



# HOW TO HELP KIDS BE GRATEFUL AND KIND



Being grateful and kind boosts the way we feel, and tends to make us more likeable human beings. So how can we help our tamariki learn these important skills?

## MODEL KINDNESS

Your children will learn how to be kind mostly by watching you, so keep helping others, being friendly, giving compliments and sharing little bits of love. Doing so is a win-win, as it'll be good for your wellbeing too!

## RECOGNISE KINDNESS

Identify examples of kindness in other people and in your kids' favourite stories. Talk with your tamariki about situations when they could choose to act like that, or differently when a story shows unkindness.

## DITTO GRATITUDE

Just like sharing or turn taking, gratitude is a social skill children need to see, learn and practice. By showing your appreciation and acknowledging the people and things you're grateful for (and why), you'll help your tamariki learn, that gratitude extends beyond material stuff.

## GIVE WITH YOUR KIDS

Encourage your kids to help when you make a donation or do something nice (e.g. baking, cooking or buying flowers) This lets them experience first-hand how it feels to brighten someone's day.

## EMPATHY STARTS WITH EMOTIONS

To develop empathy, children need to:

1. feel kindness from you and those who care for them
2. be free to discover and express their emotions
3. see a wide range of emotions in others
4. learn how to put themselves in others shoes.

## ENCOURAGE PITCHING IN

Show gratitude when your kids help out, by thanking them and praising their efforts, even if they don't get things 100% right. To encourage 'pitching in', rather than ask (complain or nag!), try: "I'm feeling pretty tired tonight. I'd love it if you could help me with the dishes." By giving them a choice, you're empowering them to show empathy and kindness.

## USE SPECIAL EVENTS AS 'EXCUSES' TO BE KIND

Celebrations are a great opportunity to encourage kindness. At Halloween for instance, you could try collecting non-perishable items instead of lollies, to give to charity. At Christmas, you could create a kindness advent calendar where you do one small, kind act each day in the lead up to Christmas.

## EARTH LOVE

Spending time in nature is scientifically proven to be good for us! Teach your kids to look after our special outdoor spaces and whenua. Pick up litter, recycle and do your bit to look after the planet.

## MEALTIME GRATITUDE

Meal times are a great way to get each member of the whānau saying a few things they're grateful for and why. E.g. I'm grateful for the sunny day because it meant we could play outside. I'm grateful that Dad picked me up from school because I was feeling really tired.

## A GRATITUDE DIARY

Create family (or individual) gratitude diaries where you and your older tamariki can record things you're grateful for.

Check out the [Sparklers at Home Whakawhetai \(Gratitude\) O'Clock](#) activity to make your own gratitude diary.



We'd like to thank Clare Tatterson, Developmental Psychologist, for helping create this resource.

For more idead on supporting your kids to be grateful and kind, visit [sparklers.org.nz/parenting](https://sparklers.org.nz/parenting)