

Bright Horizons at Argonne Child Development Center

Stress Management Tips for Holiday Happiness & Family Fun

The holidays can be a highly stressful time for many families. Whether you are hosting a holiday party at your home, organizing travel with children, and/or trying to balance your everyday routine with additional holiday activities, it's helpful to prioritize your time, commitments, and family activities to help contribute to stress reduction.

Here are some tips and tricks for managing holiday stress, specific to busy parents, that allow for more time with your family.

There's one thing that none of us can buy and that's time. We all wish we had more especially during the holiday season. What's the best way to manage your time during the holidays to reduce stress? Assess how you're spending your time and prioritize those items most important to you.

Here are some tips for managing your holiday time for better stress management:

Make a list and check it twice. Think of the things that cause you the most stress during the holidays. Write them down, along with the level of stress they cause and how they affect you.

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Bright Horizons
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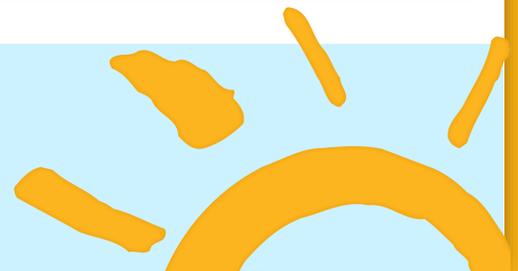


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CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS

Infants

Well Aware/Math Counts: The infant playground got an upgrade this month. The infants have been exploring the new playhouse with solid rubber surfacing and a new sandbox. Young infants explored familiar classroom items while taking in the sounds and sights of the outdoors. Older infants explored the many moving pieces on the playhouse as well as the new bigger sandbox. When exploring outdoor spaces, infants become aware of space and variations in it.



Toddlers

Science Rocks: With the change in the weather, the toddlers have noticed many animals behind the buildings. While in the Movement Zone, they noticed a gaggle of geese in the field looking for things to eat, waddling around and flapping their wings. While in the classroom, the toddlers watch the squirrels looking for acorns. Children learn to understand the characteristics of living things by observing the animals outside.



Twos

Science Rocks: The two year olds explored some basic entomology when they examined and talked about the various insects in their science area. Together they explored the different characteristics of the plastic bugs – colors, legs, antennae, etc. The children also used the large magnifying lenses to look at the different parts. By using the magnifier to examine bugs, the children learn to use tools in purposeful ways. Children learn to make observations when they engage in conversations about what they are exploring.



Preschool

Garden Works: In preparation for cooler weather, the preschool class transplanted some of the plants from the garden boxes into pots. They moved the plants inside in hopes of tending to them and prolonging their growth. The class made the decision to try to keep the strawberry plant, so they carefully dug up the roots and moved it to a pot. The class will take care of the plant in their classroom. When caring for classroom plants, children learn to understand the relationship between living and nonliving things.



Kindergarten Prep

Science Rocks: The Kindergarten Prep class ventured off on a Nature Walk. Each child was equipped with a bag and was asked to collect items that interested them. When they returned to the classroom they gathered their collections and examined the many different things they found. Later in the week the kids used their collection to create a nature collage. Children learn to compare and contrast the properties of materials when asked to sort items.



EDUCATION NEWS

Learning a New Language: A Family Activity that Lasts a Lifetime

Our country is a beautiful melting pot of people from all over the world. As we know, there are many different languages spoken on earth. Being able to talk to each other is an essential path to build bridges. Also, having the ability to communicate with people who speak a different language encourages cross-cultural understandings, which opens the door to new friendships. Think about how welcome someone feels when your family smiles and says hello in their native language. Have you ever considered learning a foreign language along with your child?

Research shows that exposing young children to different languages taps into their innate ability to distinguish sounds, which enhances their growing cognitive skills. Because young children generally learn a new language more quickly than adults, your child might take the lead. There are many language learning opportunities online, from interactive exercises that teach language to watching YouTube videos. Some are even free, while others require purchasing a program. Two recommended websites:

Duolingo

www.duolingo.com offers interactive lessons in Spanish, French, Italian, German and Portuguese.

Mamma Lisa's World of Children and International Culture

www.mamalisa.com offers poems, songs, rhymes and traditions from around the world, in over 57 languages.

As you begin learning a language together, you might delve into the culture of the countries where the language is spoken, pick up children's books in that language or prepare a traditional recipe from that country.

Everything we do as a family builds a stronger, more caring, cohesive unit. Practicing a new language broadens our view of the world. It's fun and can be done anywhere: while taking walks, commuting, playing a game, listening to music, dancing, dining, reading bilingual books, and watching a movie.



BRIGHT HORIZONS NEWS

Thanksgiving Prep - Tips for Involving Kids

- 1) Make the cranberry sauce with the kids the weekend before Thanksgiving. It will keep and it allows you to include the children in the cooking process.
- 2) Have the kids make place cards together. Give them index cards, markers, crayons and stickers. Older children can write the names, inventive spelling and all, while younger children can decorate with stickers.
- 3) Try to find the easiest Thanksgiving worthy appetizers you can that the children can help prep by counting crackers, opening jars, and arranging plates.
- 4) Ask them to be taste testers and enjoy your Thanksgiving meal!



Podcasts for Parents on the Go

Did you know that Bright Horizons has a podcast? Navigate your parenting journey with our podcast series created with working parents in mind.

Tune into our podcast, **The Work-Life Equation**, to hear about parenting, caregiving, and balancing work with everyday life. Whether you're a working or stay-at-home parent, you're likely always on-the-go. But throughout the daily hustle and bustle, you have questions, concerns, and simply need support.

Our parenting and education experts are here to help you navigate the parenting journey with an "on-the go" podcast you can listen to when convenient for you.

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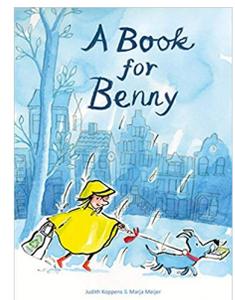


Book of the Month

Title: A Book for Benny

Written & illustrated by: Judith Koppens

The story of a girl, Sam, who wants her dog, Benny, to like books as much as she does. A trip together to the library and a borrowed book selected especially for Benny helps him begin to appreciate Sam's love of books.



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