



The Family Place Parent Child Center

319 US Route 5 South • Norwich, VT 05055 • 802-649-3269 • 800-639-0039 • info@the-family-place.org • www.the-family-place.org

Everyday Thankfulness

Thankfulness may be defined as gratitude for something appreciated and is one of many fairly sophisticated ideas for children to wrap themselves around even while they can feel and recognize it through their experiences. As parents and caregivers we have the privilege of fostering children's discovery and awareness of the world, and abstract concepts are taught and learned right along with self-care, motor skills and language. Being mindful of the potential for learning presents many regular opportunities to teach.

In the busyness of life it is easy to lose sight of the fact that the children in our lives are learning how to live life by living it with us. Our words and actions in everyday routines demonstrate our true thoughts and values. Even the youngest children are aware of our ideas and attitudes and learn from them.

Expressions of gratitude do not have to feel forced or be planned. They're as simple as noticing the smell of the bath soap or the coziness of fleece pajamas, as natural as noting the color of your morning clementine or enjoying the taste of maple syrup over pancakes. What is it that you appreciate? Say it aloud once in a while! Do you love when the snowflakes are big and feathery? Stick out your tongue and catch a few. Invite your child to join you. Do you appreciate your child's sense of humor? Laugh together.

Thank your child when he or she helps out with household chores, and when the toys



Staff:

Elaine Guenet, Exec. Dir.
Christina Bagley
Hoyt Bingham
Shelly Blodgett
Ariel Cahn-Flores
Sarah Canterbury
Kimberly Colson
Kelly Crawford
Debbie Cushman
Anne-Marie Darsney
Julia Dickenson
Prudence Fisher
Joanna Hamlin
Marla Ianello
Jeanne McMahan
Helene Meloche
Dianne Norton
Katie Ouelette
Lori Stever
Kelly Wallace
Jess Weiland
Lisa Wills

Board of Directors:

Kathleen O. Snyder, Chair
Laurel Spielberg, Vice-Chair
Elizabeth Chabot, Secretary
Michael Horvath, Treasurer
Mary Brown
Marie Colacchio
Beth Kohlemainen
Ashley Milliken
Arline S. Rotman
Peter Rutledge
Jack Wilson

get picked up without a reminder, as well as after a reminder. Say, "Thank you for trying something new!" and "That was hard work, and you did it!" Acknowledge a goal accomplished, and tell your child all that you appreciate about him or her. Let your child overhear you sharing a success with friends or family. And speak well of others. When children hear us speak well of others, they learn that we value our relationships.

Note the ways that children give thanks. In addition to sharing affection, "I'm glad...", "I love..." and "That makes me happy!" may be among children's earliest professions of thankfulness. Initially these expressions are in reference to important people in their lives and expand to include favorite toys, activities and other less tangible observations.

Every day when we tell our children that we love them, that we're glad they are growing and learning, when we recognize their contributions to daily mundane tasks, observe the pattern of a snowflake in their presence, or appreciate some needed rain, we are teaching thankfulness. Thanksgiving is not just a day on the calendar, but an everyday state of mind.



The Family Place
Parent Child Center
319 US Route 5 South
Norwich VT 05055

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
White River Junction, VT
05001
Permit #75