

HOW TO HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

A daily routine of appreciation and expressing gratitude helps any child or teen, but offers more value and healing for children living with irresolvable stress in the home. Children are less stressed, enjoy numerous physical benefits, and are more content overall. A special thank you to Jerry Moe, Betty Conger, and the American Academy of Pediatrics for their insights on children and gratitude.

Spend time with children to show your gratitude for their presence in your life, making sure to note how thankful you are for the moments you're able to spend together



Model thankfulness by expressing your appreciation for people, places, and experiences aloud, showing children the importance of voicing gratitude



Help children find ways to serve others, in small ways, to learn about the joy of giving



Encourage children to take note of life's ordinary pleasures — a warm meal, a bed to sleep in, the changing of the seasons, a fun time spent with a friend — reminding them that little things deserve gratitude too

Celebrate the moments a child expresses gratitude aloud with a comment such as, "It's so wonderful that you shared how thankful you are!"

Model the joy of texting thank yous and writing notes to show the importance of expressing gratitude



Establish a daily or weekly routine of reflecting on life's good moments while sitting down for a meal or through a quiet journaling process



Ask children thought-provoking questions, like "What is your favorite food?" or "What makes you laugh really hard?" to inspire them to reflect on life's little joys

Encourage children to identify their personal strengths to build self-confidence and inspire introspective gratitude



Observe when children make positive choices, comment on it, and ask how making that choice made them feel

Prompt children to think about those who have helped them during tough times — a friend, a teacher, a parent, or even a group — and suggest they say thank you