Tips for Managing Holiday Stress

*Holiday crowds, lights, noise, strangers, hugging, change in routine, a recipe for stress and sensory overload during the holidays for special needs children.*

**Get Ready:** Use Social stories to prepare your child emotionally for holidays. Comfortable clothing and small dose exposures to holiday sounds can also help them physically. Think ahead with an eye for anxiety causing issues. If wrapping paper is too loud? Use easy open bags or just decorate with a bow. Let friends and family know about triggers ahead of time. If your child doesn’t like to be hugged suggest a handshake or just a wave.

**Prepare Your Child For Gatherings:** Eliminate unnecessary anxiety associated with getting together with family members your child rarely sees by looking through photos of relatives prior to your event. Play memory games matching names to faces. This will help your children feel more comfortable with people they may not have seen in a while. Aunt Tina won’t seem quite so scary when she bends down to greet your child.

**Use Relaxation Techniques:** Incorporate deep breathing or other coping strategies into your day. Let your children see you use techniques when you are feeling stressed. Encourage them to use relaxation techniques on a daily basis. Breathing, visualizing, and positive thinking are powerful tools.

**Plan a Safe Space:** Ask the host to think of a place in their house where you can go for privacy for medical or hygiene care, a meltdown, or even to prevent a meltdown, it will allow you to stay a bit longer than you could otherwise. Set up a safe space and be sure that the other children and guests know that this space is off-limits. Empower your special needs child to recognize when they need to go to their safe space. Practice, practice, practice…. ahead of time to recognize when their mood is escalating. Pack a relaxation bag that your child can go to if they are feeling anxious. Bring earphones and their special relaxation music or stories. Bring playdough, stress ball, special blanket or video game, to help your child relax and give them a focus when they have social anxiety.

**Shopping:** Avoid taking your children shopping on the busiest shopping days of the year. The chaos, noise of large crowds, and long lines will definitely add stress to your life.

**Schedule Downtime:** Don’t overbook your children. It’s important to use holiday time for relaxation. Try staying in pajamas till noon. Pop your favorite popcorn and watch a movie when you wake up. You’ll be surprised how an hour or two of relaxation can rejuvenate your children’s bodies, minds, and spirits.

**Cut the Gift List:** Make a list and set a budget before going shopping. It will be much easier on your willpower. Also ask yourself if you're buying gifts just to buy gifts or if they will make a meaningful impact. If not, consider giving time instead of gifts. For example, offer a free night of babysitting or a homemade meal come January. Chances are that your friends and family will remember these meaningful gestures more than something you picked up at the store at the last minute. Also consider a gift exchange, where everyone draws names and each person buys just one gift. It's easier on your budget.

**Remind your Family and Friends - “Don't just leave us out”**: We know we’re complicated, and we might not even be able to accept your invitation, but by all means keep asking us – we want to be included!

By the time your child turns 16, their Individualized Education Program (IEP) is focused on transition services. Transition planning, however, can and should begin as early as age 14.

The Transition plan charts a course for graduation and life after high school, with measurable goals related to post-secondary education, employment, independent living, housing, and community participation.

The transition plan is created by the IEP team, with your son/daughter’s participation. It identifies the skills, services and supports necessary to reach the student’s goals.

It is a lot to consider, but you are not alone. Organizations such as PAVE (wapave.org) and Parent to Parent (arcwa.org/getsupport) can help guide you.

For a list of other high school transition resources and publications, visit: www.informingfamilies.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Office of Developmental Disabilities Ombuds</strong></th>
<th><strong>Informing Families</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(833) 727-8900</td>
<td><strong><a href="https://informingfamilies.org/">https://informingfamilies.org/</a></strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:info@ddombuds.org">info@ddombuds.org</a></td>
<td>Informing Families is a resource provided by the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council, in collaboration with the Developmental Disabilities Administration and other partners throughout the state. We offer trusted news and information to individuals and families that empowers them to be active participants in planning and building a network of support and opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.ddombuds.org">www.ddombuds.org</a></td>
<td><strong><a href="http://www.ddombuds.org">www.ddombuds.org</a></strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, referrals, complaint resolution, monitoring visits, and improving systems.</td>
<td><strong>(833) 727-8900</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAYE</strong></td>
<td><strong>OSPI</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(800) 572-7368</strong></td>
<td>is the primary agency charged with overseeing K-12 public education in Washington state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong><a href="https://wapave.org/">https://wapave.org/</a></strong></td>
<td><strong>Main: (360) 725-6000 or <a href="http://www.k12.wa.us/">http://www.k12.wa.us/</a></strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We walk beside you to provide information, resources, training, and special education advocacy support.</td>
<td><strong>Office Hours: 8:00am - 5:00pm</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAYE has been helping families in Washington since 1979.</td>
<td><strong>TTY: (360) 664-3631</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>People for People</strong></td>
<td><strong>PayDay</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yakima</strong>: 509-248-6793</td>
<td><strong>Are you looking for safe, affordable, licensed child care?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong><a href="http://www.pfp.org/pfp/index.aspx">http://www.pfp.org/pfp/index.aspx</a></strong></td>
<td><strong>Are you a child care provider in need of additional education or resources?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(800) 233-1624 Monday - Friday 8:00 - 4:30 pm</td>
<td><strong>Childcare Aware</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranges transportation for people of all ages who have current Washington state DSHS Provider One Medicaid card and need transportation to non-emergency medical services. Can provide gas vouchers if you have your own vehicle, or provide rides with contracted providers.</td>
<td><strong>(800) 446-1114</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Education Technology Center</strong></td>
<td><strong><a href="https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/">https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/</a></strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(509)</em> 963-3350</td>
<td>A lending library of toys, switches, augmentative communication devices, alternate keyboards, and other computer input devices, environmental control devices, and software designed for students with special needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong><a href="https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/">https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/</a></strong></td>
<td>You can access it through your student’s school district!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Ben’s Fund</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jordan’s Fund</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong><a href="http://www.featwa.org/bens-fund.html">www.featwa.org/bens-fund.html</a></strong></td>
<td><strong><a href="http://www.jordanfund.org/what-we-do.html">http://www.jordanfund.org/what-we-do.html</a></strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ben’s Fund Mission is to provide support to children and young adults with autism through financial assistance and guidance. Grants available up to $1,000.</td>
<td><strong>TELEPHONE</strong>: (425) 829-1121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medicaid Might Cover Diapers or Pull-ups!</strong></td>
<td><strong>Discount Card Enrollment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A doctor or physician must determine that incontinence supplies are needed. The recipient of the products must be older than age 3. You may need to get pre-approval from Medicaid in order to get supplies. Talk to your doctor for a prescription. Call Parent to Parent if you have more questions: (509) 574-3266</td>
<td><strong>Moda Health</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Washington State Prescription Drug Program</strong></td>
<td><strong>Phone</strong>: 1-800-913-4146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Receive and support!

Sometimes being a parent can be very stressful. Therefore, it is easier to handle parental challenges when we have positive relationships with family, friends and neighbors. Having a network of people to count on in our lives helps us feel safe, confident and empowered, and this helps us become better parents.

Build a strong social support system by:

- Focus on the relationships in which you feel respected and appreciated
- Be willing to accept help from others and seek opportunities to help them later.
- Building your skills and comfort in reaching out to others, communicate, resolve conflicts and do all the other things that help maintain a strong friendship.
- Building your network so you have multiple friends and connections to turn to.

Social Connections Tune-Up Tips

Take time to reconnect with old friends. Call them by phone or send them a text message, an email or a card. Join a community group (for example, a library book club, a volunteer organization or a religious group). This can be a great way to meet new people.

Reach out to parents who have children the same age as your own - maybe you could even plan a play date or a school carpool group.

For more information please visit:

PARENT TO PARENT STAFF:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tracie Hoppis</td>
<td>(509) 574-3263</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Pulido</td>
<td>(509) 574-3297</td>
<td>(509) 907-0872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Berkheimer</td>
<td>(509) 574-3234</td>
<td>(509) 907-0508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloria Urness</td>
<td>(509) 574-3257</td>
<td>(509) 833-8489</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Call Stacy to register for the Play Room:
(509) 574-3255

SALVATION ARMY
(509) 453-3721
They offer Thanksgiving and Christmas assistance

UNION GOSPEL MISSION
(509) 248-4510
Meals served daily
Turkey Box sign-ups start in November

TOYS FOR TOTS
Sign-ups are in early November!!

Upper Valley Contact:
The Salvation Army Yakima
509 823-1811

Lower Valley Contact:
The Salvation Army Grandview
509 823-1814
Yakima County Parent to Parent is supported by:

- Virginia Mason Memorial Hospital
- The Memorial Foundation
- Yakima County Department of Human Services
- United Way of Central Washington
- Developmental Disabilities Administration
- Department of Children, Youth & Families

**Yakima County Parent to Parent**

♥ Nurturing kids and families through support and friendship.
♥ Fostering attitudes in the community that welcome and value people with special needs.
♥ Helping kids realize their dreams!

**We offer:**

- Emotional support and information for parents and caregivers raising children with special needs
- Parent sharing groups in Yakima and Sunnyside
- Training for parents and caregivers interested in joining the Parent to Parent network as volunteer “Helping Parents”
- Family social events
- SibShops—Workshops for brothers & sisters of children with special needs
- Parent to Parent Connection—English and Spanish newsletter for families and providers
- one 2 one—Inclusive recreation program for children with special needs
- The Kids on the Block—Disability awareness program

Visit Parent to Parent on the Children’s Village website under the “Family Support” tab:
http://www.yakimachildrensvillage.org

**Parent to Parent Event Registration Line**

(509) 574-3266

See an event you want to attend? Call our registration line and leave the following information:

- Parent Name
- Child’s Name (that receives services at Children’s Village)
- Date of Birth
- Phone Number (speak slowly and clearly)
- The event name
- How many will attend
- What town you live in

Thanks!