

Parents can help their children cultivate an attitude of gratitude

“What do you say to your Grandma for the birthday gift she gave you?” Giving those simple prompts is the earliest way that parents teach their children to express gratitude.

A recent study found that developing gratitude does much more than ensure Grandma will give another gift! It also helps kids feel better about their families and their lives. It even helps them get along better with others.

So continue prompting your child to say *thank you*. But take the next step and ask your child to think about *why* she is grateful. (She has a loving family. She can spend time with her grandparents. She loves the gift her Grandma gave her.)

Set aside a regular time when everyone talks about things for which they are grateful. This practice can help everyone reflect on the positive things in their lives.

One study found that people who did this regularly were more optimistic. They also recognized kindness when it was offered. That is something to be grateful for.

Source: J. Froh, D. Miller & S. Snyder, “Gratitude in Children and Adolescents: Development, Assessment, and School-Based Intervention,” *School Psychology Forum: Research in Practice*, Fall 2007, National Association of School Psychologists.

From the desk of Ms. Gina La Capra, School Counselor