



Finding Joy Amid the Holiday Hustle

The holidays are a time of wonder and excitement, especially when you're creating magical memories with your kiddo. But for many young parents, the season can also bring stress—managing tight budgets, juggling family obligations, and trying to do it all. If you're feeling overwhelmed, you're not alone. Here's how to navigate holiday stress and focus on what really matters.

Focus on What's Important

It's easy to get caught up in trying to create a "perfect" holiday, but the most meaningful memories often come from simple moments. Whether it's decorating the tree, singing holiday songs, or watching your kids enjoy their favorite treats, focus on the traditions that matter most to you.

Plan, but Don't Overcommit

The holidays can feel like a marathon of events. Take a step back and decide what fits your family's needs. It's okay to say no to extra commitments or to create your own smaller, more intimate celebrations.

Stick to a Budget

Gift-giving can feel overwhelming, especially when finances are tight. Set a clear budget and look for creative ways to make the season special without overspending. Handmade gifts, a family movie night, or crafting with your kids can be just as meaningful as expensive presents.

Share the Load

Divide tasks with your partner or enlist help from family and friends. Whether it's babysitting, cooking, or wrapping gifts, don't hesitate to ask for support.

Continued on Page 2

PRIORITIZE SELF-CARE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

- 

Set boundaries. Learn to say no to activities or events that may overwhelm you. Protect your time and energy by setting limits and prioritizing what truly matters to you.


- 

Schedule "Me Time." Dedicate time for yourself daily, even if it's just 10-15 minutes. Use this time to meditate, read, or enjoy a quiet moment with a cup of tea.


- 

Stay active. A walk in the fresh air, yoga, or a quick workout can boost your mood and reduce stress.


- 

Practice gratitude. Take a moment each day to reflect on what you're grateful for. This can shift your focus away from stress and help you embrace the positives in your life.


- 

Stick to healthy habits. Avoid overindulging in holiday treats and maintain a balanced diet. Stay hydrated, get enough sleep, and limit alcohol to keep your body and mind feeling good.



Make Time for Yourself

As a parent, it's easy to put yourself last. But taking care of yourself is crucial, especially during the busy holiday season. A short walk, a quiet cup of coffee, or even a quick nap can help you recharge. Remember, a happier parent makes for a happier holiday.

Embrace Imperfections

The holidays won't always go as planned, and that's okay! Messy crafts, burned cookies, or forgotten items can become the stories your family laughs about later. The love and effort you put into the season are what your kids will cherish most.



Celebrate Togetherness

At its core, the holidays are about family and togetherness. Whether it's starting a new tradition, reflecting on what you're grateful for, or just spending time together, keep the focus on connection and love.

Being a parent during the holidays isn't easy, but it's a chance to create beautiful memories with your kiddo. Take it one step at a time, and remember—you're doing an incredible job!

December is Safe Toys and Gifts Month

Christmas is an enchanting time for little ones, filled with new sights, sounds, and exciting presents. For babies and toddlers, toys are not just a source of joy but also an essential part of their development.

December is Safe Toys and Gifts Month, a time to ensure that the presents we give bring happiness, not harm. Each year, thousands of children experience toy-related injuries, many of which could be prevented by choosing age-appropriate and safe toys. Here's a guide to choosing the perfect gifts for the youngest members of your family.

Prioritize Age Recommendations

Toy packaging includes age labels to guide parents and caregivers. These labels ensure that the toy matches a child's developmental stage and is safe for their age group.

- 0-6 months: Toys that stimulate senses, such as rattles, soft books, or colorful play mats.
- 6-12 months: Toys that encourage exploration, like stacking rings, activity cubes, or soft blocks.
- 12-24 months: Look for push toys, simple musical instruments, or interactive toys that promote motor skills.



Continued on Page 3

Avoid Choking Hazards

Choking hazards are one of the biggest concerns for babies and toddlers. Toys should not have small parts, loose pieces, or components that can detach. If a toy or part fits through a toilet paper roll, it's too small for a baby or toddler.

Select Non-Toxic and Safe Materials

Little ones love to explore with their mouths, so it's essential to choose toys made from non-toxic, BPA-free, and lead-free materials. Look for labels indicating compliance with safety standards, such as "ASTM D-4236" or "CE."



Choose Durable and Sturdy Toys

Toys for babies and toddlers need to withstand rough handling. Opt for well-made, durable toys that won't break into small, sharp pieces if dropped or bitten.

Focus on Sensory and Developmental Benefits

Babies and toddlers benefit from toys that engage their senses and encourage development.

- **Sensory Play:** Look for toys with different textures, colors, and sounds.
- **Motor Skills:** Push-and-pull toys, stacking toys, or balls can encourage movement and coordination.
- **Language Development:** Simple musical toys or those that encourage sounds and mimicry can help build early communication skills.



Be Mindful of Batteries

If a toy requires batteries, ensure the battery compartment is securely closed with screws to prevent accidental access.

Button batteries are especially dangerous if swallowed, so avoid toys with exposed battery compartments.

Choosing toys for babies and toddlers is about more than just fun; it's about ensuring safety and promoting healthy development. By focusing on age-appropriate and non-toxic options, you can make this Christmas magical and worry-free for your kiddo.



Top Toy Ideas for Babies & Toddlers

- ✓ Teething toys made from food-grade silicone
- ✓ Soft plush toys with no removable eyes or buttons
- ✓ Interactive play mats with crinkly fabrics & attached toys
- ✓ Bath toys that are easy to clean and don't trap water
- ✓ Simple shape sorters for toddlers beginning to problem-solve



Holiday Decorating Safety Around Babies and Toddlers

Here are some tips to help you create a festive, child-safe environment:

- Opt for shatterproof ornaments to prevent injuries from broken glass. Avoid sharp or heavy decorations that could pose a hazard if dropped or pulled down.
- Keep small decorations out of reach and skip the tinsel - both can be choking hazards.
- Anchor your Christmas trees to the wall or ceiling to prevent tipping.
- Avoid using open-flame candles and use flameless, battery-operated candles instead.
- If you must use traditional candles, place them on high, stable surfaces well out of reach. Never leave candles burning unattended, especially in rooms accessible to your baby or toddler.
- Use cord covers to keep electrical cords hidden and out of reach.
- Ensure lights are labeled for indoor use and have no frayed wires; unplug lights when not in use and supervise when they're on.
- Some festive plants like mistletoe, holly, and poinsettias can be toxic if ingested. Use artificial versions or keep real ones well out of reach.
- Use baby gates or playpens to create safe spaces where your child can play without reaching decorations, and keep fragile displays, candles, and other potential hazards in off-limits areas.



Happy Holidays from Healthy Families!



As the year comes to a close, we want to take a moment to express our gratitude for allowing us to be part of your journey. Your dedication to building strong, healthy, and happy families inspires us every day.

During this season of joy and reflection, we encourage you to celebrate the small victories, cherish time with loved ones, and prioritize self-care. Remember, you are never alone on this path—we are here to support you every step of the way.

From all of us at Healthy Families Skyline CAP, we wish you and your family a holiday season filled with love, laughter, and warmth. May the coming year bring new opportunities, growth, and endless moments of happiness.

With heartfelt wishes,
The Healthy Families Team



Follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/SkylineCAPHealthyFamilies

Important dates this month:

- December 21 Winter Solstice
- December 24 Christmas Eve
- December 25 Christmas Day
- December 26 Hanukkah begins
- December 26 Kwanzaa begins
- December 31 New Year's Eve