



## Kid Topics

### Douglas County Child Development Association

#### Thanksgiving Traditions by Anna Jenny

Traditions are the heart of the Thanksgiving holiday. It's a celebration for families and every family has their own way of enjoying the day. Thanksgiving is the busiest travel day of the year. People travel long distances by car, train or plane to spend the day with their loved ones.

Once the family convenes at "home", the traditions begin:

**Turkey and Trimmings:** Turkeys are a part of the American Thanksgiving dating back centuries. It is commonly believed that turkey was served at the first Thanksgiving feast in 1621 because turkeys were found in great numbers when the pilgrims arrived from England.

**Football:** The first intercollegiate football championship was held on Thanksgiving Day in 1876. Since then, traditional holiday football rivalries have become so popular a reporter once called Thanksgiving "a holiday granted by the State and the Nation to see a game of football."

**Parades:** The first American Thanksgiving Day parade was held in 1920. The New York Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade began in 1924 and has grown to be watched by more than 46 million people. Each year, many begin their Thanksgiving Day enjoying the parade of balloons, bands and floats.

**Making a Wish:** The tradition of tugging on either end of a fowl's breastbone dates back to the Etruscans of 322 BC. The Romans brought the tradition with them when they conquered England and the English colonists carried the tradition on to America. It is believed that the person winning the larger piece will get his wish.

**Giving Thanks:** Thanksgiving is about giving thanks for the people and blessings of the past year. From pre-meal prayers to providing holiday meals to the homeless, the holiday is a celebration of the good fortune that has been bestowed upon us.

Here at DCCDA, we are thankful for the new office space that we call our work home and the support of the many early educators that has made our continued growth and good fortune possible. Our wish for you is that the blessings of the season will follow you into the New Year!

*Anna Michelle      Marci Emily Hilding      Bridget Emily Hampton      Tara Hannah      Karin Ashley*

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Monday - Friday

#### DCCDA Services:

- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Local Foods Program
- Child Care Tuition Scholarships
- Training & Technical Assistance to Care-givers
- Positive Behavior Supports
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

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On average, 436 children die in home fires every year. Working smoke alarms are an essential piece of safety equipment which should be in every home. If your family lives in a home with working smoke alarms the likelihood of dying in a fire is half that compared to a home without working alarms.



### Top tips for smoke alarms:

- Put a smoke alarm on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area, and in every bedroom.
- Smoke alarms can be battery-operated or electrically hardwired in your home and are available at a variety of prices.
- If you have hearing problems, use alarms with flashing strobe lights and vibration.
- Test smoke alarms every month. Replace batteries once a year, even if alarms are hardwired.
- Test your smoke alarms at night to see if your child will wake up and respond to the alarm. Children sleep more deeply and may not wake up. If your child does not wake up to the alarm, try an alarm where you can program your voice to alert him or her.
- Mount smoke alarms high on walls or ceilings since smoke rises. Ceiling-mounted alarms should be installed at least 4 inches away from the nearest wall. Wall-mounted alarms should be installed 4 to 12 inches away from the ceiling.
- Replace all smoke alarms every 10 years.
- Consider installing both ionization alarms, which are better at sensing flaming fires, and photoelectric alarms, which are better at sensing slow, smoky fires, or dual sensor alarms.

To learn more about fire safety, visit: <http://www.safekids.org/safety-basics/safety-spotlight/fire-prevention-month/>

## Story Extenders

### Gingerbread Baby: Written & Illustrate by Jan Brett

Gingerbread Baby is a twist on the classic Gingerbread Boy story. When Matti opens the oven door just a little too soon, out pops a gingerbread baby instead of the gingerbread boy he was expecting. Eluding all efforts to catch him, the baby is chased around the village and into the countryside. He mercilessly taunts Matti's parents, a cat, the milk and cheese man, goats, villagers, a fox, and more.



**Theme:** Patience, Problem Solving, Friendship

**Vocabulary:** worn, pranced, tumbled, smug, bobbed, crept, chops, meddling, tweaked, bleating, brash, peppy, glee

**Reading the Story:** Discuss the new vocabulary words as they are introduced. Explain to the children what the words mean.

**Discussing the story:** What are some differences in the way things are in this story vs. the way things are in real life? The mom has a real fire under her stove and firewood in the house. There are candles hanging on the wall for light instead of having electricity. The Gingerbread Baby stops for a drink from the well. The farmer uses a horse and carriage for transportation. They have a milkman who uses a dog and carriage to deliver his milk. What other examples can you and the children find?

**Art:** Paper Bag Gingerbread Houses

**Supplies:** Paper lunch bags, newspaper, colored paper, glue stick, tape, scissors, white puffy paint, markers



Stuff each bag half full with newspaper, fold down the top so that it resembles a pitched roof. Cut out a rectangle using the colored paper at double the size of the folded top. Fold the rectangle in half, as shown in the picture. For a decorative touch, trim the lower edges of the roof with craft scissors. Then use puffy paint to create shingle lines.



While paint dries, cut windows & a door from colored paper & glue them onto the house. Use the puffy paint or colored markers to add trim & other decorative details.

For a chimney, fold a 1 1/2- by 5 1/2-inch strip of colored paper into a rectangle, tape the ends together. Snip small triangles from the bottoms of two sides. Then paint on brick lines & set the chimney atop the roof peak.

**Dramatic play:** Add a large cardboard box to the dramatic play area. Children can play in the "gingerbread house", pretending to be the Gingerbread Baby and his friends. To make it more realistic, decorate the box to look like a gingerbread house.

## Story Extenders

### **Snack:** Gingerbread cookies

**Ingredients:** 2 1/2 c. flour, 1 tbsp cinnamon, 2 tsp ground ginger, 1 tsp baking soda, 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg, 1/4 tsp ground cloves, 1/4 tsp salt, 6 tbsp butter at room temp, 3/4 c. packed brown sugar, 2 tbsp molasses, 1/3 c. water, icing (optional)



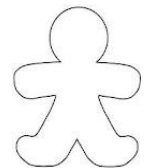
**Directions:** Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease baking sheets. Combine the flour, cinnamon, ginger, baking soda, nutmeg, cloves, and salt. In a separate bowl, beat the butter and brown sugar for 3 minutes on medium speed. Beat in the molasses. Beat in the flour mixture, a little at a time, until well-blended. Add the water, 1 tablespoon at a time, to form a stiff but well-blended dough. Divide the dough into four equal-sized pieces. Roll each piece out to 1/4" thickness. Using cookie cutters, cut into shapes. Arrange on the prepared baking sheets, leaving 1" between the cookies. Bake for 7 minutes, or until lightly browned. Cool on a rack for 2 minutes. Remove to the rack to cool completely. When completely cooled, decorate with the icing, if desired.

### **Music/Movement:** This Gingerbread Baby—to the tune of "This Little Piggy"

This gingerbread baby ran from the lady,  
This gingerbread baby ran from the cat,  
This gingerbread baby ran from the dog,  
This gingerbread baby ran from the goat,  
And this gingerbread baby ran from the piggy,  
And this gingerbread baby ran with glee all the way home.



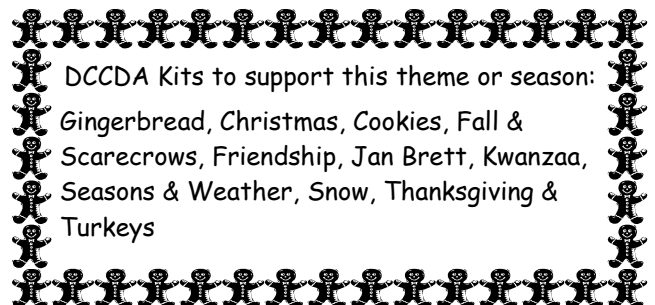
**Math:** Give the kids small paper plates with one numeral written on each plate. Ask the students to place the number of Gingerbread cookies (use template to cutout several gingerbread shapes) on each plate, according to the number written on the plate.



**Discovery/Science:** What will the sun do to a gingerbread man? Cutout a supply of gingerbread men from brown construction paper. Cut out candy shapes from cardboard. Have the kids place their gingerbread man in a sunny window sill and place the candy shapes on top. Tell the kids the gingerbread men will stay in the sun for a few days. Have the kids predict what will happen. After a few days, remove the candy cutouts. The kids will be thrilled to discover the candy shapes on the gingerbread man. After discussing the child's predictions, explain how the sun helped decorate the gingerbread man.

### **Other books and resources to support this theme:**

*Gingerbread Man* by Karen Lee Schmidt  
*Gingerbread Boy* by Richard Egielski  
*The Gingerbread Kid Goes to School* by Joan Holub  
*You Can't Catch Me* by John and Ann Hassett  
*The Cajun Gingerbread Boy* by Berthe Amoss  
*The Runaway Tortilla* by Eric Kimmel  
*The Gingerbread Girl* by Lisa Campbell Ernst



DCCDA Kits to support this theme or season:  
Gingerbread, Christmas, Cookies, Fall &  
Scarecrows, Friendship, Jan Brett, Kwanzaa,  
Seasons & Weather, Snow, Thanksgiving &  
Turkeys

# Healthy Holidays

## How to Eat Healthy During the Holidays by Hannah Sheridan-Duque



The holiday season is a time to celebrate with family and friends. Unfortunately, for many it also becomes a time for over-eating and weight gain. We are bombarded with temptation at every corner, family and friend's homes, the office, even the grocery store with their pretty packaged goodies that scream "buy me, take me home".

The National Institutes on Health, found that almost all the weight people gain throughout the year can be explained by the pounds we put on during the holiday season. So here a few tips to help combat those pesky pounds.

- If you exercise regularly, keep it up over the holidays. If you're not active now, get started and make a serious New Year's resolution to stick with it (see "Making Your Resolutions Stick", <http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/Dec2010/Feature1>). Exercise helps relieve holiday stress and prevent weight gain. A moderate and daily increase in exercise may help offset increased holiday poundage.
- Watch out for cola and other sweetened beverages as they are loaded with calories. Even natural fruit juices have unnecessary calories. Your best bet is to stick with good old calorie-free water. Diet beverages made with artificial sweeteners may help you control your calories at celebrations, however drinking them on a regular basis may not help with long-term weight control. Don't forget to watch the alcohol intake as well, a single shot of liquor may contain up to 125 calories alone.
- Choose foods that are lower in energy density, meaning they have fewer calories for their size. You'll feel fuller sooner and take in less calories. For example, start your meal with a salad or soup. Skip the second helping of stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy; go for more vegetables instead. If you're bringing dessert, serve angel food cake, ginger bread or fruit instead of brownies, pound cake or chocolate cake.
- Use a smaller plate when rounding the table. Limit the high fat foods, portion control is important. Also, don't graze throughout the celebration, as tempting as it may be, but if you must, visit the veggie platter instead of the brownie platter.
- Despite what your parents may have drummed into you as a child, don't feel obliged to clear your plate. When you feel full, stop eating. Simple.
- These days there is no excuse for not utilizing the many healthy ways in which food can be prepared. Instead of frying, grill your food. If you're roasting, use one of the many available low-calorie spray oils. Try steaming vegetables to retain nutrients and flavor. Use extra-virgin olive oil for cooking. Olive oil is low in saturated fats.

In addition, this year, don't be part of the problem for others either, give gifts that encourage healthy lifestyles. Typical food gifts encourage unhealthy eating during the holidays. Instead of giving a box of rich chocolate, try something more nutritious, like a box of fresh fruit. You can also bring gift boxes of almonds, walnuts and other unsalted nuts. How about a collection of gourmet teas? I bet your friends will love the gifts and you'll feel good about giving them.

Reference: National Institutes on Health: [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)

# Positive Behavior Supports

## Promoting Relationships and Early Learning by Tara Glanton, M.A.Ed.

Close your eyes and think back to your first experience in a trusting relationship. How old were you? What were you doing? Who was the person you connected with and why?

Relationships enhance and encourage a child's ability to learn in various environments. According to The PlayBright Team, "Children are born with approximately 100 billion neurons, or brain cells. At birth, most of those neurons are not connected" (Children and Families, p. 34, 2009). As infants are exposed to multiple experiences, the brain cells begin to make connections. Parents and caregivers play important roles in creating new learning experiences, providing opportunities for exploration, and supporting relationships. Children rely on parent and caregiver support to promote healthy brain development from birth to age five.

During these crucial development years, positive relationships help build character: trust, dependability, confidence, and independence. There are many ways to promote healthy relationships as children grow. Some strategies include teaching problem-solving skills, friendship skills, social and emotional literacy, modeling, peer buddies, and self-regulation techniques. Here are some quick tips and resources for building and supporting healthy relationships with young children:

- **Problem-Solving**- Solution Kit Cue Cards available at [www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel). Introduce one skill per week. Have guided conversations about the use of the skill and practice, practice, practice. Before you know it, children will be problem-solving on their own!
- **Friendship Skills**- Read the books, "Have You Filled a Bucket Today?" By Carol McCloud, or for younger children, "Fill a Bucket" By Carol McCloud and Katherine Martin. Talk about Bucket Fillers and Bucket Dippers. Listen and sing along to songs "The Friendship Chant" and "My School Family" from *It Starts in the Heart*: a CD by Jack Hartmann and Dr. Becky Bailey.
- **Social and Emotional Literacy**- Explore emotions. Happy, Sad, Mad, and Silly are great ones to start talking/singing about. Ask lots of questions, role play with puppets and with each other, Look at faces in the mirror (make-up compact mirrors work great for this!), and describe your own emotions aloud to the children.
- **Modeling**- Children watch and learn! This is a perfect strategy for intentional teaching moments. Say what you want them to say, do what you want them to do; show them first, then let them have a turn!
- **Peer Buddies**- Intentionally pair children to work together: Infants: Tummy time is a great opportunity to place babies face-to-face. Watch and learn from their interactions when they make eye contact! Pair older children together to read a story, paint a picture on the easel, or play a game of Memory using the emotions faces from [www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel).
- **Self-Regulation** – Tucker Turtle available at [www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel). Stop, Take Three Deep Breaths, and Think, Think, Think! This strategy is perfect for children and adults.

"Relationships engage children in the human community in ways that help define who they are, what they can become, and how and why they are important to other people"

~National Scientific Council on the Developing Child

### References:

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL, 2008).

The PlayBright Team (Fall 2009). Five Keys to Early Learning Success. *Children and Families*, XXIII No. 3, 32-27.



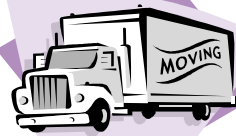
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### **Open Office Hours 2011**

Mon: **Jan 31**, 6-7:00pm  
Mon: **Feb 28**, 6-7:00pm  
Thu: **Mar 31**, 6-7:00pm  
Fri: **Apr 29**, 6-7:00pm  
Tue: **May 31**, 6-7:00pm  
Thu: **Jun 30**, 6-7:00pm  
Fri: **Jul 29**, 6-7:00pm  
Wed: **Aug 31**, 6-7:00pm  
Fri: **Sept 30**, 6-7:00pm  
Fri: **Oct 28**, 6-7:00pm  
Wed: **Nov 30**, 6-7:00pm  
Fri: **Dec 30**, 6-7:00pm

Opportunity to use  
laminating machine and  
check out library resources



**Reminder:** We moved our office on November 1st. We apologize for any inconvenience the move and our closings may have caused. We look forward to serving your needs at our new location!

DCCDA New Address effective November 1, 2011:

1525 W 6th Street, Ste A  
Lawrence, KS 66044

## **Professional Development Opportunities**

**December 1, 2011** - Cradling Literacy, 6:30-8:30pm, Childcare  
Aware Office, \$10, register at [www.ercrefer.org](http://www.ercrefer.org) or call 785-357-5171