



FIRST CLASS PRE-K

December 2025

WELCOME TO OUR

Early Childhood Mental Health Minute

Calming the Chaos



The holiday season is exciting — and sometimes overwhelming — for young children. Routines may change, schedules can get busier, and emotions may run high. This month, we're focusing on ways to help your child (and you) find calm and joy during a busy season.

How to Prepare

Children take their emotional cues from us. When we slow down, breathe, and create calm spaces, our little ones learn to do the same.

The holiday season can be a magical time, but it can also be a little overwhelming for our young learners. The changes in routine, new faces, and added excitement can sometimes lead to stress and meltdowns. Here are a few simple tips to help you and your little one navigate the holidays with more calm and joy.

What to Understand

Adults are not the only ones who feel stress. Children do as well. It may be hard to think of young children as being stressed. But preschoolers are going through a lot of changes as they work to become more independent. So, understand that all the holiday fun can also be difficult for them to navigate alone.

Signs of Stress:

- More frequent meltdowns
- Trouble sleeping
- Clinginess
- Withdrawal or regression of skills they previously had
- Acting out or “forgetting” the rules

How to Help

Children thrive on predictability. While it may be too much to ask to stick to a strict schedule, try to maintain some core routines. Practice that gratitude from last month. Be thankful for all that you are blessed to have going on right now.

- **Keep a routine** – as much as possible keep regular naptimes and bedtimes with predictable routines such as bathtime, brushing teeth and reading books. This sense of familiarity is very comforting to them.
- **Find the fun!** Drive around to look at holiday lights, make some yummy desserts together or make some simple decorations and try not to pack the calendar and schedule too tight. Have time to slow down and relax and play.
- **Communicate and prepare** – talk with your child about what they can expect and how they are feeling. Make sure they understand that it is ok for them to feel shy around people they don't know well or overwhelmed but that you will be with them to help navigate it all.
- **Practice self care** – remember that you can not pour from an empty cup so take some time for yourself! It's needed.

Things to Try

Reading nightly with your child is a great way to wind down from the day, foster a love of reading and provide a special, quiet, one on one time with each other. Use this time as one of your predictable routines.

Books to Read:

- Llama, Llama Holiday Drama – Anna Dewdney
- The Rabbit Listened – Cori Doerrfeld
- The Christmas Quiet Book – Deborah Underwood

Activities to Do:

- Update your calming corner with soft 'winter like' items (large cloth snowballs, winter themed calming bottle)
- Starting the practice of a “holiday hug” – just spend a few minutes to pause and your child. No words needed just slow, deep breaths and a hug!