

12 Family Activities for Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and chances are, your holiday might be looking a little different this year and perhaps a little less crowded. Regardless of who you're celebrating with, Thanksgiving is the perfect day to enjoy time with your kids. Get them involved in the festivities, start a new family tradition, and make this the most meaningful holiday yet!

1. Let your kids help you make a side dish

Whether you are dancing in the kitchen while preparing a delicious homemade meal, or you're saving yourself some sanity and are going to heat up the food you just had delivered, getting your kids involved in the preparation makes the meal that much better. Consider having them help with a side dish, like mashing some potatoes or mixing the ingredients for the cornbread.

2. Construct a fall centerpiece

To spruce up the dinner table, have your kids help you make a homemade centerpiece. Earlier in the week, pick up some materials such as artificial autumn flowers and grasses, small pumpkins, and candles. Or, instead of buying anything at the craft store, use what you have around your house: have your kids bring in some leaves to create a paper plate wreath or add some dried flowers and corn husks to a vase. Check online for additional inspiration by searching "DIY Fall Centerpieces".



3. Make personalized place cards

Even if it is just your family, make the meal a little extra special by having your kids make personalized place cards with names on them. Let them decorate the cards, then place them in the appropriate spots around the dinner table.

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4. Write down what you are thankful for

Thanksgiving is synonymous with gratitude. Have your family reflect on what they are grateful for this year by writing something down on notecards. Consider having everyone share what they wrote at dinner.

5. Watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

A classic American Thanksgiving tradition is to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving parade. Cuddle up with your kids on the couch to watch the floats go by on television and talk about what your favorite floats and balloons are and who you enjoyed watching perform.

6. Facetime with family

Just because you can't be with all of your family and friends does not mean you have to miss out on talking with them. Schedule a time to FaceTime or Google Meet with grandma and grandpa or your kids' cousins -- regardless of who it is, you'll be thankful to get in touch with loved ones on a holiday that centers around family.

7. Look at photo albums

Walk down memory lane with your children by looking at pictures of them growing up. Maybe even bring out the albums of you and your partner before the kids came along to show what you were up to pre-kids and tell your story. You might bring back some fun memories to talk about!

8. Participate in a Turkey Trot or go on a neighborhood walk

While the classic community Turkey Trots are virtual this year, consider still completing the race with your family, whether you decide to walk or run. Alternatively, simply go on a family walk to build up an appetite for the big meal -- or to walk off the tiredness that comes after the meal.

9. Toss the football

Have the gang head outside for a little family football fun. This is another great way to have your kids use up some energy and work up an appetite!

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10. Donate Food

Teach your kids the importance of giving back to the community by bringing food to a local food pantry or food bank. Consider donating foods families may particularly enjoy during the holidays, such as cranberry sauces, canned pumpkin, dessert mixes, or instant holiday meals. Other items to consider giving are nutritious and non-perishable goods such as canned fish and meat, peanut butter, or whole grain pasta.

11. Make Thanksgiving themed art

Let your kids get their creative juices flowing and keep them busy by making some art. Have them trace their hands and make turkeys out of the tracings, or print out coloring sheets of cornucopias or other Thanksgiving themed pictures to get their creative juices flowing.

12. Watch a movie together after dinner

When the food coma hits post-dinner, your family will likely be feeling a bit sleepy and lethargic. Finish off the day by snuggling under some blankets to watch a movie together. Whether you choose the classic Thanksgiving movie, A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving, or put on another family favorite, you'll be glad to put up your feet and relax with your family.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family!

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Originally posted on the Now What? Blog on 11.18.20 The Now What? Blog served for nearly 7 years to

1. Normalize parents seeking support and help as a manner of child abuse prevention
2. Engage community in how they can work to prevent child abuse
3. Work to build resiliency in families through promotion of the 5 protective factors

Maybe you coach a baseball team or you help care for the neighbor kids from time to time. You are investing in the safety and security of the children in our community. Because it truly does take a village to raise our children, we want to offer the tools needed to bring awareness and education to preventing child abuse.

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