

# EXPECT SUCCESS



## THE VALUE OF GRATITUDE

*"Gratitude turns what we have into enough."* Melody Beattie

As a school staff, we are taking time this year to promote positive emotional health practices for ourselves and our students. One positive practice is learning to live a life of gratitude. For some, this might feel a bit touchy-feely, but there are decades of research pointing to the scientific benefits of practicing gratitude in our daily lives. In a world that can often seem bent on highlighting what we don't have, gratitude helps us realize that what we have is enough. But, it takes practice. This month's article highlights some of the health benefits of practicing gratitude as well as some ideas to work on at home with kids.

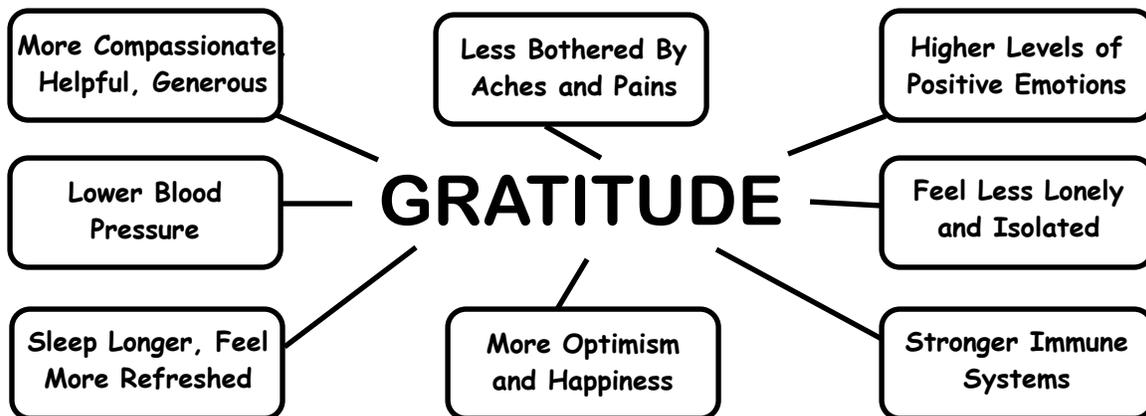


### WHAT IS GRATITUDE? (from Robert Emmons, Professor of Psychology, UC-Davis)

1. Affirmation of goodness—we affirm that there are good things in the world, gifts and benefits we've received
2. Sources of goodness are outside of ourselves—we acknowledge that we have been given many gifts, big and small

### DID YOU KNOW?

Research shows that people who consistently practice gratitude report a boatload of benefits including:



### WAYS TO PRACTICE GRATITUDE

- ◆ **The Rule of 5** - each day list five people you are grateful for. This is easy for kids because it uses one hand. Share at supper time, add it to the bedtime routine or during the car ride to school in the morning. They may surprise you with the names they share.
- ◆ **Thank You Notes** - it's a lost art with many benefits for the writer and the reader. Kids get many gifts throughout the year, so helping them write a thank you note is a natural way to practice writing and spelling while expressing their gratitude toward someone else.
- ◆ **"One Good Thing"** - it is easy to fall into the habit of sharing our woes and what went wrong with our day. Make a daily practice to share one good thing that happened. Maybe our day wasn't as bad as it seemed after all, and it helps shift the focus from the negative to the positive.