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MEDIA ARTICLE

Show me the love

With Valentine's Day fast approaching it is time to show those around you how much you love them. Apart from your partner your children need confirmation that you love them and want to win their hearts as well.

Here are the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect's (NAPCAN) top ten tips to give your child a happy Valentine's Day.

1. Give your children lots of kisses and cuddles.
2. Tell them you love them often.
3. Show pleasure in their achievements and how they are developing. Encourage them to try out new skills and let them experiment doing things their own way.
4. Take time to listen to them. Let them try to explain what they mean before interrupting or correcting them.
5. Catch your child behaving well. Instead of just saying 'Well done!' tell them exactly what you liked about their behaviour.
6. To help them relax before sleeping, take it in turns to remember something happy that happened during the day.
7. Try to make time to go to school sports matches or concerns. Their self-respect grows when you watch them perform.
8. Have family meals together – without the TV on - and spend the time talking together about everyday things.
9. Play with your children as much as you can. Getting down and dirty with children can be fun!
10. Let them know you are interested and available whenever they need you. No matter how independent older children may seem they still need their parent's support and understanding.

Children need parents to spend time with them, give them lots of encouragement and show them that they are loved regardless if it is Valentine's Day. Spending time with your children can remind you how to enjoy the simple pleasures of life again.

NAPCAN produces brochures which provide additional tips on how to show love to your child. You can order these free on-line by going to: <http://www.resources.napcan.org.au/>.

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Notes to the editor:

NAPCAN (National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect) is Australia's leading advocate for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. NAPCAN's goal is to bring about the changes necessary in individual and community behaviour and in government policy to stop abuse and neglect before it starts.

NAPCAN also works directly with children and young people conducting innovative programs to strengthen protective behaviours and build resilience and life skills. NAPCAN also assists 'at risk' parents through face-to-face programs and works in local communities building inclusive networks and strengthening local support of children and families.

A charity, NAPCAN is governed by a national board with the support of professional sub-committees and state and territory councils. For further information go to: www.napcan.org.au