

Are your kids thankful?

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(HealthDay)—Thanksgiving is the perfect time for parents to teach their children about gratitude, an expert says.

Research suggests grateful [children](#) are more satisfied with their lives and families, more hopeful, busier with hobbies, and do better at school, according to Giacomo Bono. He's an assistant professor of psychology in the College of Natural and Behavioral Sciences at California State University, Dominguez Hills. He studies [gratitude](#) in kids between the ages of 7 and 18.

Bono says [parents](#) should ask their kids about the people and things they are grateful for, including the attributes of people they are thankful to have in their life. It's also important to teach children to build strong relationships with positive people.

Parents need to set a good example by talking about the people and things they appreciate, Bono said.

It's also important to take advantage of teachable moments.

"If there is an event in your child's life, such as a classmate who has a sick parent, talk to your child about how lucky she is to have her health," Bono said. "This is also a great time to practice empathy."

He said that gratitude is the perfect antidote to the materialism and consumerism that are so common during the holiday season.

"Materialism and gratitude are like oil and water. Gratitude is psychologically fulfilling and things are not," Bono said.

More information: The Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley has more on [gratitude](#).

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