



Holiday Rituals: Thanksgiving



When people ask you about your childhood, it is likely that some of your fond memories are of the rituals that your family established. In an every busy world, it is all too easy to overlook the importance of ritual to children. Here are just a few simple ideas for Thanksgiving holiday rituals that your family may want to try!

1. Thanksgiving Family Tree

Collect pictures of your family. (In our house, 'love makes a family'. We include all the people who care about us and spend time with us.)

Paste pictures of your family members on a poster. Talk with your family about the people they are thankful for, and who they will spend time with on Thanksgiving.

You can use your family poster to give thanks for the people you love during Thanksgiving by:

- Sending cards to the people you will not see
- Hanging your poster in the dining room and sharing a memory about someone in your family at each meal during the Thanksgiving week
- Talking about the people in your family before you eat your Thanksgiving meal
- Talk about what would help YOU give thanks for those people you love! Create your own tradition!

2. Thankful Box (from 'The Book of New Family Traditions')

At your thanksgiving meal, decorate a box to place at the center of your table. Write down things that you are thankful for and put them in the box before the meal. During your dinner (or as a blessing) read the thankful notes aloud and guess who wrote them.

3. Guest at Your Table

Take the 'guest at your table' to the next level! Our parent resource coordinator, Jenian Gebeaux, created a fabulous activity for collecting money over the Thanksgiving week. (See the PDF file on our website or open the attachment 'Count Your Blessings'.

You can 'count your blessings' and use them as guides for giving during the Guest at Your Table season.

4. Thankfulness Tree (from 'The Book of New Family Traditions')

Cut out leaf shapes and draw a tree trunk on a poster. Have people in your family write things they are thankful for on the leaves and paste them to the poster. You can display your poster during the Thanksgiving season.

5. The Gines Family Pie Tradition (from 'The Book of New Family Traditions')

Members of the Gines family make 'Grandma's pie recipe' at the same time the day before Thanksgiving. Grandma Gines calls each grandchild that night to see how the pie turned out.