



# How To Support Your Child Through the **Holiday Blues**



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## Maintain Routines as Much as Possible

Routines are an important part of any child's life, as they help a child feel **safe, secure, and comfortable**. Unfortunately, holidays have the innate ability to wreak havoc on the most stable routines, and this can be a big stressor for children. As a parent, you can work with your pediatrician on ideas for **adapting your existing routine** to the season, and get advice on **easing children back into established routines** after the new year.

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## Steer Clear of Overscheduling

The holiday season is full of invitations for many, with well-intentioned family and friends ready to fill calendars with feasts and festivities. However, for families with small children, it's important to **decline invitations when possible**, or **communicate with hosts in advance** about leaving early to maintain your child's bedtime and a semblance of routine. At the very least, try to **leave breaks in the schedule** for your child to process the events of the day in a calm environment.

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## Pick Parenting Battles Wisely

**Choose your battles wisely!** It's easy to get frustrated when your child appears ungrateful for a present they've received, or if they are arguing with their sibling on the entire car ride to grandma's house. It's important **not to react to every negative behavior** that your child has. In fact, **focusing on having positive reactions to positive behavior**, or rewarding your child with **positive attention**, reduces the frequency of negative behaviors in the long run.

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## Create Conditions for Good Behavior

Tantrums and outbursts are stressful for everyone involved, and while they're never completely avoidable with younger children, you can set the scene to create less of them. Start by **avoiding taking your child to stressful or unfamiliar places**, especially when they're hungry or tired. If this is in conflict with holiday plans, **try and create a quiet space** at their relative's home, and to **pack nutritious snacks** to help your child stay on their best behavior.