

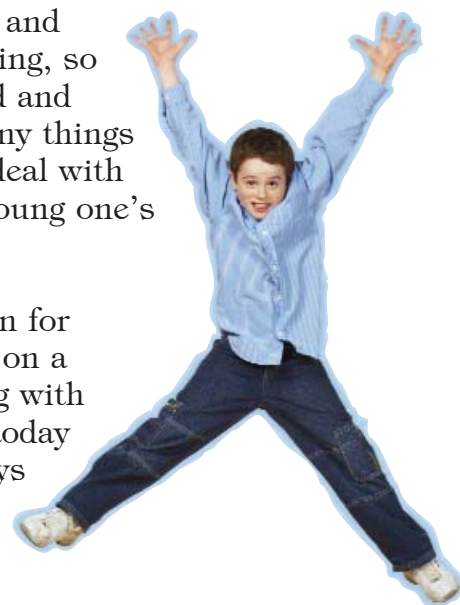
# Raising Great Kids



DECEMBER

## Helping Your Child Deal with Holiday Anticipation

This is a hectic time of year with all the holiday preparations and excitement. If adults feel overwhelmed with all that's happening, so much more do children. Young children easily become excited and overstimulated. This excitement can lead to them ruining many things for themselves and everyone else. Parents can help children deal with holiday stress by planning ahead how they will channel the young one's excited energy. Here are a few things you can do.



**Plan ahead, plan ahead, plan ahead.** The best tool is to plan for activities that will direct your child's excitement. Write down on a calendar when you will do different activities and keep talking with your child about this. When he pesters you to do something today you planned to do next week, remind him by counting the days with him on the calendar. Try to stick to the schedule, and stick to the child's basic daily routine, e.g. bedtimes, naptimes, reading times.

**Let your child help.** A great way to direct children's excitement is to give them some task in getting ready for the celebrations. You can have him help to prepare something to give to the neighbor, wrap gifts, decide on one food item to be served, or choose a gift to give friend. Children can help clean up the house and prepare for guests. Give them a job where they can make a real contribution and feel a part of what's going on.

**Play a quiet game.** When you are doing something in which you really can't include the children, direct them to play a quiet game. Bring out board games, building blocks, crayons and paper, and set them to work. They can even draw their favorite holiday memories. Teach children how to enjoy their own company.

**Do something active.** At times, the best remedy for excited children is to get them to run the energy off. Have them run around in the backyard where it is safe. If they're younger, clear a space in the house and allow them to be physically active. Have them play tag, run, ride their bikes or do other activities that will allow them to burn off the energy. 🦋

Source: Helping Your Child Cope with Holiday Anticipation.

### Safety Scoop

#### Prevent Choking

##### At mealtime:

- watch children while they eat
- cut: hotdogs lengthwise then into small pieces, grapes into quarters, raw vegetables into small pieces (not round)
- avoid spoonfuls of peanut butter

##### During playtime:

- toys small enough to fit through a 1-1/4" circle or smaller than 2-1/4" are not safe for children younger than 4 years old
- don't allow young children to play with toys made for older children
- check under furniture and between cushions for items like coins, dried beans, marbles, watch batteries that look like buttons
- never let children play with uninflated or broken balloons 🦋

Source: Preventing Choking Among Infants and Young Children. KidSource Online.  
<http://www.kidsource.com/safety/prevent.choke.html>

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**Did you know that you can teach a quiet, easily discouraged child to deal with frustration?**

Some children back away quietly when a task seems difficult or frightening. Here are a few tools you can use with such a child.

☆ Break tasks into small, easy parts. For example, instead of having the child put away all the books at one time, let her put away three books, then two blocks, then put away a few more books. Children are more willing to tackle tasks if they look manageable.

☆ Share tasks. See the child as a team player. Instead of telling her to pick up the books by herself, say, "You pick two books. I'll pick up two. Now you pick up the other two."

☆ Praise the effort as well as the result. Let her know you see that she is really working hard at putting the books in the box where they belong.

☆ Encourage and reward practice. Tell her that everyone needs practice and it will get easier as she practices putting the books away each time.🦋

Source: Living with Your Quiet, Easily Discouraged Child. Shari Steelsmith Shari Steelsmith, Parenting Press



**Build-a-Sundae**  
(makes 3 servings)

¾ cups vanilla yogurt or cottage cheese  
½ lb. chopped fruits  
(choose your favorite)

Optional toppings:  
chopped nuts  
unsweetened cereals  
honey

Put yogurt or cottage cheese in individual bowls. Add fruits. Add topping of your choice and enjoy!🦋



**Kids Can Help**  
Children can bring and measure ingredients, add ingredients to bowl and stir.

**All children must be supervised when they are in the kitchen.**

**Q My 5-year-old daughter is a real slowcoach. The worst is getting dressed in the morning. I send her to her room to get dressed and find her still in her pajamas, playing with toys, 15 minutes later. This happens at night too. What can I do?**

Although many children are guilty of being a slowcoach from time to time, a child who is easily distracted will spend a lot of time dawdling. Here are a few ideas for helping your child get dressed without stretching the time out.

✿ Have her dress together with you so that you can check on her progress and gently encourage her.

✿ Praise her attempts and successes, e.g. "Great job getting your shoes on." "You really worked hard at getting dressed on time!"

✿ Allow enough time. Some children need up to 30 minutes to get dressed.

✿ Make a clear rule e.g. dress before you play, and remind your daughter of the rule frequently.🦋

Source: Temperament Tool. Working with Your Child's Inborn Traits. Helen Neville and Diane Clark Johnson; 365 Wacky, Wonderful Ways to get Your Child to Do What You Want. Elizabeth Crary.



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