



# TODAY'S FUEL

Parenting Resources from Kanakuk

*100 Ways to Say "I Love You"* was written by Joe White President of Kanakuk Kamps and author of books for teens and parents including; *FUEL: 10-minute devotionals to ignite the faith of parents & teens*, *Wired by God*, *Pure Excitement*, and many others.

For more information about a **life-changing summer at Kanakuk** for your children or the whole family visit [www.kanakuk.com](http://www.kanakuk.com).

## 100 Ways to Say "I Love You"

Joe White

Last night my grown son Brady came home from Texas. I have missed him terribly since he left home for college. This morning I made him hot blueberry pancakes like I used to when he was a child. Oh, how my heart aches for those mornings when I was a dad of four kids living in the house! It was chaos, but wow, was it fun! (Most of the time it was fun!)

Last night we had supper at Jamie's house. My grandson Hays (precious big baby-blue-eyed five year old) asked me to lay by him and read with him and said, "Pops, don't leave until I am sound asleep." Oh my, how can life get any better!

Well, it all reminded me of the many ways I tried to say "I love you" during those priceless, tender, turbulent growing up years. Here's a hundred ways of saying "I love you" without saying the words. Pick a few that fit your style and get carried away with it! When you pack 'em up for college you'll cry over the rich, wonderful memories.

### A Hundred Ways to Say "I LOVE YOU"

1. When your child is participating in an athletic event or musical performance – be there watching.
2. Help your son or daughter learn a new skill – riding a bike, making a cake, fixing a flat tire.
3. Walk together with your child some morning all the way to the school bus stop.
4. Leave "I Love You" notes in your child's school lunch box.
5. Tonight, read a chapter together in your child's favorite book.
6. Talk together about your favorite memories growing up.
7. Memorize a verse in the Bible together.
8. Have a family picnic next Sunday afternoon.
9. Sit in church together.



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10. After your teenage son or daughter comes in from a date, have popcorn together by the fireplace.
11. Give your child a long back rub.
12. Go out in the snow together and throw snowballs at a target (or each other).
13. Listen to your child – with all your attention.
14. Sit down together and watch your child's favorite TV show.
15. Skim rocks together on a lake or pond or river.
16. Snuggle in bed together as you tell a good-night story.
17. Have a water-pistol fight (let your kids drench you).
18. When your child is afraid – try to remember your own childhood fears and talk together about it.
19. Reminisce about your child's toddler days – and say what a wonderful baby he or she was.
20. On the first cold day of autumn, make and drink hot chocolate together.
21. Say, "I'm proud of you!"
22. Twice this week, prepare your child's favorite dinner menu.
23. Have milk and cookies together after school.
24. Let your son or daughter select where you eat out (even if it's McDonald's again.)
25. Catch fireflies together and make a living lantern.
26. Go rowing or canoeing together.
27. Tell your child about the things you appreciated most about your own parents.
28. Build a small animal or insect cage together. Then go hunt together for something to put in it.
29. Have a family worship time after a meal – sing together, pray together, read Scripture together.
30. Make up and tell stories with your kids as the heroes.
31. Bring home your child's favorite candy bar.
32. Dream together about a round-the-world, as-long-as-you-like, all-expenses-paid vacation.
33. Make a telephone call to your child, just to say you're thinking of him/her.
34. Have a pillow fight together some night at bedtime.
35. Play games together – Old Maid, Concentration, Candyland, Sorry, Pictionary.
36. Rake leaves together – then jump in them.
37. Make cookies together, then put them on neighbors' porches, ring the doorbell and run.
38. Talk together about your favorite characters in the Bible. Why do you admire them?
39. Plant trees in your yard in honor of your kids (one for each).
40. On a hot day, hook up a water hose and sprinkler in the backyard and run through the water together.
41. Go apple picking together, then take some to the neighbors.
42. Give everyone a dollar and go shopping together just for the fun of it.
43. Roast marshmallows together in the fireplace.
44. Shop together for a model plane or ship, then build it together.
45. Spend a special time praying for others – even those not related to your family.
46. Make a tree house together.



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47. Listen appreciatively as your child practices his first trumpet lesson.
48. When you sense something is troubling your child, make a reason for a trip in the car alone with him.
49. Have a treasure hunt – at home, in the back yard, in the neighborhood – or a combination of all three.
50. Press your child's band uniform before each performance.
51. Go to court with your child when he/she pays their first speeding ticket.
52. Stay up to talk together after your son or daughter's first date.
53. Keep a scrapbook of your child's awards, newspaper clippings, photos, etc. Get it out and look at it together.
54. Be there on the cold street to watch your child in the Christmas parade.
55. Let your child teach you to roller skate.
56. Invite your child's friends to your home to spend the night.
57. Know when report card day is, and ask to see it.
58. Show genuine concern when your child says he is sick and can't go to school. Take his temperature and ask if you should make a doctor's appointment.
59. When you shop for clothing for yourself, take along your child and ask for his opinion on what he thinks looks best on you.
60. After a scolding, tell your child, "Did you know I love you even when you're naughty?" Then give them a hug.
61. Ask for your child's opinion on a big family decision.
62. Never say, "I'm too busy."
63. Show your child where you've kept a special card or picture from him/her for a very, very long time.
64. Be a partner with your child in planning and making something special for your spouse.
65. Give your child your full attention when he tells you what happened at school today, and provide a thoughtful response.
66. Volunteer to be a homeroom mom or dad on a special day at school.
67. Compliment your child's attempt to keep a tidy room.
68. Ask your child – with genuine and obvious sincerity – how his day was.
69. Show your child one of his baby pictures, and tell him why it's one of your favorites.
70. Help your daughter fix her hair in a special way.
71. Take your child out to breakfast (just you and him) before school.
72. Before a big event in your child's life (birthday, big test, competition) decorate his room with crepe paper and posters.
73. Take your child out for bowling or miniature golf and dinner afterwards.
74. Go on a bike ride around the neighborhood together.
75. Have a family slumber party in the family room in front of the fireplace (complete with treats and old movie videos on TV).
76. Send your child a fun balloon-o-gram at school.
77. Dry and brush your child's hair after a shower, and have a neat chat while you're doing it.



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78. Always display (on the refrigerator or in another prominent spot) the artwork you child made at school.
79. Say "please" and "thank you" each time you ask your child to do something.
80. Tell your spouse how proud you are of your child for something he did (and let him overhear your remarks.)
81. Give your child a hug when he's feeling down.
82. Smile when you are together, and be ready to laugh when your child does.
83. Build and fly kites together.
84. Say to your child, "Let's spend some time together, just you and me."
85. When your child is sick, stay up with him at night.
86. Give your child the freedom to fail. Remember, mistakes are never fatal.
87. Without being preachy, talk openly with your child about the dangers of substance abuse.
88. Leave a note of encouragement inside your child's favorite pair of shoes.
89. Talk frequently with your child about the truths in the Bible that you're enjoying in reading and meditation.
90. On a 'rough' day for the child, let a small forgotten chore go 'unnoticed.'
91. Play basketball together.
92. Serve your child breakfast in bed.
93. Don't be afraid to admit to your child when you're wrong.
94. Laugh together – cry together.
95. Remind your child often that he was made in God's image.
96. Put up a tire swing in the tallest tree around, and swing together.
97. Say something encouraging about your child in front of his friends.
98. Make up a secret code language, and write messages to one another.
99. Start praying now for the spouse your son or daughter will have someday. Pray that their marriage will be strong and Christ-centered.
100. Take time to make today special.