



# Gratitude & Giving: A Family Guide to Philanthropy

Have you ever wondered...

*How do I teach my kids generosity?*

*How can I help my kids develop a sense of concern for the world around them?*

*How can I encourage my kids to express more gratitude?*

This easy-to-use guide, developed by [Seeds of Caring](#) and [The Columbus Foundation's Center for HumanKindness](#), aims to make conversations about philanthropy, service and gratitude with children simple, engaging and fun. There are two parts: Part One explores needs in our community and the kinder world we imagine. Through connective conversations, Part One allows families to create a shared vision for the role they want to play in creating a kinder community. Part Two invites action through a gratitude exercise and a family plan. The two parts can be completed at one sitting, or at separate times.

## STEP 1



### ENGAGE HEARTS & MINDS!

Create a shared vision about the kinder world your family imagines. Using our guided discussion and conversation cards will make this conversation meaningful and fun for kids (and a lot easier for you)!

*While this guide is appropriate for most children, grown-ups are invited to modify for older/younger kids as needed.*

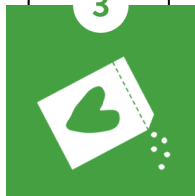
## STEP 2



### PUT HELPING HANDS TO WORK

Using the activities provided on Pages 6-8, decide how your family will take action to create a kinder, more connected world for us all.

## STEP 3



### INSPIRE EVEN MORE CARING...

Help us create a kinder community by teaming together with Seeds of Caring and The Columbus Foundation's Center for HumanKindness. Sign up for both monthly newsletters through the links below to stay connected.

[Seeds of Caring Newsletter](#) | [Center for HumanKindness Newsletter](#)



[Seeds of Caring](#) is a youth service organization that empowers kids to create a kinder community through service, social action, and community building projects. Family service projects, classroom curriculum and more can be found at: [www.seedsofcaring.org](http://www.seedsofcaring.org)



[The Columbus Foundation](#) is on a mission to assist donors and others in strengthening and improving our community for the benefit of all its residents. They do this by helping you help others through the most effective philanthropy possible.

## PART ONE: CREATING A SHARED VISION

Family philanthropy starts with helping our youngest generation understand that we're each part of a bigger community and that we each have a role to play in making our community a kinder, more connected place. Our kids notice many things about the world around them - about what's fair and unfair, or what's kind and unkind. When we take the time to listen to their ideas and to share our own, we not only honor their humanity and create connection, we lay the foundation for a lifetime of empathy, philanthropy and service.

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Introduce the activity. Consider using the script below.
2. Print the conversation cards on Pages 3-5 and take turns reading/answering. You could incorporate this into your next family dinner!

### SUPPLIES NEEDED:



- Script below
- Conversation cards, Pages 3-5
- Open hearts and listening ears!

#### SAY:

*We're going to talk about philanthropy today. The word "philanthropy" is often used to describe charitable giving - when someone gives money to a person or organization who needs it - but it actually has a much broader meaning. It comes from the Greek words "philos," meaning "love," and "anthropos," meaning "humanity." "Philanthropy" truly means "love for humanity," and that love can be expressed in many ways—including how we treat one another and how we invest our resources, like our time and money.*

*We're going to play a game where we answer questions about our community and the kind of world we want to live in. But first, do you know what "community" means? Typically, community refers to the people living nearby, in our city or our area, but it can also be smaller than that, like the people living in our neighborhood or attending our school. No matter how old or young we are, we have the ability to share our love for humanity and make our world a better place, and I know that is something our family cares a lot about.*

*I'm excited to hear your answers and your ideas as we share today. Remember, there is no right or wrong answer. Who wants to go first?!*

#### ASK:

Use the Conversation Cards provided on Pages 3-5.

Use these conversation cards at your next family gathering by placing one at each place setting!





What is something we need more of in our community?  
What is something we need less of in our community?

What does it mean to be a good person in today's world?



What is something you love about our community?

When you think about our community, what problems or issues do you want to change?





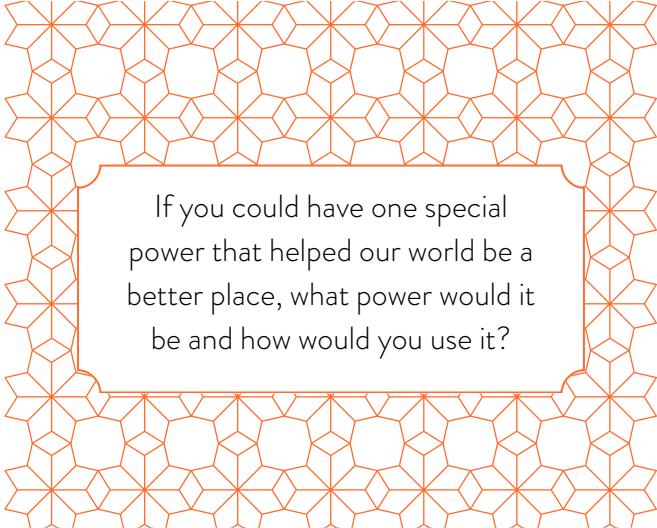
Have you heard stories about people who have made a positive difference in their community? Can you share one?

If you could give money to support people or address a challenge in our community, what cause would you choose to support? Why?

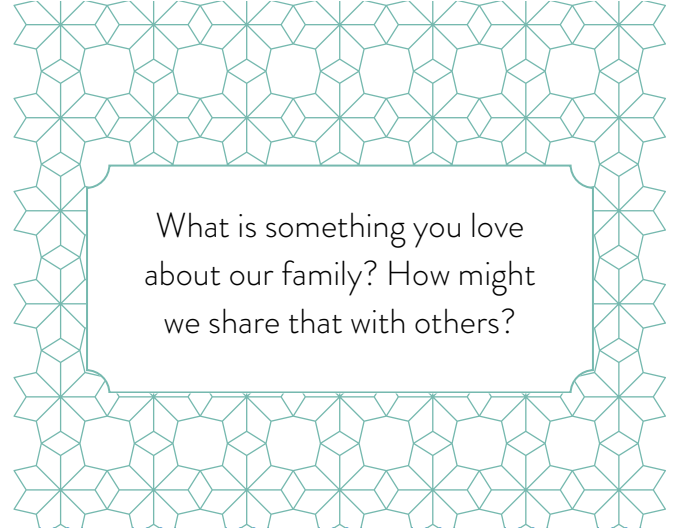
Can you think of an act of kindness that had a positive impact on your life? Tell me about it.

What is a small act of kindness that you think can make a big difference?

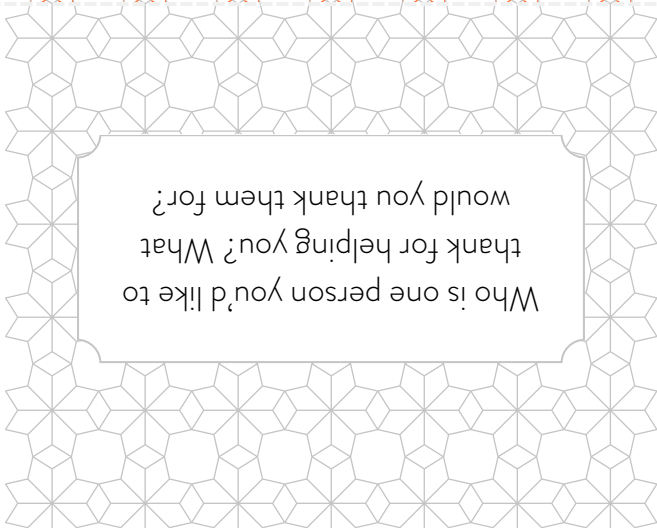




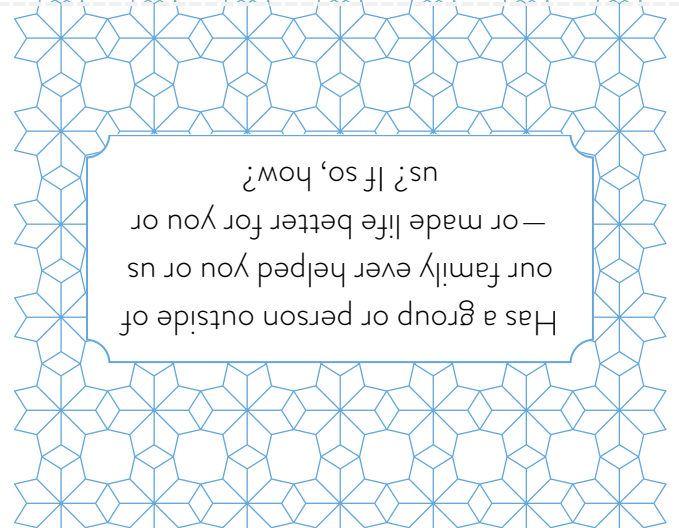
If you could have one special power that helped our world be a better place, what power would it be and how would you use it?



What is something you love about our family? How might we share that with others?



Who is one person you'd like to thank for helping you? What would you thank them for?



Has a group or person outside of our family ever helped you or us — or made life better for you or us? If so, how?





## PART TWO: GRATITUDE + ACTION

It's important that our children learn from a very young age that there is always something they can do to make our community a kinder place. Instill a sense of agency, responsibility, gratitude and generosity by following the script below and completing the activities on Pages 6-8.

**SAY:**

*I have a fun challenge for us today: Let's make the longest list possible of things we are grateful for! Do you think we can come up with 50 things? 100? I'll get a blank piece of paper, and we'll see how high we can go!*

**ASK:**

*Work as a family to come up with as many things to be grateful for as possible. You can do this around the dinner table, on a large poster board in the living room picture-style, or any other way you choose! Use the questions below to help prompt ideas:*

- *What is something you have that makes your life easier? (e.g. running water)*
- *What abilities or talents do you have that you are grateful for?*
- *What are two of your favorite things to do? Why are you thankful for these things?*
- *What is something you're grateful for in our community?*
- *Who is someone in your life that you're grateful for? Why?*
- *Who is a person from history that you are grateful for, even if they are no longer living? Why?*

**SAY:**

*We have so much to be grateful for, and I know from our conversation earlier that we each want to live in a world where everyone has a really long gratitude list like we do! We want everyone to have the things they need to live a happy, full life and to be able to reach their goals and dreams, don't we?!*

*I think our family can help make this possible. I think we can partner up with community helpers who are already doing good and working hard to make our world a kinder, more connected place. I'm going to read some great ideas of how we can take action with these community helpers, but first, I want to make sure we understand who these community helpers are and the important work they do every day.*

**Want more on gratitude?**  
Watch [this video](#) by RocketKids or this [inspiring video](#) by GreatSchools.

➔ **continue discussion on Page 7**



## PUT HELPING HANDS TO WORK

### ASK:

Use the notes below to support your conversation about nonprofits and the important work they do in our community.

- When I say “community helper,” who do you think of?
- When I say “nonprofit” or “charity,” what comes to mind?
- Can you think of any examples of a nonprofit? How are they making our community a better, fairer, kinder place to live?
- What do nonprofit organizations do?



### DISCUSS NONPROFITS:

- Nonprofits help with important community needs
- Nonprofits can be small (a couple employees) or quite large
- They often find the needs in their community by listening to other people’s stories and the challenges they face
- Nonprofits can help people get food, clothing, education, jobs; help the environment, etc.
- Nonprofits include:
  - social services (food banks, homeless shelters, etc.)
  - arts and cultural institutions (theaters, zoos, conservatories, etc.)
  - parks and neighborhood beautification programs
  - educational programs and institutions
  - houses of worship AND MORE!

### SAY:

Thank you for learning about nonprofits and all the community helpers who are working to make our community a kinder place. Let’s look at some ideas of ways we can take action, too! After I read this list, we are going to work together to come up with our own Family Philanthropy Plan.

## FAMILY PHILANTHROPY PLAN IDEAS

Review the list of ideas below, then complete the Family Philanthropy Plan on Page 8.

1. Pledge \$1, \$5 or \$10 for items on our Gratitude List to donate to a local nonprofit organization! The amount is not what's important. This is about building a spirit of generosity. Browse [The Giving Store](#) at The Columbus Foundation to explore specific causes together — or make a donation to families experiencing a sudden hardship through the [Gifts of Kindness Fund](#).
2. Give the gift of time: Volunteer as a family with [Seeds of Caring](#).
3. Make a plan for ongoing giving! Consider setting a goal for the next year of dollars or items donated or hours volunteered. Or consider creating a 3-Part Allowance, dividing future allowance among 3 “jars” for spending, saving and giving.
4. Brainstorm some simple acts of kindness to incorporate into your daily lives. Need inspiration? [Check here](#).



# OUR FAMILY PHILANTHROPY PLAN

Today, our family commits to create a kinder, more connected world through service, philanthropy and kindness by:

1

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2

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3

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**SIGNED:**





# Grow More Kindness *with Seeds of Caring*

## Who is Seeds of Caring...



### OUR VISION:

A kinder, more connected world led by our youngest generation.

### OUR MISSION:

We empower kids to create a kinder community with their hearts, hands, and minds.

## Why kindness matters...

**Proven outcomes:** Grown-ups report that after participating with Seeds of Caring, they saw these changes in their kids: 98% increased their knowledge and understanding of community needs; 91% showed more initiative in making a difference in their community; and 96% demonstrated empathy more frequently for others.

## Where we can go together...

If a kinder, more connected world is something you envision, let's work together! Help us raise our next generation of:

- bridge builders.
- kindness creators.
- empathizers.
- change-makers.



Register to participate as a family



Get your class or group involved



Sign up for Seeds of Caring's newsletter



Want to have a conversation about how you can be more involved? Reach out to [brandy@seedsofcaring.org](mailto:brandy@seedsofcaring.org).

“You aren’t going to save the world on your own, but you might inspire a generation of kids to save it for all of us. You would be amazed at what inspired children can do.”

— Dr. Jane Goodall