



Tips for Reducing Stress During the Holidays

The holiday season, with its twinkling lights and festive gatherings, is often described as the most wonderful time of the year. Yet, for parents, it can quickly become the most **stressful** time of the year. Between managing travel, gift shopping, school breaks, and a packed social calendar, it's no surprise that children's behavior often takes a challenging turn.

To make your holiday season less stressful and more meaningful, remember these key strategies:

- Encourage cooperation with empathy, focusing on effort and strengths over criticism.
- Set realistic expectations for behavior and logistics.
- Maintain structure when routines change, using tools like a Family Meeting.
- Model calm even when things get chaotic—your children are watching and learning from you.
- Be respectful model respect and watch it come back to you.
- Build Traditions explore the cultures and traditions of your extended family and friends and don't be afraid to create new traditions that reflect the diversity of your family.
- Manage food intake: Monitor sugar consumption and pack protein-rich snacks to help manage energy levels.
- Learn to say "no": It's okay to decline invitations to protect your energy and time. Saying no to one thing allows you to say yes to something else, like quality family time.
- Delegate tasks: Don't try to do it all yourself. Ask family members to help with tasks to avoid burnout.
- Schedule downtime: Build quiet time into the day for children to recharge, even if it's just 15 minutes to read a book or listen to music. Make rest & self-care a priority.

Remember that family traditions—from cooking cultural dishes to holiday customs—strengthen the family bond, provide a sense of identity and pass on values and heritage across generations. Embrace the opportunity to share your history and values this season.

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