



# Counselor's Corner

## Fostering an Attitude of Gratitude

Practicing gratitude is an excellent way to promote good mental health. Here is an excerpt from [Fostering an Attitude of Gratitude: Tips for Parents Communiqué Handout](#): by the National Association of School Psychologists.

“Research has shown that people who experience gratitude have more positive emotions, such as joy, love, and happiness; have fewer negative emotions, such as bitterness, envy, and resentment; have increased feelings of connectedness and improved relationships; experience greater satisfaction with school and improved academic achievement; and even have better physical health than people who don't take the time to notice and appreciate the good things in their lives. Parents can help their children develop the attitude of gratitude through a variety of simple acts and activities.

**Model practicing gratitude.** Emotions are contagious. Express thanks to your families, friends, neighbors, and strangers, and ensure that your children see you behaving gratefully.

**Encourage “gratitude” thinking.** For example, if your child wins the spelling bee, help her identify all those who helped along the way. Suggest she say “thank you” in person or by writing a note to someone who made a particular difference.

**Share gratitude daily.** Make time in the morning or at dinner for the family to share at least one thing for which each person is grateful. This can be balanced with one thing that was difficult that day, but starting with gratefulness reinforces positive connections and resources.

**Reinforce grateful behavior.** Watch for grateful behavior or language in your child. Identify it when it happens and reinforce him for it. For example: “That was thoughtful of you to thank your friend for helping you with homework. Good for you. I'm sure it made him feel good and made your friendship stronger.”

**Use visual reminders.** Put notes in your child's lunchbox reminding her to be thankful for. Share something for which you are grateful.

**Make a Grateful Sayings Poster.** Get a piece of poster board and write "For This I Am Grateful" in big letters across the top. Ask everyone in your family (and friends and neighbors, too!) to write or draw something on the poster for which he is grateful.

**Keep a Good Stuff Journal.** Most people spend far more time thinking about how they can correct something that has gone wrong, worrying about something that is about to go wrong, or simply replaying a failure or setback, than they do basking in what has gone right and being grateful for their everyday blessings. You can help your child notice what goes well in her life and build gratitude by keeping a Good Stuff Journal. Analyzing why events go well, what the positive events mean to us, and how we can create circumstances that enable more good things to occur, encourages a consciousness of blessings and gratitude and promotes optimism. Every night, set aside a few minutes with your child and write down three positive events from the day. Next to each positive event that your child lists, write a reflection (for example): • What this good thing means to you • What you can do tomorrow to enable more of this good thing • What you learned from taking the time to name this good thing • What ways you or others contribute to this good thing”

Source: Communiqué Handout: November, 2009 Volume 38, Number 3

For further details or information, please contact your child's guidance counselor:

**Mrs. Kelly B. Maire**

Angelo L. Tomaso School  
(908) 753-5300 x 5305  
[kblessing-maire@warrentboe.org](mailto:kblessing-maire@warrentboe.org)

**Ms. Alyssa Pech**

Central School  
(908) 753-5300 x 5205  
[apech@warrentboe.org](mailto:apech@warrentboe.org)

**Dr. Kelly Stankiewicz**

Mount Horeb School  
(908) 753-5300 x 5405  
[kellystankiewicz@warrentboe.org](mailto:kellystankiewicz@warrentboe.org)

**Ms. Alexandra Pranzo**

Woodland School  
(908) 7730-5300 x 5505  
[apranzo@warrentboe.org](mailto:apranzo@warrentboe.org)

**Ms. Lauren Regal**

Middle School - 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
(908) 753-5300 x5009

**Ms. Helen Scully**

Middle School- 7<sup>th</sup> grade  
(908) 753-5300 x 5007

**Mrs. Midge Johnson**

Middle School – 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
(908) 753-5300 x 5005

**Mrs. Carol Brown**

Warren Middle School  
908-753-5300 x 5101

[lregal@warrentboe.org](mailto:lregal@warrentboe.org)

[hscully@warrentboe.org](mailto:hscully@warrentboe.org)

[mjohnson@warrentboe.org](mailto:mjohnson@warrentboe.org)

[cbrown@warrentboe.org](mailto:cbrown@warrentboe.org)