



# “THRIVE Tidbits”

## Create Family Time to Reduce Holiday Stress

1. It is true, laughter is good medicine. It will mentally and physically make you feel better. Watch a funny movie, read some jokes, read humorous greeting cards, or spend time with funny friends and family members.
2. It's not about the money you spend. One year my friend and her husband had very little money, but were able to acquire a large appliance box. That was the gift they gave their two girls. The whole family spent many hours coloring, painting and cutting out doors and windows in the new play house.
3. Get to know your neighbors. There may be an elderly person who would love to receive a homemade holiday ornament from your child/children. Bake some cookies and take them to share.
4. Do something thoughtful and considerate for others with your children. Like help a neighbor/friend with their snow removal or offer to pick up something for them at the grocery store. Your children will remember this and want to do the same when they are old enough.
5. Sleep, or lack of sleep during the holidays, can greatly affect your family's enjoyment of the season. Keeping things low key with short spurts of excitement will help make the holidays fun. Tension triggers such as overstimulation, overscheduling and anticipation can leave your child's emotional system on the alert and too excited or distressed to calm down and fall asleep.
6. Go to bed early. Life is easier when you are rested. A bedtime story is just what kids need to get them to calm down before sleep. Ask your child about their day and what they look forward to tomorrow.
7. When you are away, take a favorite blanket or pillow from your child's bed to help her calm down more easily for a nap away from home or a sleepover at Grandma's.
8. A child whose misbehaviors are caused by missing sleep may be the child who experiences hurt feelings easily, has trouble being patient, is bossy and demanding, loses it if told no, forgets rules or wants to debate them and is irritated by siblings and friends. If any of these behaviors describe your child at holiday time, check the sleep schedule.
9. Get up before your children to have that alone time. Be dressed and ready yourself to avoid that rushed time in the morning.
10. Decide the night before what you and your children are going to wear. Lay it out for each of you and notice how much smoother the morning goes.

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THRIVE Mission: To promote healthy social and emotional development and mental health in children from prenatal to kindergarten entrance by providing family support and education through community-wide collaboration and networking.