

An Attitude of Gratitude

Name: _____ Date: _____

Building family resiliency is a skill that helps to foster strong families and to help you to overcome difficulties. All families go through problems and crises from time to time, but the families with the most resilience are the ones who practice the 7Cs of family resilience. These 7Cs are:

1. Compassion
2. Communication
3. Control
4. Choices
5. Consequences
6. Consistency
7. Confidence

We will be going over each of these 7Cs in future sessions. The first C is compassion.

The first step in fostering resiliency through compassion is to practice an Attitude of Gratitude. The simplest way to do this is to find at least one thing per day you're thankful for, and to teach your child to do the same. For this exercise, we will foster compassion by beginning a daily practice of the Attitude of Gratitude. Answer the questions below, and have your child answer as well. You may use the answers below to help you build resilience through compassion.

What are some things you are grateful to your child for? List as many of them as you can in the space below.

What are some things your child is grateful to you for? List as many as your child can think of in the space below.

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When you have completed your lists, it may help to hang them someplace so you can both see them, perhaps on the refrigerator or on the family bulletin board or calendar (if you have one). Make it a practice each day to thank your child for a chosen behavior, thought, or action. For example, if your child has a daily chore, remember to thank your child for performing it, even if it is a required portion of their daily routine.

NOTE: Don't force your child to make statements of gratitude each day. Allow your child to choose to do so. If you make daily gratitude statements a requirement for your child, it may lead to resentment. Instead, lead by example. Thank your child whenever the opportunity presents itself. Eventually your child will feel comfortable enough to engage in the practice on his or her own. Even if they never start using statements of thankfulness, you have still created an environment of reciprocal nurturing that your child will remember well into adulthood, and your own statements of gratitude will remind your child to be thankful, even if your child does not verbalize gratitude.

Practice the Attitude of Gratitude for the coming week. The day before your Ecoplay session for next week, answer the following questions:

Practicing compassion through the Attitude of Gratitude requires a great deal of focusing on your child's behavior, but it also requires being aware of how you express compassion to your child. How might the things you noticed or observed about your child's behavior change how you feel about yourself?

Was anything you noticed nurturing to you? If so, how might it help you to express more compassion in your daily interactions with your child? With the rest of your family?
