

Greetings from IEPD, Inc.

As I reflect on the past couple of years, I realize how grateful I am for my family, my friends, my co-workers, coaches, and instructors and all the dedicated educators in our state and those that support them. When we think about “gratitude,” we can consider what we are thankful for and how we can return this kindness each day in our interactions with others.

Research suggests that the practice of considering what we are grateful for results in greater happiness. This reflection and subsequent action, such as letting people know what we appreciate about them or even writing a gratitude text, email, or snail-mail letter, makes us feel good! Are you ready to reach out to others and show your appreciation?

How can you let someone know you appreciate them? First of all, consider the positive and words that communicate your feelings such as *Thank-you. I appreciate you. You are an inspiration. You make a difference.* When we are thinking positively, negativity is not present. Studies show that people who use more positive emotion words and fewer negative words report better mental health and a more positive outlook.¹ We are “unshackled from toxic emotions” when we express gratitude.

Ok, perhaps you are not comfortable sharing your appreciation with others. Just writing down who or what you are grateful for still results in this happier feeling. It’s worth a try!

As we approach the holidays, let’s consider what and who we are grateful for. If you are comfortable, let people know WHY you appreciate them. Just as we need to be specific when commenting on a child’s positive behavior, we should do the same with adults. Expand upon –“ I appreciate you” to “I appreciate the way you _____.”

On that note, I appreciate you and what you give of yourself as you care for children, help educators in their work, and support children and families in all you do. On a more personal note, I would like to offer what I appreciate about you individually- the way you care, the way you communicate with a child who is upset, how you listen with caring when a parent/guardian who needs someone to talk to, and the support you give co-workers. You make a difference, and I AM grateful for you!

For ideas for nurturing gratitude in young children – check out the Zero to Three link below.¹

With Warm Regards & Positive Thoughts,



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¹Brown, J. & Wong, J. (2017, June 6). How gratitude changes you and your brain. *Greater Good Magazine*. Retrieved from https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_gratitude_changes_you_and_your_brain.
McLaughlin, S. & Parlakian, R. (2020, Nov. 18). Nurturing gratitude. *Zero to Three*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/30RyYUs>.
