

The Thankful Tree Classroom Activity

Teaching kids about gratitude is incredibly important to their mental health!

Focusing on the positive is one of the best natural mood enhancers we have. Research shows that people who think about the good things in their life are not only happier, but healthier too! They feel more energized, sleep better, have stronger social connections, and feel better about themselves – including having fewer physical problems, fewer medical symptoms, and a stronger immune system.

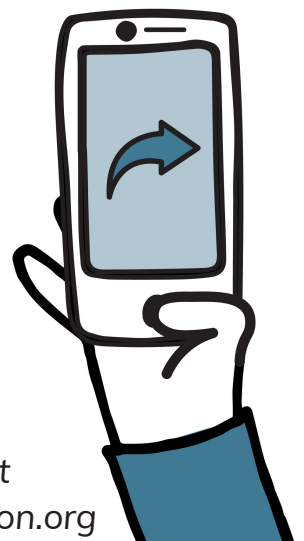
This is the perfect season to grow gratitude and remember what you're thankful for. Try this quick and easy interactive activity with your class this Thanksgiving season to get started.

supplies

- Small poster board
- Colored construction paper (using Fall colors like brown, burgundy, red, orange and yellow is even better).
- scissors
- glue or tape

*share your class's
Thankful Tree with us online!*

*Use the hashtag
#OnOurSleevesinAction
on social media or email us at
onoursleeves@childrensdayton.org*



Step 1: Create your tree and leaves

- Draw a tree shape on construction paper or print a template. Make sure it's large enough to fit plenty of "gratitude leaves" on it. Glue or tape your tree onto the small poster board to make it easier to display.
- If your students are old enough to use scissors, this is a perfect time to get them involved! Have them help cut out 1-2 leaves per student from the construction paper.

Step 2: Make your gratitude leaves

Now that your leaves are cut out and ready, talk with your class about what they're thankful for.

Write down each item on a different leaf. If have younger students, you can help them write out their answers if they need help.

helpful hint: If your students are feeling stuck and can't think of anything, try using some of these conversation starters to inspire ideas.

- Who are you thankful for?
- Who is someone who helped you lately?
- What toy are you thankful for?
- What is the most delicious food you ate today?
- What is something that makes your life easier?
- What is something beautiful you saw today?
- What tv show or movie always makes you happy?
- What is your favorite thing to do with your family?
- What do you like most about school?

Step 3: Display your thankful tree

- Using glue sticks or tape, help your students decorate their thankful tree with the gratitude leaves. If some of them end up at the bottom of the tree, that's okay! Many of the leaves outside are on the ground as well!
- Now you have a beautiful, hand-made display of what you and your class are thankful for. Don't you feel the gratitude growing already?