

# Love is a Verb

Do you ever get angry with your little brother for calling you names? Do you ever hit him for it? Or maybe you tried the verbal tactic. Do you get annoyed with your younger sister, who wants to talk after bedtime? Do you ever tell her to shut up and go to sleep? Have you ever made fun of one of your siblings just because you knew they would get mad and scream at you?

Maybe you've done one of these "acts of affection" to your siblings. Or maybe you showed your true feelings a little bit differently. It's easy to say we love our siblings but much harder to show that we love them.

by Kate Yurchak

## 10 ways to show love to your siblings



### 5 Hug them often, even if they act as if they don't like it.

If they're younger than 5 or 6, kiss them on the cheek. Hold their hand when you cross the street together. Human touch is essential to kids for proper growth. Touch brings a sense of security to them and strengthens your relationship. Your physical touch shows that you care about them and that you're not ashamed of them.

### 6 Read them their favorite book before they go to bed.

And offer to do it before they have a chance to ask. Tell them to pick out any book. Then read it using animated voices and expressions. Lie next to them in the bed, or let them sit on your lap while you read. Then tuck them in and kiss them goodnight before you leave.

### 7 Drive to their favorite restaurant get them a treat.

The first time I pulled into McDonald's with my 5-year old brother, Kameron, he got really excited and started wiggling in the front seat. I bought him some 99-cent french fries, and now he loves doing errands with me because of the possibility of food! He says he's hungry every time we go out.

### 8 Encourage them to obey your parents.

When Mom and Dad say it's time for bed, help them to go cheerfully. Even go with them! Be an example. If they see you happily doing what your parents ask, they'll imitate you and grow to be more like Jesus.

### 9 Go to their activities.

When they have a basketball game, swim meet or piano recital, go with them. Don't be embarrassed to cheer or clap loudly for them. They may act self-conscious, but they love it. They know that you aren't ashamed of them and that you are proud of them.

### 10 Help them get into God's Word.

Young kids often struggle with beginning their daily devotions. Share what God is teaching you. If they have trouble making time for devotions, offer to read your Bible at the same time. By sitting down together and reading the Word, not only will you both grow closer to God, but you'll grow closer to each other.

### 1 Play their favorite game with them.

Whether it's Uno, Domino or building blocks, they love when you play with them. It may not be your favorite thing to do, but true love requires sacrifice. Besides, some good, hearty competition is always fun. Get your parents to play, too-it'll be even more exciting!

### 2 Help them with their dirtiest chore.

This varies from family to family, even from sibling to sibling, but some common most-hated jobs are cleaning the bedroom, taking out the trash and doing the dishes. Offer to load the dishwasher for them. Or if they are on trash duty, take it out without their noticing. Later, they'll be grateful. I'll let you in on a little secret. Young kids always think cleaning their room is hard, but it's not. If you help them, you'll help them obey Mom, avoid a lot of frustration and relieve them of the hardship.

### 3 Make their favorite sandwich for lunch.

Write their name with mustard on the bread and show it to them before you close it. Then get their favorite chips and drink. Top it all off by scooping a big bowl of ice cream for dessert.

### 4 Write them a note to tell them how much you love them.

Use pretty stationery or put cool stickers on it. Tell them how talented they are at the piano or how proud you are of their football skills. Then don't leave them in any doubt of your sincerity. Back your words up with actions! (See Numbers 1 through 10!)

The people we are the closest to often are the hardest to love. But don't give up! Christ gave His life to show His love for us. "Love one another," He says. "As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (John 13:34). You may not have the chance to die for your siblings every day, but you can die to yourself by putting them first. All of these ideas are useless if you don't put them into practice.

Try something a little harder. The next time one of them does something just to bug you, turn around and put one of these ideas into practice. If they call you "bossy" and "pizza face," take out the trash for them. When they snap a rubber band on your arm, write them a note to say, "I love you." Turn the other cheek. Be a godly example of Christlike love.\*

Kate Yurchak from Greenville, S.C., has seven younger siblings.  
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