

Supporting Young Children During the Holidays



For many families, holidays are full of joy, family, togetherness, and stress! Children, though full of joy and wonder, can experience stress, like us, during holiday gatherings and celebrations. As caring adults, we can make holidays less stressful and more enjoyable for children. Some tips include:



- Remember the routine! (sleep, mealtimes, bathing, etc.).
- Be sure to have periods of time where there is quiet and calm.
- Acknowledge the stress you may be experiencing.
- Take time to enjoy being in the moment with your child.
- Give your child permission to not feel okay.
(e.g., *"You had a long day and are tired. You are upset that your cousin took your toy"*)
- Schedule time for physical activity each day (dance or go for a walk).
- Be respectful of children when they are shy or quiet around distant relatives and friends. (*Don't force hugs*)
- Make decisions for what is best for your child and family.



If challenges arise, try to remember that children are doing the best they can. They are not being "bad" they are likely overwhelmed, confused, or even tired. Changes in routine, even if fun, are difficult for all of us, and focusing on what needs your child may have, could help the family have more fun and stress less.

Take time to enjoy the holidays!



For other resources about supporting children and caregivers go to:
www.neinfantmentalhealth.org



Nebraska Association
for Infant Mental Health

