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2 This calendar is dedicated to making the most December's teachable moments for building family bonds that will help your child feel happy and secure.

3 Begin the month with a family meeting. Write out the expected events on a calendar. Help children who have to share households know what the expectations may be and support them in making transitions.



5 Choose a family service project. Shall we take some food to the food bank? Purchase extra shovels and shovel walks as a team? Visit a homebound friend?

6 Marsh kids are learning to take a breath before deciding what to do when they're under stress. Practice at home!

7 Learn about each other! Ask everyone to name their favorite seasonal treat or tradition. Repetition of family rituals builds a sense of continuity and security. It makes happier children and adults!

1/8 Start a new tradition: shall we get a winter bird feeder? Shall we make our own Christmas cards? Shall we try a new cookie recipe? Have a family cookie decorating contest? Build a snow fort?

9 The inexpensive suggestions offered here will actually make kids smarter and happier for much longer than video games and DVDs.

10 What talent can you nurture with a gift? Would your music lover like a little keyboard? Your thinker a construction toy? Would your writer like a composition book and fancy pens? Your mover a nerf basketball hoop?

11 Children with secure attachments are allowed to love whoever they love, even if the adults don't get along. Help your child contact distant relatives by phone or email and support their excitement for all their loved ones.

12 Inexpensive and important—purchase a large magnifying glass as a gift for your child this year. Go outside together and examine snow. Create a "wonder box" for collecting natural treasures.



14 Share your family memories! What was grandpa like as a boy? What was the silliest thing that happened in your childhood? Who was the family trickster? The hero? The helper?

15 Kids want our time more than our gifts. Buy a family board game and make an effort to play it together often during Christmas vacation.

16



17 Another family gift to consider? A mini-trampoline! Everyone can use it to de-stress and get the heart rate up when the weather's too cold for a walk.

18 Preschool Christmas Programs @ 10 & 2

19 Kindergarten Holiday Programs
See Your Child's Teacher

20 A little preparation can minimize TV and video game time. Fill a shoebox with crayons, markers, scissors, glue, index cards, paper, and watercolor paints. Create a "costume box" for imaginative play. Have play dough ready.

22 Google "Free Audio Books for Kids" and load your phone with free stories family travel listening.

22



23 Does your child have a "special place" to go for quiet play? Set up a blanket tent or create a cozy corner with soft toys and a blanket.

24 The kids will enjoy feeding the pets and the birds a special treat tonight. You can "paint" bagels with peanut butter, roll in bird seed, string with yarn and hang on outdoor trees together.

25



26 Offer healthy foods alongside the seasonal treats to keep blood sugar levels steady and prevent unnecessary meltdowns.

27



28 Gratitude builds relationships and grows happiness. Help your child make thank you notes for relatives.

29 Exercise and sunshine are important for steady, good moods. Bundle up and play outside whenever possible.

Christmas Break

30 Start a New Year's tradition by organizing the family photos together. **Talk about the good times.** Make a family resolution. The kids will happily hold you to it!

31



Christmas Break

December, a beautiful month full of celebrations, family visits and gift-giving, is also a challenging one for children and families. Along with winter beauty comes higher utility bills, family visits mean separations and travel stresses, gift-giving can mean stretching the family budget, which isn't easy! So we are filling our December calendar with ideas that may help. We hope a few of them will be helpful for our parents, who do a heroic job raising good kids in a very busy world.

Need help with food or gifts this Christmas? Call or stop by Mrs. Haslar's office! Many people care!