

7 WAYS TO AFFIRM YOUR KIDS EVERY MORNING

You certainly don't have to do all of these every single day. But if you make it a routine to do two or three of them, the long-term effect will have a significant impact on your kids' hearts. Here are 7 affirmations for kids every morning.

1. Say, "I love you"

I know many people, especially men, who never heard their dads say, "I love you." You can never tell your kids "I love you" enough. Your actions mean a great deal, but your words can be equally as powerful. I want my kids to remember their dad not only showed his love often but said it often, too. As a side note, you'll notice the rest of these ways to affirm your kids are extensions of saying "I love you."

2. Say, "I'm glad you're my son/daughter."

It's one thing to say "I love you" to your kids, but do your kids think you like them? Do they know you delight in them? I often try to tell my son and daughter that I'm glad they're my son and daughter. Don't give kids reasons to doubt whether you value them or not. If they don't think you're glad to be their dad, they will find someone who will be glad to value them—and that may not always be good for them.

3. Ask, "Who are you?"

Your son or daughter needs help forming his or her identity. Without a strong identity, kids can fall into risky behavior and lack confidence. I ask my kids at least once a day, "Who are you?" They respond, "A child of the King." I want my kids to know that no matter what names someone may call them or what pressures they face, they are children of God. What identity do you want your kids to have? Make it simple and easy to instill every day.

4. Hug Them

Our kids need affection and healthy physical touch. I will never refuse to hug my kids, no matter how old they get. Saying "I love you" gets to your kid's heart through the ears. A hug gets to your kid's heart through touch. You not only convey love to your kids when you hug them, but you convey the safety, strength, and closeness they need.

5. Make breakfast for them.

We have a Saturday tradition of chocolate chip pancakes. My daughter will sometimes make them with me. She loves that I count out five chocolate chips for her (because she's five) as "payment" for her help. We then wash them down with a massive glass of milk. The point is that I know my kids love chocolate chip pancakes, and I know that, so I make them. When you make their favorite breakfast, it's another tangible way to say "I love you."

7 WAYS TO AFFIRM YOUR KIDS EVERY MORNING

6. Write them a note.

Full disclosure: My wife is better at this than I am, but depending on your kids' ages, write them a short note and stick it in their lunch box or wherever else they'll see it. It's another reminder that their dad loves them. It could simply be "I love you" or a reminder of something funny that happened recently between you. It doesn't matter what you write because who doesn't love handwritten notes? The point is to remind them you think of them.

7. Say a special affirmation to them.

One of the best affirmations for kids is something I stole from John Trent's book *I'd Choose You*. For example, I love to ask my daughter, "If I had all the five-year-old girls in the world lined up and could only choose one to be my daughter, do you know who I'd pick?" I've done it often enough that she will smile and yell out, "Me!" When the world is often speaking anything but affirmation to our kids, it's imperative that we do.

30 DAY CHALLENGE

For the next 30 days, commit to affirming your kids every morning.

(print this and place it somewhere you will see it each day.

Circle each day that you affirm your kid(s).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					