



WINTER 2020

TAKE CARE

**HEALTHY TIPS
FOR
WINTER**

Winter ushers in colder weather along with the holidays. It also brings additional challenges in a year which has already tested us. Here are a few ideas for helping to make the season bright and the dark days lighter. And suggestions on how efforts to give hope and happiness to others might also renew your own.



Keep the Holidays Happy During COVID-19

By: Kenneth Ginsburg, MD, MS Ed, FAAP

The Children's Health Foundation is a non-profit organization that partners with your Pediatrician to develop quality health care programs in our community. We work together to foster the highest quality care for children, to raise awareness on health issues, and to achieve better children's health outcomes. Please ask your provider for more information.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH *foundation*

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The holiday season usually is a joyful time. Many families look forward to gathering with relatives and friends, exchanging gifts and celebrating traditions. But COVID-19 and physical distancing have brought a new kind of stress this holiday season.

There are ways families can cut down their stress during the holidays. Sticking to routines as much as possible, exercising, eating healthy food, and getting plenty of sleep can help. Pay attention to how much time your kids—and you—spend on screens. And avoid the pressure to spend a lot on gifts, focusing on the simple joy of spending time together.

If your toddler's tantrums or teen's mood swings seem more intense during the pandemic, though, it could be a sign that they need support to manage emotions and behavior.

Beyond "normal" holiday stress

Even if your family does not know someone who is directly affected by the virus, it may be hard for children to manage their feelings. When making plans, parents should think about how their child has handled holiday stress before.

COVID-19 is harder for some families

During a normal fall or winter, children and adults may feel lost, sad or isolated. Most times, a parent or another caring adult or friend can help a child or teen manage their stress. Your child's stress this holiday season may depend on your family's hardships. Think about getting extra support this year if your family is affected by the stress of:

- job loss, homelessness, not enough food, problems with remote work and learning.
- a parent or caregiver with mental health, substance use or health issues.
- frontline workers (such as a police officer, firefighter, doctor, nurse or restaurant worker).
- children with special health care needs or a mental health condition.
- racial or ethnic minority groups.
- grieving the loss of a loved one.

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Volunteering with kids: COVID Style

by: Pamela White, Children's Center Development Director, www.childrenscenter.cc

In the United States, the time between Thanksgiving Day and New Year's Day is traditionally thought of as the "holiday season". Depending on your family, cultural, and religious traditions, volunteering could very likely be part of what you do to give back during this time. As the parent of five-children (who are now all adults), volunteering has long been a big part of our family life year-round and during the holiday season.

When my kids were young, we did things like food drives, collecting pop cans, singing Christmas carols at nursing homes, and some years we were able to adopt a family during the holidays. As my kids got older, we began volunteering to building houses with Habitat for Humanity, worked weekly at a local Kiwanis Thrift store, and helped organize school-wide volunteer projects like food or toy drives. My kids also participated in week-long service trips to volunteer at orphanages in Mexico, paint houses on a Reservation in New Mexico, and work in "soup kitchens" and homeless shelters in San Francisco and San Diego. Unfortunately, all of these "hands-on" kinds of experiences have been put on pause due to COVID-19.

I know how important volunteering is for my family, and I've done a lot of thinking about how to help parents keep the spirit of volunteerism alive during a worldwide pandemic. So, I did some doing research on volunteering during COVID, and wanted to share some ideas with you.

Make cards to send to local long-term care and assisted living facilities:

- All facilities for seniors have been on lockdown for visitors since mid-March. Needless to say, many seniors in these facilities are feeling very lonely; you may also have neighbors or family friends who could use some encouragement. Having your kids draw or paint pictures and write a few words of encouragement is a great way to send some sunshine during this difficult time. Doing Good Together offers tips on how to become a Senior Angel. To find a senior facility near you, Google "Senior living facility near me" and give them a call and ask how you can help! <https://www.doinggoodtogether.org/bhf/become-a-senior-angel>

Support our troops and their families:

- Soldierangels.org offers the opportunity to provide "Holiday Stockings for Heroes" or "Adopt a Military Family". There is still time to do either one of these great projects, however, you need to sign up right away and plan to send off your package by December 18. Include your kids in choosing what goes in the package, and if possible, shop with them online rather than taking them into a store. As an alternative, check with local stores you love – they might let you shop online and then do curbside pick-up.

Help local Oregon families and individuals who are struggling:

- Clackamas Women's Services (CWS) offers services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. They are looking for \$25 gift cards from Fred Meyer, Target, Walmart and Amazon.com which will be distributed to the women and families they serve. While I don't encourage you to take your kids into a local store to buy these cards, perhaps you could have them write a letter to include with the gift cards when you mail or deliver. You can mail gift cards directly to CWS or reach out for delivery instructions by contacting Josie Greer, Administrative Coordinator, at josieg@cwsor.org or (503) 557-5830.

- Northwest Family Services (NWFS) works to reduce poverty through health, education, employment, and social justice services. They also need gifts for the families they serve. You can shop their Christmas Wish List by going to your Amazon account and putting "NWFS Christmas Wish List" into the search bar. Talk with your kids before looking at this list, give them a budget, and think about what age group they would like to support with the toys they choose. This might also be a great time to talk about how grateful you are to be able help others and to talk about what they are grateful for. When you shop Amazon from NWFS Amazon list, anything you buy will be shipped directly to NWFS.
- Here at Children's Center, we always give children who have an assessment a new stuffed animal and a child size quilt or knitted blanket. We also try to keep books available for kids in our waiting room. This tangible comfort means we always need these things. We welcome NEW stuffed animals, child size quilts or blankets (ideally handmade), and books. For more information, please email me directly; Pamela White at pamela@childrenscenter.cc.

Organize a Food Drive:

- Help or encourage your kids to hold a food drive. I have listed below pantries I could find in each community that are accepting food donations right now. In your neighborhood, you can be COVID savvy and contacting your neighbors through a paper "invitation" left at the door for them with a request for them to drop donations off at your home on a certain day and time. Kids can create these by hand or on the computer and then you all can walk door to door to deliver (make sure they wear masks where age-appropriate). You and your kids (depending on their age) could also do this through social media and again provide a time and place for the drop-off.
- Help your kids arrange a "curbside" drop off and hang out with them while the donations come in. You could create bins or even collect the food directly to the trunk of your car or pick-up and be already for delivery. Then, check the directions on the website as to drop-off times at your preferred food bank.
- Local food pantries currently accepting food donations:
 - Wichita Center – In Milwaukie serving North Clackamas Area
 - The Canby Center – Canby
 - The Sandy Community Action Center – Sandy
 - Hunger Fighters Oregon – Lake Oswego (they have specific COVID instructions so when you click on the site – scroll down to find them).

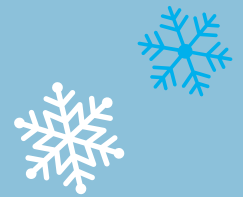
Regardless of what, when or how you and your child volunteer this year, remember to talk with them about how to be safe and remind them you will always listen if they are uncomfortable with a situation or don't feel safe. Check out Darkness to Light's information on how to understand more about this issue. And we encourage you to take Children's Center's Stewards of Children® training, offered throughout the year to learn how to become an advocate for children's safety in every part of your life.

I know so many are in need and if you are so fortunate as to be warm, dry and fed this holiday season I join you in gratitude. Please consider helping someone less fortunate than yourself, and if you have kids or grandkids, help them learn to do the same!

Source: Children's Center blog, Article has been excerpted.



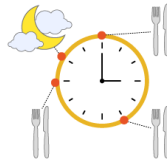
Tips to Stay Chill During the Hectic Holiday Season



Focus on spending time with your family.



Don't feel pressure to overspend on gifts.



Keep bedtimes & meals on a regular schedule.



Volunteer as a family to help others.



Concentrate on one task at a time.



Set a good example & take care of yourself.

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When to seek help

If a child is struggling for more than two weeks, it might be time to get help. Here are a few symptoms to watch for:

- An infant or young child clings to parents, has sleep problems, doesn't eat as much, or a preschooler starts thumb sucking or bed wetting.
- An older child or adolescent acts fearful, anxious, or withdrawn, argues more or seems to be more aggressive. They also might complain more about stomachaches or headaches.
- A teen or young adult gets into trouble, can't focus, hides problems because they are afraid, feels bad about the problems, or feels like they are a burden to their family.

Safe + Strong

It's okay to ask for help

COVID-19 has changed our lives, and it can feel difficult for anyone. There's support for you and the people you love. YouthLine for teen-to-teen support.

Teens respond from 4 to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday
24 hours a day / 7 days a week



CALL
1-877-968-8491



TEXT
teen2teen to 839863

Finding joy during the holiday season

Spend a few moments each day enjoying the company of your children this holiday season. It can bring your family closer and boost your mood. Try using extra downtime to do these things together as a family:

- Use your talents to help others, volunteer and give back to the community.
- Talk about your family's culture, heritage, values and spiritual beliefs. Cook together, for example, making favorite family recipes.
- Find ways to play and laugh together. Consider making special cloth face coverings to wear during the holiday season.
- Aim to be present in the moment. Teach kids to use mindfulness and relaxation to cut down on stress.
- Practice gratitude as a family.

Remember

It is perfectly fine to call your pediatrician. Get help right away if you are worried that your child might hurt themselves or someone else. Your pediatrician can help determine if any mood problems are caused by underlying health conditions or medications. They can put you in touch with psychologists, psychiatrists, or social workers.

We are all going through unprecedented times, and the holiday season will not take away how difficult that feels for a child. Instead, families can try to focus on ways to give to others. When they learn to share their time or talent with those who have less, children build resilience that will last long after the pandemic is over.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics (Copyright © 2020), [Healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)

Volunteering Resources

Please visit www.childrenscenter.cc to learn more about The Children's Center.

Another resource for Portland volunteering:
<https://pdxparent.com/volunteering-for-portland-families-during-covid/>



Wintertime Recipe: Peppermint Bark



According to Men's Health magazine, Peppermint Bark is Oregonians' favorite Christmas time treat. They also claim that Skittles are the favorite seasonal craving for Washington state. While these may not be easily verifiable statistics, the tastiness of this peppermint bark recipe is, as we have tried it. It is quick and easy to make and delicious! Enjoy and share.

INGREDIENTS

12 ounces white chocolate (good quality, like Ghiradelli)
12 ounces dark or semi-sweet chocolate (like Ghiradelli, we love it with dark chocolate)
3 Candy Canes (crushed)
½ - 1 teaspoon Peppermint extract (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line a 9x12 inch baking sheet (it is best if it has raised edges) with parchment paper
2. Using a microwave safe dish or double boiler, melt the dark or semi-sweet chocolate. If using a double boiler, stay near the pan and stir continuously while it melts to avoid burning the chocolate. If using a microwave, turn power to 50% and microwave for 30 seconds at a time, stirring in between. Stop when it melts and has a smooth consistency. (You can add the peppermint extract to either or both the melted chocolate mixtures at this stage in the process.)
3. Pour melted dark chocolate on the parchment paper, spread the chocolate out until it's about 1/3" thick. You can hit the pan on the countertop repeatedly to smooth it out or use a spatula to spread the chocolate evenly. After it has cooled a bit, let dark chocolate set up in pan for a few minutes in the refrigerator.
4. Melt the white chocolate using the above steps. Allow the white chocolate to cool slightly and while it is still warm, but not piping hot, slowly pour over white chocolate over the dark chocolate bottom layer. Gently spread white chocolate in an even layer, trying not to mix with bottom layer of chocolate. Its best to do this step while the white chocolate is still soft to avoid separation of layers when it has cooled completely. You want the layers to stick together.
5. Sprinkle with crushed peppermint. Refrigerate for 2 hours, then break the candy into pieces with a big knife. Put into containers for gifting. Store in cool, dry location, or refrigerator.

Indoor and Outdoor Winter Activities For Kids

PLAY IN THE SNOW If there is snow (and this winter's forecast for the NW is predicting we will get at least one big snowfall), build a snowman, build snow angels, have a snowball fight, sled and if you have access, try skiing, snowboarding, or snowshoeing. Have some hot chocolate ready when everyone comes back in.

PAPER SNOWFLAKES If you are still waiting for snow, cut paper snowflakes or make handmade valentines.

MAKE A BIRDFEEDER out of pinecones, peanut butter and birdseed and place it outside, near a window for viewing.

OUTDOOR EXPLORATION (with a parent in tow for younger kids). Have a "winter journal" for kids to write down or draw what they discover.

KID'S YOGA There are online resources available for free yoga classes for kids. Cosmic Kids is one resource on YouTube to check out for yoga videos for kids.

INDOOR PICNICS Let your kids set up the blankets and stuffed animal guests and arrange a tasty spread.

BAKING Winter baking can fill your house with good smells and be a great family activity. Let kids help plan what you will make. Try baked apples or make homemade caramel popcorn for a simple treat.



STARGAZING If you can find your way out of town on a clear night, to an area with low light pollution that has a clear view of the entire sky, you will have a good chance of seeing a few meteors on the nights between Dec. 27 and Jan. 10 when the Quadrantids Meteor shower is viewable. Jan. 3-4 will be the peak days for viewing. If you have caught the bug of stargazing after the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn on 12/21, you might want to download a smartphone app (like Star Walk 2 or SkySafari) or consider signing up for alerts at spotthestation.nasa.gov or the ISS Spotter app to receive notifications when the International Space Station will be making a visible, fly by, over our area. It is always a marvel to see this man-made object, the size of a football field, gliding across the sky like a floating star. Jupiter & Saturn will still be close together in the sky for some time after 12/21, so if you catch a clear evening make sure to look for them in the low Southern Sky.

PLAN A VIRTUAL GAME NIGHT with family and friends. Or have a virtual painting party by ordering the same painting set for all interested parties and connecting through a meeting platform to paint together online. Local painting party companies include Goghbox.com and PaintingtoGogh.com.