another in the house, you'll reach out and touch, squeeze or massage one another so you can help them know they're loved.

ACTIVITY 5: Observation

Write down some observations about the ways the members of your family best receive and give love.

I love you because...



I love you because...



I love you because...



I love you because...



I love you because...



I love you because...

