



PARENT PAGE

SESSION TWELVE

Welcome to the DivorceCare for Kids family. Each week you will receive a Parent Page. This Parent Page will do three things: (1) make you aware of the theme for the week's session, (2) give you tips to create stronger bonds in your single-parent family, and (3) enhance the parent/child relationship. We suggest you purchase or create a journal to record stories, comments, and funny things that happen in your family. For more information about DC4K, go to www.dc4k.org. Find single-parent resources at www.dc4k.org/parentzone.

Loving my parents

This week's goal:

To allow your children to express their love to you as you model expressing love to your own parents.

What the experts say:

In the middle of a frustrating day when everything seems to go wrong, it is easy to want a little extra love and attention. If we don't get it, we may feel deprived and even unloved. Children have those days too. In many divorced families children are reluctant to ask for attention or to express love to the parent.* You will want your family to learn to express their feelings and be able to ask for a hug when needed. Children will model how they see you treating your parents. Encourage the children to have contact with their grandparents. Grandparents can add a different and refreshing dynamic to children's lives.

This week in DC4K:

We discussed loving each parent in different ways. We reminded the children that their parents still love them. We explored ways to show love and discussed ways to ask for love and attention. We also talked about accepting love from our heavenly Father.

One family's story:

One single dad had a hard time expressing his love to his daughter. The 10-year-old daughter shared with

her counselor that she didn't think her dad loved her. When the counselor asked her why she felt this way, the daughter replied, "He never hugs me. I see other kids' parents hug them. I asked him about it one time, and he said he didn't like to hug people, but I need a hug or something!" The counselor called the dad into the office and had the girl explain how she felt. This father had no idea his daughter thought he didn't love her. He admitted he felt strange hugging her because his parents had never hugged him. The counselor asked for another suggestion from the daughter. She asked the dad if he could brush her hair every night. That would help her to feel wanted. During the next visit to the counselor, the daughter asked if maybe she could hold her dad's hand sometimes. Eventually, this dad and daughter developed ways for the daughter to get some attention and for the dad to feel comfortable giving her the love and attention she needed.

This week's Scripture focus:

Psalm 31:21: "For he showed his wonderful love to me" and Psalm 100:5: "His love endures forever" (NIV).

Building family strengths:

In a family meeting, read Psalm 23. Read it again, but this time make up a list of all the ways the shepherd took care of his sheep. Now make up a list of all the ways the people in your family care for each other. Then make up a list of other ways family members can show how much they care and love each other. Then practice, practice, practice!

The best way to help your children is to help yourself. Link up with a DivorceCare divorce recovery support group, www.divorcecare.org.

DIVORCE *Care*

* Christian Family Activities by Bobbie Reed. (Standard Publishing, 1982), p. 44. Used by permission from the author.