

Go to's for

MANAGING CHRISTMAS EXPECTATIONS

Create a gift wish list ahead of time which could cover birthdays and Christmas. Help children to 'star' a most wanted gift!



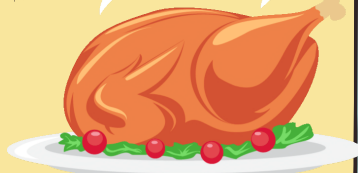
Talk to your children about special treats, days, visits etc and how to share these or spread them out over the holidays



Chat about who all you will see together or apart at Christmas - which days they will see which family members and/or friends



Talk about what Christmas dinner might look like and possible expectations from family or friends. Be realistic with your expectations of your child or children



Consider your own self-care. Build in some 'time out/rest/space' to the busy Christmas calendar





Be intentional



Decide what is important ahead of time -

You can chat about making memories with people you all love: friends, neighbours and family.

Talk about special past memories you have that didn't cost any money. Give examples around quality time spent together, or handmade cards/gifts you remember, or kind words people have said to you at Christmas. Share and explain some of your favourite Christmas Carols or song lyrics.

Help your child to know what to expect over Christmas by asking curious questions:



- Do you like surprises?

- You won't get everything on your list so should we star your favourite thing?

- What is your favourite thing/best bit about the Christmas holidays?

- Have you ever found Christmas time hard?
Tell me more about that.





Make new memories

Look up some Christmas traditions in other countries or what other friends/family might have. What do we think would work for our family for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or Boxing Day? Talk about traditions around: food, games, decorations and music so not all about giving or getting expensive presents.



Model Gratitude

Buy or make thank you cards and build in a time to write these after Christmas. Talk about writing cards to folk who visited, or who have been kind to you recently not just to people who gave gifts.



Christmas can be a difficult time for many reasons.

Seek and reach out to local groups in your community, before, during and after Christmas. And Remember Parentline NI is here for you: **0808 8020**

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Monday to Thursday 9am to 9pm,

Friday 9am to 5pm, Saturday 9am to 1pm

or webchat: [ci-ni.org.uk](https://www.ci-ni.org.uk)

email: Parentline@ci-ni.org.uk

[Facebook.com/parentlineNI](https://www.facebook.com/parentlineNI)

