

ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



NAVIGATING EMOTIONAL TURBULENCE: A HOLIDAY SUCCESS GUIDE FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES



What's Inside ?

Watch

It can be hard to find the words to explain your children's needs to extended family, especially with the added stress of the holiday season. This video from Bryan Post, founder of The Post Institute, can help with these discussions.

Read

This National Council for Adoption Newsletter identifies several important tasks for adoptive families and provides suggestions on how to respond in ways that strengthen bonds and reinforce the family unit during the holidays.

Listen

Adoption and trauma therapist, Robyn Gobbel discusses healthy practices for keeping our children regulated (and happy) during the holidays. She provides actionable ways to address triggers and encourages parental self-care as well.

10 CALMING ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS DURING THE HECTIC HOLIDAYS

- 1 Offer a blanket & a quiet space
- 2 Do yoga or meditation
- 3 Take a bath
- 4 Create with Play-doh
- 5 Go on a walk
- 6 Snuggle comfort items
- 7 Use sensory bottles
- 8 Practice deep breathing
- 9 Squeeze a stress ball
- 10 Listen to favorite music



Unwrapping Opportunities for Adoptive Families During the Holidays

Adoption Advocate Newsletter

Adoption professional Elise Lowe reminds us to listen, build attachment, celebrate culture, adjust expectations, be attuned to our children, and be mindful of sensory overload.

[Read...](#)



How To Help Your Child Thrive During The Holidays

40 Minute Podcast

Surviving the holidays on their own can be hard enough, and helping your children with complex trauma can sometimes feel insurmountable.

[Listen...](#)



Talking to Extended Family About Your Child's Challenges

15 minute video

Starting at 4:00, Child behavior expert Bryan Post guides you through dialogue to engage with family members when working to educate them on your holiday boundaries.

[Watch...](#)

A Step-by-Step Guide to

HOLIDAY SUCCESS

Remember that the holidays may trigger a range of emotions for everyone. Be flexible and adapt your plans for everyone's needs and comfort level.

ADAPT AS NEEDED

MAINTAIN OPEN DIALOGUE

Encourage open and honest discussions with your child about the holidays. Validate any concerns they bring up and the feelings they have about the season.

Develop family traditions that celebrate your child's heritage and be open to discussing your child's past holiday experiences as well.

CREATE NEW TRADITIONS

USE SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Reach out to support groups, counselors who specialize in adoption, or other adoptive parents. Sharing with others that understand is important.

Keep it simple - focus on quality time with your immediate family. Avoid having an overcrowded calendar or planning overwhelming activities.

DON'T OVER COMMIT

PRACTICE SELF-CARE

Remember to take care of yourself so that you can be the best support for your child. Find moments for relaxation and rejuvenation.

Consider sensory sensitivities when planning activities and try to create a calming environment for children with sensory processing challenges.

LIMIT SENSORY INPUT

10 REASONS ADOPTED CHILDREN MAY STRUGGLE WITH THE HOLIDAYS

Feeling unworthy.

Abandonment or the perception of abandonment in children who have been adopted or who have had one parent leave the family can lead to a deep sense of shame.

Triggers.

During the holidays, triggers are everywhere. Smells, sights, sounds, memories of the past... the holidays can be a minefield to navigate. and cause a fight, flight, or freeze response.

Confusion.

Excitement and anxiety feel the same in the body. When your child feels the body sensations of excitement, it can bring memories of times of stress when they felt that way due to anxiety which can feel troubling.

Lack of routine.

The unpredictability and uncertainty can feel unsafe and children may attempt to assert control and take charge. Being overtired and eating poorly which can also affect behavior and mood.

Sensory overload.

Sensory meltdowns are often mistaken for a tantrum or misbehavior. However, sensory meltdowns are a reaction to stimuli or the environment and are usually beyond the child's control.

Weight of expectations.

Children often blow up when they believe they will fall short of the expectations placed on them. The stress that comes with anticipating the disappointment they may cause can be overwhelming.

Togetherness.

During the holiday season, relationships are usually the focus and there is more emphasis put on family togetherness. This can feel like a threat to kids who are putting walls up when it comes to family.

Unrealistic expectations.

Most children have high expectations during the holidays. This is sometimes magnified in kids with a trauma history who may have a fantasy of what life would be like with their biological parents.

Grief.

Simple traditions such as decorating the Christmas tree can be difficult for children who do not have positive memories of the holidays. There are so many things that can magnify grief, sadness and loss.

Protection.

Attempting to protect their heart from further disappointment, a child who has experienced early trauma may put up higher walls up and push others away more strongly.





“WHEN LITTLE PEOPLE ARE OVERWHELMED BY BIG EMOTIONS, IT'S OUR JOB TO SHARE OUR CALM, NOT JOIN THEIR CHAOS.”

-LR KNOST

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS TREATS!

Balance your child's sugar intake with healthy snacks and drinks throughout this season. Sugar crashes can happen when a child's blood sugar levels drop drastically after the body has processed too much sugar. This often causes irritability and increased anxiety in kids as they come down from the "high" that comes with eating lots of holiday treats. A way to avoid this is by planning healthy snacks and treats like nuts, yogurt, or cheese sticks. These foods will give your child the energy they need and can help tame overly hyper or anxious behaviors during or after holiday parties or events.

Credit: [Sugar Rush Season: 7 Tips for Managing Your Anxious Kid's Energy Over the Holidays](#)

DIY:

HOLIDAY SENSORY BOTTLES

Simple sensory bottles can entertain, focus, and **calm kids**, making them perfect for road trips, restaurants, and busy holiday gatherings.

With only a few art supplies you can **get creative** and make your own at home!

Learn how...



Need support? Contact us!

