

November is National Gratitude Month

November is a time when we all stop to consider what we are thankful for and those we appreciate. Saying thank you and appreciating family and friends are lessons that children learn from those around them role modeling, stories being shared, and conversations about family values. In this month's MLC Minutes we are going to share with you ways to prompt thoughtfulness and appreciation with your child.

Why Doesn't My Child Say Thank You?

We all know that when we say to a child "what do you say?" they respond with a flat "thank you". There is no heart in their response or true appreciation. It is not that children take things for granted, it is that they do not know that what they have been given or experienced requires an effort made by someone else. As adults, we appreciate someone else's time or money spent but children have to be taught to recognize the actions of others. When an opportunity arises in which your child should acknowledge someone else's kindness or appreciate a gift, you can scaffold their responses by saying things such as "doesn't that make you feel good", or "I am so thankful that you were thought of". By helping your child recognize how the actions of others make them feel good will generate their natural ability to be appreciative.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/parenting/wp/2017/09/29/i-stopped-forcing-my-kids-to-say-thank-you-and-they-learned-true-gratitude/>

What's the Magic Word?

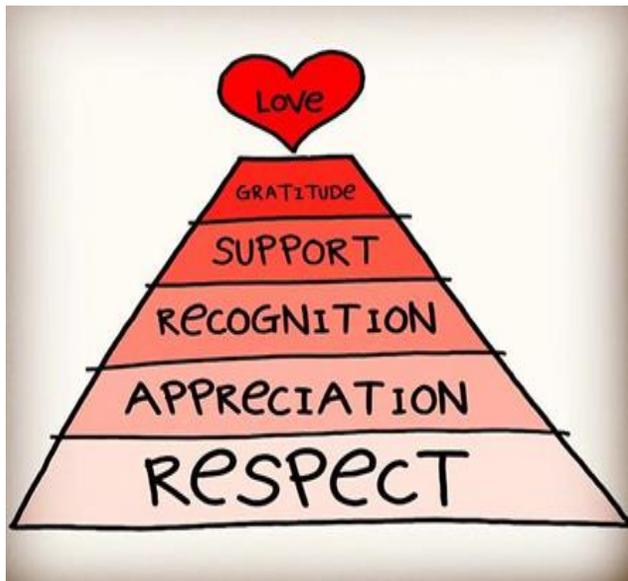
Everyone will tell you the answer is "please" but in reality the words "thank you" have greater power. From birth, children are naturally given all they need to survive and at a very early age saying "please" will get them what they want. The challenge for parents is teaching their children that nothing they get is to be taken for granted. To develop a sense of gratitude and empathy, the best way to teach this is for parents to acknowledge and thank each other for their actions and to also thank their children. Saying thank you for the meal that was made, the clothes that were bought, and even the game that was played with them helps a child to learn gratitude.

<https://www.fatherly.com/parenting/how-to-teach-a-kid-to-say-thank-you-manners-children/>



MLC November Family Minutes

A resource from our family to yours



The Health Benefits to Being Grateful.

As the gifting holiday approaches and children draft their “list” that includes cell phones, tablets, and a gaming system, the idea of teaching a child to be grateful as they live in a world of overabundance can seem impossible. As parents, we want our children to experience true happiness. A study done with children as young as the age of 5 demonstrated that happiness is linked to the child’s ability to demonstrate gratitude. If we want our children to grow up happy and optimistic, we need to instill in them the ability to be grateful. Another study also showed that those who are grateful sleep better and live longer.

<https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-teach-children-gratitude-4782154>

Family Activity – Gratitude Calendar

Countdown the days to Christmas with little acts of kindness! Use it at home as a family, for an individual child, or for a holiday classroom activity. The Be Kind Advent Calendar gives you a token every day with a prompt for something kind to do. Design to prompt creativity, empathy and discussion, it is a great way to put meaning into the holiday season.

<https://www.mindware.orientaltrading.com/be-kind-advent-calendar-a2-PS27.fltr>

gratitude
TURNS WHAT WE
have
INTO
enough

The Four Parts of Gratitude:

1. **Noticing** – Recognizing the things you have to be grateful for.
2. **Thinking** – Thinking about why you’ve been given those things.
3. **Feeling** – The emotions you experience as a result of the things you’ve been given.
4. **Doing** – The way you express appreciation.

Fun Family Book

“Gratitude is my Superpower”
by Alicia Ortego

This wonderfully illustrated and written book would make a wonderful addition to any child’s home library. It is a tool to teach your child to be grateful for the things they already have.

“Gratitude’s in all of us and all we have to do is stop and think how thankful we are, instead of feeling blue!”

<https://www.amazon.com/Gratitude-Superpower-childrens-Practicing-Positivity/dp/B098WHNV3Z>

Additional Resources

<https://www.healthstartfoundation.org/hsblog/practicing-gratitude-with-little-ones>

A Year Of Kindness Calendar

<https://www.mindware.orientaltrading.com/a-year-of-kindness-calendar-a2-PS25.fltr>