

Gratitude and Student Well-Being

Building Resilience and Belonging through Gratitude

Gratitude is often thought of as simply saying "thank you," but its impact can extend far beyond good manners. For students, cultivating gratitude can be a valuable tool for managing stress, building resilience, and fostering a greater sense of connection to their learning community.

For students navigating academic pressures, personal responsibilities, and life transitions, gratitude can serve as a protective factor that supports overall wellbeing.



Benefits of Gratitude

Practicing gratitude can positively influence several aspects of the student experience, including:

- Increased optimism and positive emotions
- Improved relationships with peers, faculty, and staff
- Greater resilience during stressful situations
- Enhanced sense of belonging and connection
- Reduced focus on negative experiences or setbacks
- Improved awareness of available support systems

While gratitude is not a solution to every challenge, it can help students identify strengths, recognize support networks, and develop coping strategies during difficult times.

Creating Opportunities for Gratitude

Educators can help foster gratitude throughout the school environment. Small, intentional practices can encourage students to reflect on positive experiences and connections.

Examples include:

- Encouraging reflection after successful projects or milestones
- Celebrating personal and academic achievements
- Providing opportunities for peer recognition
- Acknowledging student contributions and efforts
- Incorporating moments of reflection into meetings, classes, or programs

Try This!

Create a gratitude moment.

Start a meeting, class, tutoring session, advising appointment, or student event by inviting participants to reflect on one thing they are grateful for this week. Responses can be shared aloud, written on sticky notes, submitted anonymously, or added to a virtual discussion board.

This simple activity takes only a few minutes but can help students and educators pause, reflect on positive experiences, and strengthen their sense of connection with others.

Students are more likely to engage and persist when they feel connected to their school and the people around them. Gratitude can strengthen these connections by helping students recognize the support they receive from classmates, mentors, family members, and campus resources.

When gratitude becomes part of a school's culture, it can contribute to a more positive and supportive community for everyone.

Additional Resources

<https://www.constantloveandlearning.com/blog/powerful-year-round-gratitude-tools-to-benefit-educators-and-children>

<https://www.shraman.org/gratitude>

