

THE *Counseling* CONNECTION

St. Hilary School
Mrs. Eldred and Mrs. Rohal

Nurturing Gratitude in Children's Hearts

During the holiday season children hear adults talk about gratitude. This is a wonderful time to help nurture the gratitude in our children's hearts. Children are not born feeling grateful, and they need practice learning how to demonstrate it. Being grateful is an everyday choice and becomes easier and more natural with practice.

When people are grateful they tend to be in a better mood and less stressed. In addition, studies have shown that gratitude can have positive effects on our physical health. People who practice gratitude may have increased immune systems and experience better sleep.

How to Teach Gratitude:

1. Practice saying thank you both verbally and in writing. Teach older children to write thank you notes when receiving a birthday or Christmas gift.
2. Model gratitude. Children need to see the adults in their life show thanks for the blessings they've been given.
3. Schedule acts of service as a family. There are plenty of opportunities especially during the holidays (Food Bank, Giving Tree)
4. Help them to recognize the good in a bad situation. Even if things don't go the way they want them to, help them to see the silver lining.
5. Let them help out. Allowing them to have age-appropriate responsibilities gives them the satisfaction that they are contributing to the family.

November's Focus:

Nurturing Gratitude

