

Gratitude

November 24, 2009



Just around the corner lurks the biggest gift-giving holidays of the year. As we deal with the onslaught of ads, offers, requests, shopping lists, travel plans, stress, and so on, what if we pause for one day and focus on the things our families are grateful for? The obvious day for this, of course, is Thanksgiving Day.

When we are grateful for the things we have, when we concentrate on what has already been given to us, we can help mitigate the ever-present desire for more of what we have yet to acquire or achieve.



So as Thanksgiving draws closer, find ways to be thankful.

When To Do It

Thanksgiving Day

What To Do

Challenge your kids to come up with a list of 10 things they are most grateful for and create a way to share the list with you and other family members as you gather on Thanksgiving.

Project Ideas

1. **Grateful Collage:** Have your kids find pictures or photos or draw images of the 10 things they are most grateful for. Have them create a collage representing why they are grateful for them. These can be people, animals, toys, games, books, food, kinds of weather, places, music — whatever they appreciate in life! Find a prominent place to hang it.
2. **Grateful Give-Away:** Have your kids find 10 items they are ready to give away. They should be items they have enjoyed and are thankful for having had them in their toy chest or closet. They can put these items in a bag for giving away to a local charity. You can let them select which charity they would like to give the items to, and if the charity is open over the holiday weekend, see if you can find a few minutes to deliver the donation. Just imagine the other kids who will be excited and thankful to have these toys.
3. **Grateful Buddies:** Have your kids pick 10 friends that they are grateful for. Have them then create a list of the reasons why. Is it because they are kind, helpful, funny, smart, fast, or ?? How many different reasons can they come up with for why they are grateful for their friends?
4. **Grateful Family:** Have your kids identify 10 family members that they are grateful for. Do they feel that gratitude because these individuals are kind, helpful, funny, smart, fast? How many different things can they come up with that make them grateful for their special family members?
5. **Grateful Food:** Have your kids identify 10 foods they cannot live without. Can they share why they are grateful for those items? Taste good? Smell good? Are there foods that they grew or picked themselves? Crunchy and salty, or sweet and creamy? Part of a comforting ritual, like hot cocoa when they come in from the cold, or popcorn when you all curl up together to watch a movie?

Parenting sometimes includes teaching our kids to notice what we have, not what we lack. And what is satisfying, not what they wish they could change. Enjoy the sharing and exploring of what you and your family are grateful for this Thanksgiving.

Money Wisdom is grateful for all you parents who are passionate about teaching your young kids how to be great stewards of their precious time, possessions, and money.

What You Will Need

- Pen, paper, pencils
- Magazines and newspapers
- Glue, scissors
- Bags for donations

Talk About It

Help your kids explore why we sometimes forget to be grateful. What would their life be like without their favorite items? Should we do this grateful practice more often?