

Holiday Tips for Families

Happy Visiting -- Remember to clean up after a holiday party. A toddler could rise early and choke on leftover food or become exposed to alcohol or tobacco. When you go out to parties, be sure the sitter knows where you can be reached. The number of the police and fire department and your pediatrician should be available to the sitter. The sitter should also know how to contact the poison control center. Remember that the homes you visit may not be childproofed. Take a survey of any place you visit.

Food Safety -- Bacteria are often present in raw foods. Fully cook meats and poultry, and thoroughly wash raw vegetables and fruits. Wash your hands frequently, and make sure your children do the same. Never put a spoon used to taste food back into food without washing it. Always keep raw foods and cooked foods separate, and use separate utensils when preparing them. Always thaw meat in the refrigerator, never on the countertop. Food should never be left at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

Holiday Traditions -- Cutting down your own tree for the Holiday may start a wonderful family tradition. Young children can pick out the tree while an adult does the chopping. Make charity a part of your holidays. Take your children with you to the store, and let them pick out a toy to donate to a local hospital or shelter. Some Jewish families volunteer in soup kitchens, hospitals or nursing homes on Christmas Day, so employees who celebrate the day can spend it with their family. Capture the holidays on film – and include an "every year" photo. For example, one family always takes a picture of the children standing in front of the fireplace.