

# An Ounce of Prevention

A Quarterly Mini Newsletter

Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council  
of Humboldt County

Volume 2

Winter 2010

## Simplify the Season!

Here are two simple songs to enjoy over the winter season. Sing to the tune of "Are you sleeping?"

### Winters Coming

Winter's coming,  
Winters Coming.  
It is Dark, It is cold.  
I am bundled snug and warm.  
Animals sleep safe from harm.  
Sleds and snow.  
Cold winds blow.

### Dance like snowflakes

Dance like snowflakes  
Dance like snowflakes  
In the air  
In the air  
Whirling, twirling,  
snowflakes  
Whirling, twirling,  
snowflakes  
Here and there  
Here and there.

For more winter poems and songs go to:

<http://www.preschooleducation.com/swinter.shtml>

Although we often hear the phrase "Happy Holidays!", many families find this time of year very stressful. Here are a few tips to help you simplify the season:

### Spend moments with your children instead of money.

Reading a favorite holiday story together while snuggled on the sofa will make far more lasting memories than a toy that is opened with excitement, but soon forgotten.

**Stay flexible!** Keep in mind that it would be just as fun for the kids to make a gingerbread mansion in January, after the busiest days are over.

Are you in charge of making the big holiday meal? Ask for a lot of help and don't hesitate to cut the meal down to fewer courses.

### Exercise together!

Instead of watching that holiday special for the hundredth time, bundle up and take a brisk walk around the neighborhood with your child. Exercise is a great natural stress reliever. An added bonus is that a little winter sunlight can dramatically brighten your mood.

**Rein in your expectations.** No holiday has ever gone perfectly. Spills and squabbles and unwanted gifts are



just a part of the season. Don't hold yourself or anyone else up to an unrealistic standard. Just take it all in, relax, have fun, and remember that the holiday season only comes around once a year.

When stress levels rise and you are feeling overwhelmed, take a time out. Ask a friend or family member to watch the kids or call up a supportive listener.

## Curl up with your children and good book!

See this link for winter books for all faiths:

[http://childrensbooks.about.com/od/holidays/u/Christmas\\_books.htm](http://childrensbooks.about.com/od/holidays/u/Christmas_books.htm)

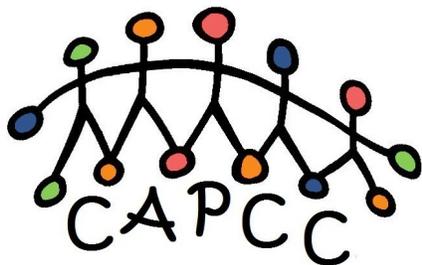
Visit your local library and see how many you can find!

## Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council of Humboldt County

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Protecting our Children  
is Everyone's Business.



For ideas about managing family stress, see  
this great article by Elizabeth Scott:

**Parents and Stress: Stress Relievers You Can  
Do With Your Children Reduce Stress In Both  
Of You!**

[http://stress.about.com/od/  
parentsunderstress/a/stress\\_kids.htm](http://stress.about.com/od/parentsunderstress/a/stress_kids.htm)

## Host a Toy Exchange:

This is a fun way to reduce the stress of spending money over the holidays and it has the added benefit of recycling toys, so it is good for the planet!

Invite four to six families to participate. Have each family bring between three to five nice, clean and complete toys that their child or children no longer plays with on a regular basis. They don't have to be the most expensive items in the toy box. Try to insure that each child contributes the same amount of toys.

After everyone arrives, explain the rules of the exchange. Every child will

draw numbers and that will be the order in which they pick. Every child gets to choose one "new" toy for each "old" toy they brought. The choosing will go in rounds. The first child will pick one toy from the pile. The second child will follow, and so on. After the first round, the child who picked last will pick first and the order will go backwards until each child has exchanged their toys and chosen the same amount in return.

After the big pick is over, parents can sit back and enjoy chatting together while the children play together with their "new to them" toys.

You can do a pot luck of snacks, or even lunch or dinner if you desire.

Note: Toddlers might not like the idea of others using their toys, even if they haven't been interested in them for awhile. For that age group, put toys out for the children to play with and have the parents choose toys at the end of the play date, based on what items caught their children's interest. Use the same choosing method described above.

Adapted from an idea at  
[www.associatedcontent.com](http://www.associatedcontent.com)