



HOLIDAY STRESS & SOLUTIONS FOR PARENTS

The holidays are a time for family and friends...but sometimes we let stress overshadow the good times. If you find yourself stressed this year, following these tips may help you and your family enjoy the holidays with less stress and more fun!

STRESS: UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Holidays can be stressful when people put pressure on themselves to have a “perfect” holiday.

SOLUTION: Just relax! The holidays are about being with friends and family and **none of us are perfect**. Be yourself and enjoy the people around you for who they are.

STRESS: TOO MANY RESPONSIBILITIES

Scheduling too many activities during the holidays can put a big strain on both you and your family.

SOLUTION: Don't take on more than you can handle, learn to say “No,” and **do not over commit** yourself or your family. Don't be afraid to ask for help! What children really want is to spend time with you!

STRESS: TRAVEL STRESS

Traveling during the holidays (or having guests at your home) can cause extra stress due to traffic, lack of sleep, and more responsibility such as packing.

SOLUTION: Plan your trips in advance, and do not be afraid to **limit the stay** of your own guests. Plan for the unexpected and remember traveling can be hard on kids, too. Bring games, books, magazines, and snacks.

STRESS: UNPLEASANT MEMORIES

Negative memories of past seasons sometimes resurface during the holidays, often adding more stress.

SOLUTION: Surround yourself and your children with **safe, supportive people**. Being with others can provide strength and nurturing during a difficult time.

STRESS: FINANCIAL PRESSURE

Overspending adds stress and can ruin the holiday spirit.

SOLUTION: Your family and friends do not want you to go into debt due to holiday gifts or events! Buy smaller gifts, create handmade gifts...remember **it's the thought that counts!**

STRESS: CULTURAL DIVERSITY

With so many different cultures and holidays, children can feel different, out of place or confused, which can lead to family stress.

SOLUTION: Talk to your child about all of the holidays people celebrate and why. **Spend time learning** about other holidays so they understand them as well as your own.

STRESS: USING TO COPE

During the busy holiday season, many people increase their use of alcohol and drugs, decrease sleep, and consume more food than usual.

SOLUTION: **Take good care of yourself** and your family! Get proper rest, eat healthy foods, and avoid alcohol or drugs.

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