



Grandparents Corner

December 2012

National Stress-Free Family Holiday Month

A common mistake made by many during the Holiday Season is trying to recreate the perfect Norman Rockwell Holiday - decorating the house beautifully with outdoor lights and a perfectly trimmed Christmas tree; numerous presents carefully chosen and wrapped under the tree; and the holiday meal fit for a king - picture perfect, maybe, but is it realistic?

The holiday season is a special time for enjoying family and friends and celebrating tradition; however, it can be a time for unrelenting stress.

If you and your family create stress by trying to meet unrealistic expectations, make a firm commitment to do things differently this year. The trick is to identify what is important to your family and develop holiday traditions that are uniquely your own. Hold a family meeting to discuss the traditions in your family, pace yourself, and involve every family member in the holiday preparations - most importantly, don't expect perfection!

Simplify

1. If sending Christmas cards is a priority, make it a family project. Write a Christmas letter requiring contributions from every family member. Have the grown-ups address the envelopes and the kids place the stamps.
2. If you enjoy bringing all the extended family together for a holiday meal, ask everyone to bring a dish. Also, consider purchasing all or part of your holiday meal from your favorite restaurant. Engage all family members in the clean-up duties.
3. Fill pretty tins with goodies from your favorite bakery as Holiday treats.
4. Start decorating early; consider having the Christmas tree up right after Thanksgiving. You won't be so rushed and can enjoy it longer.
5. Hire older kids to wrap your presents. Consider gifts that don't require shopping, such as magazine subscriptions or tickets to sporting events.
6. Celebrate the true meaning of the season!

Universal precautions and basic health practices, such as frequent handwashing, are especially important because there is an increase in infectious diseases and a growing resistance to antibiotics. Answer True or False to the questions below.

1. Wear disposable gloves anytime you might be exposed to body fluids, as when assisting with toileting or disposing of Depends®. T F
2. Practicing Standard or Universal Precautions protects you from bacteria or viruses carried by the person in your care. T F
3. Always wash cutting boards and utensils with hot soapy water after they come in contact with raw meat, poultry and seafood. T F
4. If you are rushed, it is alright to place cooked food on a plate which may have held the raw meat or seafood. T F
5. Germs can pass from person to person through blood or any other body fluids such as mucus, blood, pus or drainage from sores, vomit, urine, and fecal matter. T F
6. Wearing a face mask if you are or have recently been sick with a cold or the flu will not protect the person in your care from infection. T F
7. Discard all foods that are past the expiration date. T F
8. In handwashing, the combination of soap, water and rubbing flushes germs away. T F
9. You can't pick-up infections by sharing items like cups, eating utensils, thermometers, toothbrushes, cosmetics, razors or eyeglasses. T F
10. Dispose of needles, glucose sticks and other sharp items in a hard plastic sharps disposal box. T F

KEY: 1. T 2. T 3. T 4. F 5. T 6. F 7. T 8. T 9. F 10. T