

From Your Ridgecrest Counselors

Thanksgiving allows us to reflect on what we are appreciative and thankful for, a common discussion theme among celebration meals. Another theme for the holiday is being mindful. Having a sense of mindfulness allows us to have an awareness of our surroundings, things, and those we share time with. We think this is perfect as we enter the upcoming holiday season.

Mindfulness relates to being present and aware of what is taking place. By taking the time to focus on those we spend time with, our own belongings, and our hard work whether at school, work, or play, we develop a stronger appreciation for our efforts. When we experience success or are given a second chance to try again, stress and anxiety levels are reduced when mindfulness is practiced as well as improved working memory according to the American Psychological Association. Students will experience mindfulness when parents/guardians share a continued interest in their academics and extracurricular activities. Sharing your child's interests will allow them to recognize the positive experiences they are exposed to and opportunities they are provided with. As such, with the holidays approaching, we want to encourage an appreciation for the lives our students have as we recognize not many students and their families are as fortunate as those at Ridgecrest.

Welcome the holiday season by donating your time, an item, or making a monetary donation to those less fortunate. Friends & Helpers is a non-profit organization that works with children and adults to help improve their circumstances. This is one of many great ways to give back and encourage your child to appreciate what s/he has and how s/he can mindfully help others. Both mindfulness and appreciation should be practiced and modeled by adults as student learning often comes through observation of those adults they admire and respect.

Questions to Have as a Family

1. Who is someone you appreciate and why?
2. What is an experience you have had that you appreciate and why?
3. How could you show your appreciation for your friends, teachers, and family?
4. In what ways can you practice mindfulness at school and with homework?

Happy Holidays!

Heidi Shulman & Jesse Allen

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