

Give Me Five!

Some kids need a physical touch to feel loved. These are usually the ones that try to snuggle up against you or try to sit on your lap or that hug you and won't let go. They need attention. They need physical touch. They need to *feel* loved. But in our culture it's extremely important to have specific boundaries for physical affection. For example, if I am sitting down and a child sits on my lap, I will immediately stand up and give them the chair. If a child approaches me to initiate a hug, I will turn my body sideways to give them a side-hug. For children that are especially touchy, use a high-five. Try to see them before they see you. Become the initiator. Call them by name and say, "Give me five!" Also look for ways to genuinely compliment them and build them up. By doing so, you will meet their emotional needs; with the high-five, you will be giving them frequent physical touches in a safe and appropriate way; and the high-five also draws a boundary line. It meets a need but also creates a distance for those who might be overly clingy.