

CHARACTER



Love

December 2004

Love: “unselfish, loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another.”
“Love one another and you will be happy. It’s as simple and as difficult as that.”

Michael Leunig

Have you ever observed a group of children at play and wondered at their different personalities? Why are some cheerful and bubbling with enthusiasm while others seem unsure of themselves, suspicious and afraid?

Studies have proven that a child’s feelings of security and self-esteem come largely from their home environment. If they see love expressed in both word and deed between caring parents; if compliments and words of praise reward obedience and kindness, a child will react with similar behavior.

In daily living, parents who are kind, gentle and quick to forgive are by example teaching these qualities of loving behavior. Their children who know they are loved unconditionally are free to go among their peers with an inner joy that is a direct result of feeling secure and loved. They find it easy to make friends. They resist the inclination many children have to be selfish and unkind. They are slow to anger. Revenge, ridicule, vulgarity, abuse and ostracism have no place in their hearts. Outward actions and appearance are often the reflection of how a child feels inside.

The following poem by Dorothy L. Law says it well:

Children Learn What They Live

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight.

If a child lives with fear, he learns to be apprehensive.

If a child lives with pity, he learns to feel sorry for himself.

When a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy.

If a child lives with jealousy, he learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to be confident.

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns how to be patient.

If a child lives with praise, he learns to be appreciative.

If a child lives with acceptance, he learns to love.

If a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself.

If a child lives with fairness, he learns what justice is.

If a child lives with honesty, he learns what truth is.

If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith in himself and those about him.

If a child lives with friendliness, he learns the world is a nice place in which to live.

What is your child living?

Each of us from our earliest years to our oldest stage in life has a need to be loved. Yet for most of us, it takes a lifetime to realize that if one would have the love of others, they must love others.

Love and being loving is the key to happiness for each of us. It must come from our homes where love is a way of life.

Gwen Noble
Lindon Resident

“You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.”

—Amy

Carmichael

“Love lives in cottages as well as in castles.”

“Love delights in giving attention rather than attracting it.

Love finds the element of good and builds on it.

Love does not magnify defects.

Love is a flame that warms but never burns.

Love knows how to disagree without becoming disagreeable.

Love rejoices at the success of others instead of being envious.”

—Father James Keller

Book List

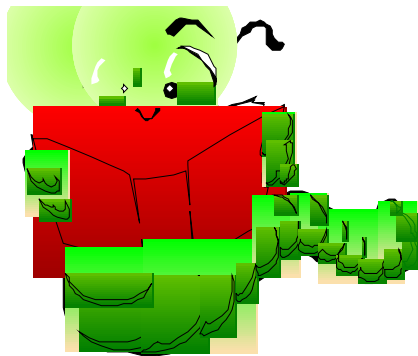
Weird Parents
by Audrey Wood

Fanny's Dream
by Caralyn Buehner

The Gift of the Magi
by O. Henry

Mama, Do You Love Me?
by Barbara M. Joosse

Old Jake's Skirts
by C. Anne Scott



Family Activities

–Do a family Christmas service project.

–Have each family member write a “letter of love” to each other family member. Each person could make a large initial of the addressee and outline it with sentences of admiration and fond remembrances. Open these on Christmas Eve.

–Build a Christmas tree shape with pretzels and large marshmallows. Like the marshmallows connecting pretzels, the sweetness of love holds relationships together.

–Clara Barton, “Angel of the Battlefield” and founder of the American Red Cross, was born on December 25, 1821. After her service in the Civil War, her love for mankind led her to offer aid at the battlefield of the Franco-Prussian War. Later, she organized relief work following American floods and hurricanes. She worked to alleviate suffering during the Russian and Armenian famines. One of her earliest efforts in her distinguished career of humanitarian service occurred when she was 11 years old. For two years she nursed and attended her brother, David, who was badly injured in an accident. *How can we put our love for others into action?*

Kid's Corner

When I think about what love is, I think of my family. They love me no matter what. They support me in sports and school and encourage me to do my best, but also to be myself. They accept my friends and welcome them to our house. They teach me that love of family is important and that is how and where we learn to love others. Love is what keeps us together even when things get tough. It helps us forgive when sometimes we don't treat our families as well as we treat our friends. But, no matter what happens, I know my family will always love me. Friends come and go. Friends sometimes hurt us and disappoint us, but family love seems to last through hurt and disappointment. We need to love our families and always be loyal to them.

Sean Tanner
8th Grade
Oak Canyon Jr. High

We, at Character Connection would like to focus on helping parents access character materials this year by using the web site located at www.thecharacterconnection.com. If you are interested in receiving a monthly reminder of the character traits and access to resource materials, please e-mail your address to arlainea@isquaredinc.com

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