Family Togetherness Calendar

When you think back to your fondest memories of past holidays, what comes to mind first? Was it a gift? Or was it time spent with loved ones?

No matter your culture or faith, typical traditions or shopping plans, this holiday season may be an opportunity to prioritize "togetherness." Although parents love watching their children open presents, there are additional ways to create joy.

This year, you may think about starting a new family tradition as a way to maintain connection with those closest to you. Traditions are shared experiences that are repeated to strengthen bonds between people and groups. One suggestion is to give back to those in need. Helping people may create a sense of gratitude and foster a sense of connection with others. You never know, a new tradition may end up becoming a regular part of your family plans in the future. These experiences can be valued by children, both in the moment and long afterward in their memories for years to come.

This month, we encourage you to start a conversation with your children about the value and importance of family togetherness, and to share that there can be more ways to enjoy the season than receiving many gifts. Try buying less "stuff" and creating more memories!

Use this **Family Togetherness Calendar** to plan creative ways to make this month special for the whole family. Your plans may depend on the makeup of your family, ability to travel, supplies at home and individual interests of each member. Be sure to also check your children's school newsletters and local websites for upcoming events that you might consider adding to the calendar. Try to choose one family-based activity each day! Share your stories with us, and any new ideas you have, by using **#OnOurSleeves** and **#OnOurSleevesJax** on social media.

ON OUR SLEEVES®
The Movement for Children's Mental Health

Wolfson Children's Hospital
OF JACKSONVILLE

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THE _____ FAMILY   DECEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Type or write in your daily family activity. Here are a few ideas:

- Have a holiday pajama game night
- Cook your favorite dinner or dessert together
- Make handmade holiday cards for family and friends
- Decorate your home for holidays you celebrate
- Bake cookies for neighbors or friends and deliver them together
- Make popcorn and watch a movie together
- Select a charity or family in need and donate gently used toys, food, household items, or some of the money you would typically spend on gifts
- Make a holiday craft
- Choose an area of your neighborhood to clean up and beautify
- Tour a local museum
- Offer to decorate or do yard work for a neighbor who is unable to
- Have holiday story time or listen to an audiobook together

- Bring snow to Florida by making paper snowflakes and decorating your windows
- Cook extra portions of your family's traditional holiday meal and deliver it to a neighbor or friend
- Assemble and donate a care package to a local homeless shelter
- Try a new holiday recipe
- Attend a holiday play, musical or concert
- Dress up and have a family holiday photoshoot
- Give away outgrown toys and clothes to family and friends who might use them
- Work on a large puzzle
- Head to the beach and search for shells to use in crafts
- Have a cookie or cupcake decorating party
- Take a day trip to a place no one has visited before
- Hold a family karaoke night

- Take a walk or drive to look at the holiday lights in your neighborhood
- Pick one surprise gift for the entire family. Take a picture of it beforehand and turn that into puzzle for everyone to put together for an exciting reveal
- Create a family portrait coloring or painting craft
- Visit the zoo
- Ask children to find something special of theirs they would like to re-gift to another child
- Hold a holiday dance party, complete with food and games
- Set up a gently used book exchange with family or friends and serve hot cocoa with lots of toppings/flavors
- Build a birdhouse or make a pinecone bird feeder
- Review your children's school newsletters and local parent websites for other events around town