



# Huntington Beach

## City School District



December 1st, 2015

### Greetings!

*Happy December! In this edition of the Early Childhood Newsletter, you will find information, ideas, and resources on techniques that foster a lifestyle of gratitude and compassion in young children. You will also find information specific to families from the California Department of Education, early literacy tips, and opportunities for young children in the Huntington Beach City School District.*

### Children and Gratitude



*"Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for."*

Zig Ziglar

As adults, we know how important it is to feel and express gratitude in our daily lives. Expressing gratitude and compassion allows us to fully and authentically connect with others; expressions of gratitude can also serve to shift our thinking toward greater

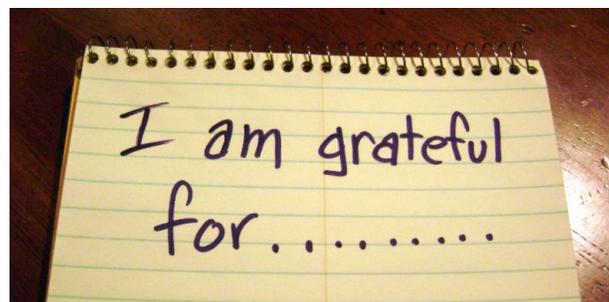
empathy and caring. Noticing and being thankful for what we have each day is a strategy for inherently increasing resiliency in the face of crises and one that better equips us to accept and embrace unexpected challenges.

Dr. Robert Emmons, professor of psychology at the University of California, Davis, discovered that practicing gratitude can increase happiness levels by as much as 25%! In his book, [Thanks, How the New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier](#), he explored extensive research involving thousands of participants across the globe. He concludes, "*Gratitude should be a lifestyle, not just an immediate reaction when something goes your way or you get what you want. Notice the little things in life, say thank you and bring gratitude to your experiences instead of waiting for something positive to feel grateful.*"

Early childhood is a perfect time to begin to instill and develop these important life skills. Here are a few simple ideas:

- 1) Model gratitude to your child by regularly mentioning what you are thankful for, and asking them about what is important to them (and listening!).
- 2) Every day at a time that works best (during dinner, bedtime routine, in the morning, etc.) each member of the family shares their gratitude sentiments.
- 3) Help your child work through challenges. For example, when something does not go the way they had anticipated, discuss what might be learned from the situation, and help them to find the good in it.
- 4) Encourage giving back. Discuss with your child how they might deliver acts of kindness, such as playing with a new friend, helping to pick up items that someone dropped, or finding ways to be supportive when someone is upset.

The University of California, Berkeley, has hosted a project titled *Greater Good in Action: Science Based Practices for a Meaningful Life*. To find more resources and information, you may want to start here: [Seven Ways to Foster Gratitude in Kids](#).



**Read Aloud**

**FEED YOUR CHILD'S BRAIN!**



Has your child had her serving  
of **Reading Aloud** today?



Every child. Every parent. Every day.



Learn more at [ReadAloud.org](http://ReadAloud.org)

## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD BE READY TO READ AND READY TO LEARN?

- ✦ Talk to your infant and toddler to help him learn to speak and understand the meaning of words. Point to objects that are near and describe them as you play and do daily activities together. Having a large vocabulary gives a child a great start when he enters school.
- ✦ Read to your baby every day starting at six months of age. Reading and playing with books is a wonderful way to spend special time with her. Hearing words over and over helps her become familiar with them. Reading to your baby is one of the best ways to help her learn.
- ✦ Use sounds, songs, gestures and words that rhyme to help your baby learn about language and its many uses. Babies need to hear language from a human being. Television is just noise to a baby.
- ✦ Point out the printed words in your home and other places you take your child such as the grocery store. Spend as much time listening to your child as you do talking to him.
- ✦ Take children's books and writing materials with you whenever you leave home. This gives your child fun activities to entertain and occupy him while traveling and going to the doctor's office or other appointments.
- ✦ Create a quiet, special place in your home for your child to read, write and draw. Keep books and other reading materials where your child can easily reach them.
- ✦ Help your child see that reading is important. Set a good example for your child by reading books, newspapers and magazines.
- ✦ Limit the amount and type of television you and your child watch. Better yet, turn off the television and spend more time cuddling and reading books with your child. The time and attention you give your child has many benefits beyond helping him be ready for success in school.
- ✦ Reach out to libraries and community and faith-based organizations. These organizations can:
  - ★ Help you find age-appropriate books to use at home with your child;
  - ★ Show you creative ways to use books with your child and other tips to help her learn; and
  - ★ Provide year-round children's reading and educational activities.



Reading Tips For Parents

## Website of the Month!



## A Message to California Parents

*"Parents are a child's first and most important teacher. Research proves that family engagement is one of the best tools to help a student succeed in school. We have gathered here some information that can help you support your child's education. That includes finding care for our youngest learners, determining how well a particular school performs, and learning about the standards we have set for what a student should know and be able to do to be ready to graduate and succeed in life."*

**-Tom Torlakson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction**

Find out more about what the site offers (including information about Kindergarten admission) here: [California Department of Education \(Family Portal\)](#)

## Early Childhood Opportunities in the HBCSD



### Extended Kindergarten: Huntington Beach City School District

Will your child turn 5 by February 9th, 2016? Our district is proud to offer an opportunity for your child to enter an

### School Readiness Nurse

The Huntington Beach City School District offers health and wellness screenings to help ensure that every child enters school healthy and ready to

early learning program prior to their Kindergarten year. **Registration forms will be available only at the former District Office (20451 Cramer Lane, HB, 92646) beginning December 7th at 8:30am.** This program will be held on the campus of Perry Elementary from 8:05am-1:25pm M, T, W, F and 8:05-11:50am Th.

Click here for a current flier: [Extended Kindergarten Program Information](#)

For additional information, please contact:

Perry Elementary: (714) 962-3348

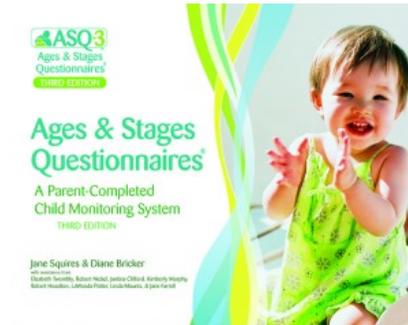
District Office: (714) 964-8888, ext. 2011

learn. Screenings include dental, vision, hearing, BMI and developmental progress using the research based Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3).

Please contact Nurse Jeanne to schedule an appointment!

**(714) 962-3348 x2345**

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Sincerely,

***Jenn Kinkel***

Director of Early Childhood Education, Huntington Beach City School District

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