

Why Is It Important To Know the Love Languages of Your Children?

By Mark Terrell, CEO

It is common knowledge that I am probably the worst Spanish student that the world has ever known. I find it ironic that I now run an organization that is in a Spanish speaking country. I'm sure that my Spanish speaking employees love listening to my broken Spanish and especially like my hand signals and gestures that I use to get my point across.

Not unlike my visits to the Dominican Republic I often think that my family speaks a different language and in fact they do. Not only do they speak a different language I get the very same blank stares that I receive as I speak to my Spanish speaking staff.

In the book "The 5 love languages" author Gary Chapman talks about the fact that each of us has a different love languages: "physical touch, words of encouragement, acts of service, time and attention, and gift giving. He describes the fact that each of us has one of these love languages and the importance of knowing our families love language and the importance of knowing our own love language.

How do you know which love language you have? Simply put, it is the one that you find yourself giving to others.

For example my wife loves to clean the garage for me (Acts of Service) and I love to tell my wife how beautiful she is (Words of encouragement). She is telling me that she loves me by cleaning the garage when all I want is to tell her that I am a great provider, and I am telling her that I love her by paying her a compliment when all she wants me to do is clean the garage.

Unfortunately, what results from this misunderstanding is that I simply walk through the garage not noticing or appreciating all of her hard work or she will simply rebuff my compliment by telling me she hasn't washed her hair in two days. We are each trying to tell the other one that we love them but we are doing it in a way that neither of us understands or appreciates. This situation over time will result in bitterness and confusion which can and will have an adverse affect on our marriage.

This same lack of understanding can take a toll on our children as well. For instance if your daughter's love language is physical touch and you and your spouse never fill that need she will find a way to fill that void in a way that may be surprising to you.

We should care to know each of our families love languages so that they will know that they are truly loved and cared for. If not we risk seeing blank stares from those we love the most.

Other Resources

- *The Five Love Languages for Children* by Gary Chapman
- *The Five Love Languages for Teenagers: The Secret to Loving Teens Effectively* by Gary Chapman
- *The Five Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts* by Gary Chapman

- *For Parents Only: Getting Inside the Head of Your Kid* by Lisa Rice