



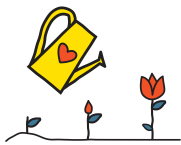
When you think back to your fondest memories of past holidays, what comes to mind first? Was it a gift? Or was it time spent with loved ones?

No matter your culture or faith, typical traditions or shopping plans, this holiday season may be an opportunity to prioritize “togetherness” and gratitude.



Although parents love watching their children open presents, there are additional ways to create joy. This year, you may think about starting a new family tradition as a way to stay connected with those closest to you. Traditions are shared experiences that are repeated to strengthen bonds between people and groups.

One suggestion is to give back to those in need. Helping others may create a sense of gratefulness and foster connection among people.



As parents and caregivers, it’s important to guide the children in your lives from a young age to notice and appreciate the positives in their lives, and express gratitude. Children who learn to show unprompted gratitude are more likely to experience positive mental health benefits, such as increased happiness levels and resilience when coping with hardships. You never know, a new tradition focusing on gratitude may end up becoming a regular part of your family plans in the future.

Can a sense of gratitude be taught?

You may help your child understand gratitude and the importance of togetherness when you share your thoughts and feelings openly with them by:

- **Noticing and talking about who you’re thankful for.** Whether you’re grateful for family, friends, or a neighbor, name the people who are important to you.
- **Thinking about why you’re grateful for meaningful relationships.** Explain to your child why you appreciate a family member or a special friend and how they make you feel.

- **Thinking about how to express your gratitude without a store-bought gift.**

Ask your child how you might thank someone for their friendship or kindness without taking a trip to the store.

This month, we encourage you to start a conversation with your children about the immense value of gratitude and family togetherness. Try buying less “stuff,” exploring what you’re grateful for, spending time with loved ones and creating more memories!

THE _____ FAMILY DECEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

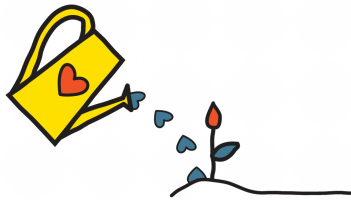
[Click here](#) to download our **Family Togetherness Calendar** to plan creative ways to make this month special for the whole family.

Your plans may depend on the makeup of your family, ability to travel, supplies at home and individual interests of each member. Be sure to also check your children’s school newsletters and local websites for upcoming events you might consider adding to the

calendar. Post the calendar on your refrigerator or bulletin board and write your own ideas in the space provided. Try to choose one family-based activity each day! Share your stories with us, and any new ideas you have, by using **#OnOurSleevesJax** and **#OnOurSleeves** on social media.

On Our Sleeves Gratitude Journal

Research shows people who practice gratitude – who think about the good things in their life – are healthier and happier!
 Have your child decorate a notebook with stickers, glitter, photos, etc., and write down and/or draw at least one thing they are thankful for every day throughout the month.



To keep the theme of gratitude going all month long, [click here](#) to download the **On Our Sleeves Gratitude Journal** so kids can write down and/or draw at least one thing they are thankful for each day. Also available to [download in Spanish](#).

Don’t forget to share how you’re using *On Our Sleeves* resources! Hit the reply button to tell us your *On Our Sleeves* story.

Sincerely,
 Wolfson Children's Hospital



www.OnOurSleeves.org

The mission of *On Our Sleeves* is to provide every community in America access to free, evidence-informed educational resources necessary for breaking stigmas about child mental health and educating families and advocates. For more information, visit OnOurSleeves.org.

To access educational resources and revisit the mission of *On Our Sleeves*, visit wolfsonchildrens.com/onoursleeves.

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