

WELLNESS TODAY

for parents and families



HOPE
SQUAD



TIPS FOR COPING DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Although the holidays are approaching, some children can have a difficult time getting into the holiday spirit because of stress, anxiety, disruptions, or depression. They could feel alone in their lack of cheer or feel unsure how to get through to the new year. The following tips can help your children cope during the holidays.

- Break down stress or problem. Your children's prefrontal cortex (which aids in problem-solving) is likely still developing, so they might need your help identifying, understanding, and solving problems. Work together to break a problem down and brainstorm how they can solve each part.
- Practice positive self-talk. Teach your children how to have positive conversations with themselves. Ask them to write down their strengths and celebrate their wins. Remind them to talk to themselves like they would a good friend.
- Communicate feelings. Reassure your children that it's ok to not feel joyful during the holidays; they are not alone in their feelings. Ask if the feelings are new or if they have been happening. Be empathetic when listening, and give them a safe space to talk.
- Go outside. Though it may be cold during the holiday season, send your children outside to get any sunshine and fresh air that they can to help any seasonal depression. Encourage them to take a walk, have a snowball fight, or any other physical activity.
- Do service. Helping others can remind your children what they have to be thankful for and help them temporarily forget about their own problems. Bringing joy to others can help them feel happy too!
- Show gratitude. Encourage your children to use gratitude journals, meditation, or other ways of being grateful. Practicing gratitude can keep your children be grounded and give them a positive mindset.

BENEFITS OF KINDNESS

Acts of kindness, whether big or small, have many benefits, to the receiver but also to the giver.

Kindness increases self-esteem, empathy, compassion, happiness, connection, heart health, optimism, energy, lifespan, and sense of belonging.

Kindness decreases pain, stress, anxiety, depression, and blood pressure.

If your children are struggling during the holiday season, look for ideas for acts of kindness and have them choose a few they'd like to do. Encourage them to keep a journal or notebook of what they did and how it made them feel.

