

Parents - If you haven't already read the pages on ["Developing Character in Your Children,"](#) you might want to go there first before reading these pages.

## Contentment Vs. covetousness

*"Realizing that true happiness does not depend on material conditions."*

**Tips for Parents to Encourage Contentment**

We have all been annoyed by discontented children, characterized by whining, pouting, and begging to get the toy they have fixed their hearts on. But we also may have accepted that behavior as normal and understandable, rather than realizing that children can be trained to learn contentment.

The key to contentment for children and for adults is cultivating an attitude of thankfulness for what we do have and letting go of the elusive goal of attaining the ultimate "toy" or material possession. Gratefulness actually settles our emotional state into a feeling of well-being and stillness, aka contentment. It is a habit that can be developed at any age. Grateful and contented people are pleasant to be around and have an influence on any group they are part of.

We need to help our children distinguish between complacency and contentedness, as our children watch us keep trying to be the best we can be in all circumstances, but not being discontented with circumstances that cannot be changed.

Why not try some projects to help your children learn contentedness:

- ◆ Visit a charity that helps those who are poverty stricken and talk with your children later about what the people's lives were lacking. Let them make a list of the things they have that they are grateful for.
- ◆ Read biographies of those who have sacrificed material wealth to help others.
- ◆ Make some simple toys that children used to play with and were very happy with. Let your children choose one simple toy (say, a ball) and learn to be content with it only all day.