

# Managing holiday stress

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(HealthDay)—The holidays can be festive and fun, but they can also be stressful as families try to juggle shopping and cooking with parties and other gatherings, a leading pediatricians' group says.

Adults' stress and anxiety can affect their [children](#) and teens, the American Academy of Pediatrics noted. When adults find ways to manage their stress, however, they can help children learn how to do the same, the group said.

There are many ways to ease holiday-related stress. The AAP offers the following strategies:

- **Try to minimize schedule changes.** Whenever possible, allow children to eat when they usually do and stick to their normal sleep and wake routines. Kids also must remember to brush their teeth at least twice a day.
- **Try to slow down.** Focus on one thing at a time and be mindful about what you are doing while you are doing it. Enjoy the time you spend with your friends and family. Make a plan to balance tasks, such as

shopping, cooking and preparing for parties and other events.

- **Give back.** If possible, volunteer some of your time and energy to those who need some extra help or support. Older children could be encouraged to help serve a meal at a local food bank or shelter, visit a nursing home or write a letter to a member of the U.S. military stationed overseas. These thoughtful deeds could become family holiday traditions.
- **Be sensitive to others.** The holidays are not always a joyful time for everyone. Many adults and children feel sad and lonely at this [time](#) of year. It's important to remember that and ask for help if you are having trouble.
- **Don't overdo it.** There is no shortage of sales, specials and deals for shoppers seeking holiday gifts, but don't feel pressured to spend more than you should. Try making one or two gifts and encourage children to do the same. These handmade items may mean more to their recipients than something bought in a store.

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides more [holiday health and safety tips](#).

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