

How to teach children gratitude

Children may often want every new toy and thing they see.
But you can help teach them gratitude with these tips:



1. Make getting things a surprise.

This helps kids see something as a gift, not an entitlement. For instance, “surprise” them with a trip to the park or their favorite dessert on special occasions.



2. Be careful with choices.

Allowing children to choose something big, such as a vacation destination, will make them think they can get whatever they want. Instead, the adults can choose the vacation plans and present it as a surprise.



3. Talk about what made them happy each day.

This teaches kids to be thankful for good things. It can be as simple as playing at recess, seeing a friend or enjoying what they ate for lunch.



4. Serve others as a family.

Community charity programs such as working at a food bank are a great way for kids to see how much they have. Also, do smaller things like bring meals to neighbors who are going through a hard time.



5. Show them how to be positive.

Being demanding, whiny or jealous quickly turns into being ungrateful for what they have. You can point out positives in nearly any situation to teach them how to find it themselves. “It’s really hot today, but I’m so glad we have cold water to drink” is a great example.



6. Insist on saying “please” and “thank you.”

Give them positive reinforcement every time they use these words. This helps to teach them the importance of showing gratitude and respect for other people.



7. Give them chores to do.

Yes, kids are busy, but simple things like putting away their clothes, helping with dishes and picking up their toys are valuable lessons. Chores teach kids that it takes work to keep up a household and that they should contribute. Even five to 10 minutes of chores a day is helpful.



8. Consider gifts of “experiences” instead of “things.”

Not sure what to get them because they already have so much? How about tickets to a movie or show? Or a trip to a water park for a day? Chances are, they will remember those fun experiences far longer than any toy or gadget.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics