

## Holiday Guidelines for Parents

1. No child can be perfect for an entire month, let alone a year. Relying on empty threats such as “Santa is not bringing you anything if you don’t behave!” or “Santa only brings presents to good little boys and girls” could backfire.
2. Children are basically good although their behavior may not always be what we want. The magic of Santa is that he loves all children. Each of us needs that kind of unconditional acceptance.
3. It is okay to allow a child to believe in Santa. Santa is the magic of love, giving, and joy, and we are never too old to be awed by magic. Pretending is good for the imagination.
4. Asking children “What do you want for Christmas?” concentrates more on what they will receive rather than what they can give. The spirit of love and caring is often forgotten when children are overwhelmed by the outpouring of commercials during children’s television shows. Find other activities for them to do rather than to be caught up in the commercialism of the season.
5. Teach children the value of giving to others by providing opportunities and materials to make gifts. Creating personalized gifts requires thought, planning, preparation, work, and commitment. Perhaps that’s why homemade gifts are so precious.
6. If your children purchase gifts, provide opportunities to earn the money they will use, such as extra work around the house. This is one way for children to learn the joy of giving is to allow them to experience the hardship of sacrifice.
7. Simplify family life during this season by having relaxed and loving time with your children.
8. Select durable, manipulative toys appropriate to the child’s age rather than toys that are “the newest rage.”
9. Create holiday traditions for your family. Children love rituals and feel safe and secure knowing what will happen and when. Pass on traditions from your own childhoods and adopt new ones for your family. One of the most enjoyable parts of the holiday is anticipation, looking forward to special food, special times, and special ways of bringing the family together. These traditions anchor the warm and wonderful memories of childhood—treasured gifts we can give our children.

*Source: unknown*