

Give Thanks to Mother... Every Day!

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During May we celebrate Mother's Day, but moms deserve to be thanked more often than once a year!

Most mothers say that they weren't fully prepared for motherhood, regardless of their age, culture, or the amount of money they earn. Raising children is such an important job, but one with little training. Guidelines and recommendations change frequently, leaving moms confused as to the best ways to ensure a child's safety and health. Most women have good instincts, but there's much to learn about raising happy and healthy children.

Mothers learn by doing, and often hope or pray that their mistakes won't have serious consequences. Some women are lucky to have relatives or friends to turn to for sound advice and a shoulder to cry on. Others are isolated in a new country or community and feel lonely with little support. Having a friend to talk to and spend time with can make all the difference in the world. Finding a support group with other mothers can reduce isolation and provide important information like suggestions for finding a good childcare program or strategies for helping a child sleep through the night.

Most women admit that being a mother is harder than they thought it would be, and yet they're often reluctant to say that out loud. Some mothers feel pressured to pretend they're always happy, even when they're over tired and stressed out by demands they face each day.

Here are some ways to show the mothers in your life how much you appreciate them, any day of the year:

- Give her time to go see a movie, go out with girlfriends, or do something else she enjoys doing. Take care of the kids so she can have time for R&R (rest and relaxation).
- Write a letter or poem capturing the things you love and appreciate about her.
- Cook a special dinner, and make sure she doesn't have to clean up afterwards.
- Talk with her about what she needs, so she has a chance to think about the quality of her life and ways she can increase her wellbeing and decrease her stress.
- Have fun. Go for a walk in nature, ride a bike, or have a picnic at the park. Moms often forget to play.
- Think about your mom, what it was like for you growing up, what challenges your mom had, and how she overcame them.

Let the mothers in your life know that you appreciate their dedication and hard work. A happy mother is a key ingredient for a happy family!

