



The Children's Trust

Because All Children Are Our Children

## Our Vision:

Become the recognized leader in planning, advocating and funding quality services to improve the lives of children and families.

The Children's Trust  
**DIAL 211 HELPLINE**

The Children's Trust is a dedicated source of revenue established by voter referendum to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County by making strategic investments in their futures.



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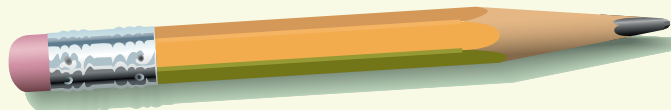
# teach more love more

Every single moment you spend with your child counts. So sing and read to your children, hug them, give them routines, respond to their signals, learn, love and succeed. That's how children grow, learn, love and succeed.

Call 305-631-8111 or 211 to learn more or visit us at  
[www.teachmorelovemore.org](http://www.teachmorelovemore.org).  
 Brought to you by The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation.

## Staying Healthy Through the Flu Season

By Dr. Kendra Y. Velez, chief resident of pediatrics at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital.



**I**nfluenza, or "the flu," is a virus that peaks from December through March. During this time, anywhere from 10-40% of healthy children can be affected, with 1% of these children requiring hospitalization. Most are school-age children who are the first to be affected during a community outbreak, followed by their parents and younger siblings.

The flu is spread from person to person by coughing, sneezing and by direct contact with unclean hands. Symptoms include fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, cough and sneezing. Persons with the flu are most likely to spread the virus from the day prior to starting with symptoms to about seven days after the start of symptoms.

Some simple steps to stay healthy this flu season:

- **Stay home.** When you are experiencing flu symptoms, stay home from work, school and extracurricular activities, if possible, to prevent others from catching your illness. If you come in contact with a person who is sick, avoid getting too close.
- **Cover your cough.** According to the Center for Disease Control, an easy way to prevent the spread of flu and other viruses is covering your cough. When coughing or sneezing, use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth. If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve not your hands, which can contaminate surfaces if not cleaned. Immediately after coughing or sneezing, clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.

□ **Clean your hands.** Washing your hands frequently helps protect you from the flu or other viruses. Germs can live on surfaces such as counters. Touching those with your hands can be the direct path of your becoming ill. Be healthy. Healthy nutrition, stress-management strategies, physical activity and good hydration are ways to help keep your immune system ready to fight viruses such as the flu.

□ **Get vaccinated.** The influenza vaccine is recommended annually by the American Academy of Pediatrics for all children 6 months to 5 years. In addition, all persons living in the house with children younger than 5 years, as well as those who care for your children but may not live in your house, should be vaccinated. The AAP also recommends all health care workers be vaccinated annually. Asthmatics, children with heart disease, children with weak immune systems (such as those with HIV or immunodeficiency disorders), sickle cell patients, diabetics and any child with a chronic respiratory illness are considered high risk and should be vaccinated each year regardless of age. Children or adolescents should not receive the yearly influenza vaccine only if they've had a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose or have a severe allergic reaction to eggs, are younger than 6 months, currently have a moderate to severe illness, or have had a condition called Guillain-Barre within six weeks of a previous dose. The vaccine is given in the muscle. For those children 6 months to 9 years old who have not been immunized previously, a second dose should be given during the first influenza season.

### OUR MISSION:

To ensure that all children in Miami-Dade County have the community's attention, commitment and resources and, hence, the chance to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically so that they are ready and eager to learn by the time they reach first grade.

If you have questions about raising your child or being a parent, call: Teach More/Love More at 305-631-8111. Operated in English, Spanish and Creole 24 hours a day.

Si ou ta  
 renmen resewva  
 ti jounal sa a an  
 kreyòl, rele  
 (305) 631-8111.



For more information, please call us at 305-631-8111  
or visit us at [www.teachmorelovemore.org](http://www.teachmorelovemore.org).

## Message in a Bottle

By Kristin Read from Miami Children Museum's Early Childhood Center.

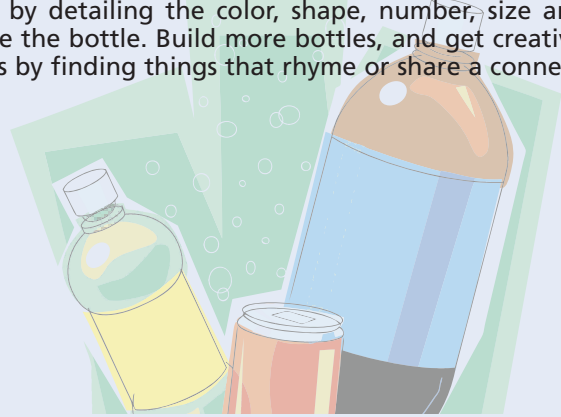
Create a no-cost game to enjoy with your child. This idea was developed by Nicole Sparks and the voluntary universal prekindergarten classroom at Sparks Daycare & Kindergarten. Their investigation of 2-liter bottles were displayed at Miami Children's Museum thanks to Project Blue, a hands-on professional development series sponsored by the Dade Community Foundation.

### How To:

- Find an empty two-liter bottle with a tight-fitting cap. Fill it up with water. (Optional: You also can add a drop of blue food coloring for contrast.)
- Next, search the house for six different objects that will slide easily into the mouth of the bottle. Choose some objects that float and some that sink. Look colorful and interesting items. Put the cap back on and get to work having fun!

### What to Do:

Emphasize building vocabulary as you work together and talk about the items. Encourage your child to describe a mystery item by detailing the color, shape, number, size and location inside the bottle. Build more bottles, and get creative with the items by finding things that rhyme or share a connection.



## Enjoying Holiday Treats Without the Guilt

By Sabrina Candelaria, MPH, RD, LDIN, Pediatric Nutritionist, Mailman Center for Child Development, Miller School of Medicine.

As we move through the holiday season, getting through the New Year without a few extra pounds is often a challenge. With so many friend, family and school gatherings, your family may find it difficult to avoid the tasty, high calorie treats we have come to know and love during this time of the year. Baked goods are a large part of celebrations. Cookies, cakes and brownies are everywhere at holiday parties.

While you may not be able to control what goes into these treats when prepared by others, there are a few things you can do when baking in your own kitchen to lighten things up a bit. Holiday baking is a great way to spend time with your children. A few tips your family can use for healthier baking:

- Use applesauce or prune puree as a fat substitute. Butter is a common fat source used in many popular baking recipes. At approximately 815 calories, 58 grams of saturated fat and 244 grams of cholesterol per every half cup (or one stick), substituting even a little butter makes a big difference. Using fruit purees lightens up your recipes by reducing the calories and fat – and adds a little fiber to your baking.
- Use unbleached, whole wheat flour in place of white, bleached wheat flour. This an excellent way to boost the fiber content of your baked goods. For every one cup of white bleached flour

which has about 3 grams of fiber, using one cup of unbleached, whole wheat flour in its place will add almost 15 grams of fiber to your recipe. This simple substitution provides more than four times the amount of fiber.

- When a recipe uses more than one egg, lower the cholesterol by replacing at least one whole egg with two egg whites. 100% substitution of whole egg with egg white is not recommended because it can make baked goods very dry and rubbery. But replacing at least one whole egg can lighten up your recipe by almost 40 calories, 5 grams of fat, and 212 grams of cholesterol.
- For recipes using chocolate, add 3 tablespoons of cocoa powder and 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil in place of 1 ounce of baking chocolate (or 1 square). This simple substitution can spare you more than 6 grams of saturated fat.

Healthy eating does not mean giving up good flavor. When using these tips, keep in mind that 100% substitution with the above ingredients is not necessary to make your recipes healthier. You can get the benefits without completely changing the taste by using a few of the ingredients suggested.

Holidays are a time for enjoying family, friends and food. Getting into the kitchen with your children is a great way to spend time together, as well as teaching them to lead a healthy lifestyle. Adopting healthier habits in the kitchen is an excellent idea for getting your family started on a "lighter" note as we enter the New Year.



Visit your local library for books, activities and ideas to encourage your child's literacy.

To find a library near you call 305-375-2665 or log on to [www.mdpls.org](http://www.mdpls.org).

## You're invited! Target Free Third Fridays at the Miami Children's Museum

Dec. 21 from 3–9 p.m.

Join us with your family on the third Friday of each month and enjoy activities in the Miami Children's Museum and 14 interactive galleries, including our new exhibit, *Oh Seuss! Off to Great Places*. Visit [www.miamichildrensmuseum.org](http://www.miamichildrensmuseum.org) for more information.

# Holidays Are Rich with Stories, Explore Them with Your Child

By Michael R. Malone for The Children's Trust.

**W**hatever holiday you recognize this season -- Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Diwali or another -- you'll find stories at the heart of the celebration. Stories about magical and marvelous births, lamps that burn without oil, ones that share the wisdom of ancestors, and so many others offer the chance to explore your child's world. Whether in traditional version or in exciting, new adaptations, these stories -- expressed in dance, song, plays or in book form -- are rich with themes that share meaningful messages, especially for young and questioning minds.

So amidst the hustle and bustle, schedule in reading time or a holiday play or dance, and then enjoy talking with your child to explore the story and its meaning.

The Richmond Perrine Optimist Club in South Dade, supported by The Children's Trust, promotes reading as a key component of its after-school program. Reading is both in large groups and in one-on-one sessions and, as the holidays approach, stories take on special importance.

"Our biggest hope is to keep the children encouraged with reading," says Darlene Rodgers, who supervises the program. For the holidays, Rodgers says, middle school students who serve as assistants there, download stories, poems and other information about the many holidays of the season to share with the younger children.

A good story rich in characters and challenges is always fascinating, and holiday stories so full of wonder and magic are especially so. Children get important positive messages about the importance of reading when they sit beside Mom, Dad, Abuela or Abuelo.

At this center, parents are encouraged to come in as volunteers and read to the younger children. "When kids see their parents come in, it gives them a sense of pride," Darlene Rodgers says. "They say, 'Wow, if Mommy or Daddy comes in, then reading must be important.' We find those particular children respond and do better academically in school."

Read2Succeed, a program funded by The Children's Trust and dedicated to increasing literacy among children, launched a family reading program last summer. On Fridays at a West Kendall book store, about 60 children kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade arrive in pajamas to enjoy reading time.

Executive Director David Castrillon chooses books that share messages about character-building and social issues. He says, "For the holidays, the books on Christmas and Hanukkah we've chosen to read will

focus more on messages of the season -- solidarity, humbleness, and helping one another. You can take those from any religion. What we're doing is focusing on the idea of giving back to one another and to improve oneself."

Children are encouraged to ask questions, share their experiences and to discuss the messages about the story. Then paper and crayons are distributed, and kids draw what they have learned about the stories. The parents also are encouraged to participate in the conversation and activity, creating a warm atmosphere, Castrillon explains.

In December, Read2Succeed is partnering with another organization for "Angel Tree," a literacy program at a Southwest area church. Children who have a parent incarcerated are invited to come with their caretakers, usually grandparents. They are read to and receive donated books.

Your local library has a fine selection of holiday books. Also, the Internet is a great resource for locating stories about how cultures around the world celebrate the many different holidays. Once you've enjoyed reading a story together, consider ways -- through arts and crafts or drawing -- that you and your child can further explore what's been learned.

## Good holiday story sites:

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/fieldtrp/k2/holiday.htm>  
(Teacher Scholastic)

[http://www.nncc.org/Curriculum/dc32\\_holidays.divers.html](http://www.nncc.org/Curriculum/dc32_holidays.divers.html)  
(National Network for Child Care)

<http://familycrafts.about.com/>  
(Family Crafts/free ideas)

Children out of school have free time, and reading offers a great way to spend time together. Talking about stories with your child furnishes an almost a magical opportunity to reinforce your relationship.

Reading stories with your child is among the most valuable things you can do together, especially at holiday time.

Call 305-571-5700 to learn more or  
visit us at: [www.thechildrenstrust.org](http://www.thechildrenstrust.org)

# The Holidays: A Time to Celebrate Smart

B By Andrew Dec, Susan Uhlhorn, Ph.D., Julia Belkowitz, M.D., Steve Dearwater, M.S. and Judy Schaechter, M.D.

As we plan our holiday activities, let's think about how to celebrate smart. As wonderful as the holidays are, they also can present dangers for children who want to explore the exciting things we bring into our homes. Parents easily can become distracted in the hustle and bustle of the season. About 12,500 people end up in hospital emergency rooms for injuries related to holiday decorating every year in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> Nothing is more important than keeping your children under constant supervision. Some tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics to keep everyone safe this season:

## "Sprucing" Up Your Home

- When buying an artificial tree, choose one labeled "fire-resistant."
- Always keep live trees well-watered; dried-out trees are a fire hazard.
- Keep any kind of flame or heater away from trees and decorations.
- Check lights and cords for damage before use.
- In homes with small children, avoid sharp or breakable decorations.
- Keep anything with small parts -- decorative light bulbs, batteries and ornament hooks -- out of reach of children.

## Oh! All the Toys!

- Bigger is better for younger children. A toy smaller than the opening of a toilet paper roll could cause choking.
- Follow age recommendations (usually on the box) when buying toys.
- Avoid toys with long pull-cords or ribbons; they could be a strangulation hazard.
- For more information, contact the Consumer Product Safety Commission ([www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)).

## Other Important Tips

- Clean up immediately after a holiday party. A toddler can choke on wrapping paper, leftover food or sample alcohol or tobacco.
- Use caution when renting or borrowing a crib. Make sure the space between the bars is less than the width of a soda can and the mattress fits securely.
- Never co-sleep with an infant or small child; roll-over suffocations can occur.

- Always use your seat belt; restrain children properly before driving.
- If you drink, do so responsibly. Always designate a sober driver.
- Keep a list of important phone numbers in case of an emergency. Include the police and fire department, your pediatrician and the Poison Help Line, 1-800-222-1222.

Most importantly, make sure to always supervise your children and keep an eye out for hazards. Keeping safe provides a healthier environment for all to enjoy this holiday season.

For more information on child safety, contact the Injury-Free Coalition for Kids of Miami at 305-243-3928 or check online at the American Academy of Pediatrics ([www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)).

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, *Hazards Related to Holiday Decorating, 2006*



## Be a Part of our Newsletter

**Send in** Photos, question or helpful tips. Photos will be included in each issue. These photos personify our readership and do not imply or suggest any particular family styles or situations. Questions will be answered by local experts.

### Mail to:

The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation 3250 SW Third Ave., Miami, Fla. 33129

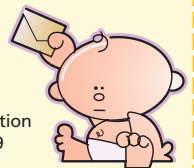
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