

Pre-School Pages



A newsletter for parents of pre-schoolers
 packed with food, facts & fun
 from your local county extension office

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Celebrate

Teaching Kids About Giving Back



"It's better to give than to receive" is an old adage that we've all heard. A study by the American Psychological Association suggests that giving to others increases life expectancy by at least 5 years. A stretch? Maybe. But if you and your child shovel the snow from your elderly neighbors' sidewalk this winter, you may be doing yourself, your child, and your neighbor a favor. We can start with the very small and teach our children about giving to others in need. Young children can learn to give back during the holiday season by giving a kind word, offering a smile, sharing a toy, drawing a picture, writing or dictating a note, or comforting a friend or family member. And as they grow, so will their generosity.

Here are some additional family giving ideas for helping and giving to others that

you can do with your child during the holiday season:

- Collect clothing or personal items and donate them to a local shelter for the homeless.
- Make favors, scrapbooks, napkin rings, or crafts for a special occasion to donate to a local children's hospital.
- "Adopt" a senior citizen and help him or her with necessary chores or visit an elder care home.
- Plan or cooperate with existing paper drives or other recycling endeavors.
- Collect food for local food banks.
- Make greeting cards for people in a veteran's hospital or other health care facilities.
- "Adopt" a service person stationed overseas, collect items and send them a gift box.
- Make toys, games, or crafts for a child care center or pediatric unit of a hospital.

Tic Toc

Keeping the Holidays Calm for Young Children

Prevent holiday meltdowns

Sometimes it seems to parents that the more effort they put into making the



holidays fun for young children, the more they get tears and tantrums in return. During the holiday season it's better to do one thing calmly than 10 things frenetically. The pace is often what does in parents and children alike. Too many new and exciting experiences and too much of a change in the daily routine can throw everyone into a tizzy.

Slow it down so children can participate in holiday activities in a satisfying, simple way. Make preparations in small, easily managed steps that you can all do together. Children can help with things that are done in advance of Christmas, like food preparation or selecting gifts or making cards, but don't provide too many exciting activities at once. When it comes to baking, for example, make just one plain kind of cookie or streamline the process by using ready-made cookie dough and let the children do the decorating. Remember that from the child's point of view it doesn't matter what the cookies look like, it's the fun of making them together that counts. The same goes for holiday decorations and making or picking out and wrapping presents.

Stick to comfortable routines

Another way to help make the holidays more pleasurable is by sticking to regular routines as much as possible. Children need consistency and sameness in their daily lives as well as stimulation. When this balance gets out of whack, as it invariably does during the holiday season, everyone can feel out of sorts.

Maintain bedtime rituals and, when you can, allow a little extra time to answer the questions young children will have about all the goings-on. Often, in the rush of too many activities, parents forget that children need calm, leisurely explanations of the customs and rituals of their particular holiday tradition.

Since it's often difficult for young children to accept going to bed at the end of a big day,

talking quietly, reading a story or singing a song related to the holidays can help calm everyone down.

Very simple things satisfy young children. They are pleased and reassured by repetition. So keep it simple, keep it manageable for a holiday season that's a happy one for little people and their parents.

Source: Sue West, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, NYS College of Human Ecology, Cornell University.

Let's Eat

Kiwi Christmas Tree



The vibrant green color of kiwis is perfect for creating Christmas trees. Top with a watermelon star and use the skin for the tree base.

Makes: 2 servings

Ingredients

- 1 Kiwi
- 1 Red or Yellow Fruit i.e. Watermelon or Pineapple

Directions

1. Wash fruit.
2. Peel Kiwi and keep one section of peel for the tree base. Prepare red or yellow fruit.
3. Slice the Kiwi into thin circles and then cut in half. Cut a star or angel from the red or yellow fruit for the topper.
4. Place kiwi slices on plate to shape a Christmas tree. Place red or yellow shape on top.

Source: <https://www.healthylittlefoodies.com/18-healthy-christmas-snacks/>



Sincerely,

Brooke Hogancamp

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