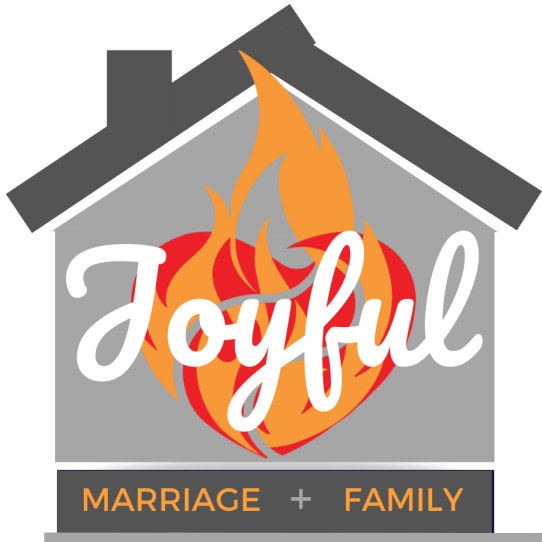


JOYFUL HOMES AREN'T PERFECT *They're affectionate.*



God doesn't just love you. He *delights* in you! Our families are most joyful when we delight in one another through lavish affection. This often comes very easy when our children are babies and small children, but even our teenagers and adult children need affection to feel secure. Hugs and snuggles are important, but affection can also be any gesture that communicates "I'm happy you're here!"

As a family, discuss:

- When was a time that you felt not just loved, but *liked*? What specific words or gestures did those people use?
- Which would you say is true for you:
 - I think we could use more affection, (especially ___)
 - I'm good with how affectionate we are
 - I think we can tone it down (especially when ____)

Pick one practice this month!

One small, attainable goal sets us up for success.

- Not a hugger? Start by picking one or two intentional times a day: before leaving for school, at bedtime, etc.
- Be intentional during movie/screen time to share a blanket (and a snuggle) with a different family member each time.
- Learn your family members' love languages and be intentional about using them. (You can take quizzes at www.5lovelanguages.com).
- Is there one family member you have a harder time liking? Focus this month on affectionate words and deeds toward this person.

THE SCIENCE OF SNUGGLING

Numerous studies show the connection between parental affection and the well-being of children. One study showed that physical affection actually changes the brain, making kids happier and less anxious. Another study found that adults who received ample affection as children experienced less depression and anxiety, and more overall compassion than those who did not.

SOURCE: www.gottman.com/blog/how-a-parents-affection-shapes-a-childs-happiness-for-life/

Scripture of the month: Romans 16:16

Greet one another with a holy kiss.

What does our level of affection say to the outside world about our faith?

Want more ideas and encouragement? www.archkcks.org/affectionate