

Newsletter

December 2024

Reducing Stress and Increasing Joy for the Holidays



The holiday season can be a magical time, filled with traditions, celebrations, and family gatherings. However, it can also be stressful for everyone, with busy schedules, financial pressures, and the challenge of managing high expectations. Finding ways to reduce stress while increasing joy is essential for creating a holiday experience that is enjoyable for both young and old.

Reducing Stress

One of the most effective ways to reduce stress during the holidays is by setting realistic expectations. Parents and grandparents often feel pressure to create a "perfect" holiday but trying to live up to this ideal can lead to exhaustion and disappointment. It is important to focus on what truly matters — spending quality time together — rather than striving for perfection in decorations, gifts, or events. Simplifying traditions and cutting out activities that feel more like obligations than sources of joy can significantly reduce stress.

Planning ahead is another key strategy for lowering stress. By creating a holiday schedule that includes meal planning, shopping, and downtime, caregivers can avoid last-minute chaos. Involving children in the preparation process, whether it's decorating, cooking, or wrapping gifts, can also lighten the load while fostering family bonding. The American Psychological Association suggests that setting aside time for self-care, such as, exercise, meditation, or simply taking a break, is crucial for maintaining balance and reducing stress.

Continued on next page....

1377 S HWY 261 | Hardinsburg, KY 40143 | P: 270-756-2182 | F: 270-756-9016 | breckinridge.ca.uky.edu



Increasing Joy

To increase joy during the holidays, focus on creating meaningful experiences and traditions that emphasize connection and gratitude. These can be simple but powerful, like baking cookies together, going for a family walk or drive to see holiday lights, or reading favorite holiday stories. Engaging in shared activities helps build positive memories and strengthens family bonds.

Another way to increase joy is by practicing gratitude. Encourage children to express thankfulness for what they have and involve them in acts of giving. Whether it's donating toys, making cards for neighbors, or volunteering as a family, teaching children about the joy of giving can shift the focus away from materialism and foster a deeper sense of fulfillment. Research from the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley shows that gratitude is strongly associated with happiness, even in children.

Finally, staying present in the moment and savoring small joys, such as a warm cup of cocoa or a cozy evening on the couch, can make the holiday season more joyful. By letting go of unnecessary stress and focusing on connection and gratitude, parents and grandparents can create a holiday atmosphere that is joyful, meaningful, and memorable for the entire family.

Adapted from Parenting for the Holidays: Reducing Stress and Increasing Joy by David Weisenhorn, Ph.D.; Specialist for Parenting and Child Development

References:

American Psychological Association (APA). (2018). Tips for managing holiday stress. Retrieved from apa.org

Greater Good Science Center. (2018). The Science of Gratitude. Retrieved from ggsc.berkeley.edu

happy holidays

Lynnette Allen

Lynnette Allen
Extension Agent
For Family & Consumer Sciences Education
Breckinridge County



Homemaker Spotlight



Shelby Butler
Irvington Homemakers

The Irvington Homemakers take pleasure in nominating Mrs. Shelby Jean Butler for Homemaker of the Month. When describing Shelby, her personality and outgoing nature immediately come to mind. She makes everyone feel at home and at ease, a great communicator, and a very hard worker. Shelby was introduced to the Homemaker Organization by her beloved sister, Susie, and in her twenty plus years as a member has never wavered in her devotion to it. She is always looking for ways to volunteer, always striving to better the Homemaker Organization and the communities it serves.

She is very knowledgeable and loves sharing her expertise and life experiences. Shelby has worn many hats as a Homemaker -- Past President of the Homemaker Club, County Secretary, County Recreation Leader, as well as, many committee assignments. Oh yes, she is quite the crafter. A very talented capable, generous, genuine all-around friendly person whose can-do attitude embodies the spirit of the homemaker. Her Motto - "Never say I can't." We are very proud of our Shelby and appreciate having the opportunity to share that with all of you reading this.

Submitted by Mary Coghill, Irvington Homemakers Club

Homemaker Happenings



December 7th

Cloverport Christmas Bazaar

December 8th

Taste of Christmas

December 17th

Homemaker Council & County Christmas Party

Extension Office Closed

December 25 2024 - January 1 2025

CLOVERPORT EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS

Christmas BAZAAR



CLOVERPORT METHODIST CHURCH

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

11 AM-3 PM CT

Handmade crafts

*Homemade potato soup, chili, pimento cheese,
chicken salad sandwiches, & desserts*

Homemaker Club Meetings

Flower Rangers

Friday, December 27th

6 p.m. CT

Breckinridge County Extension
Community Building

Roll Call & Thought of the day for December

Roll Call: What is your dream for this holiday season?
(Or for the upcoming new year?)

Thought for the Day:

"Workin' on a mystery, goin' wherever it leads. Runnin' down a dream"
Runnin' Down a Dream by Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers 1989

Homemaker Council Meeting & Holiday Luncheon

Tuesday, December 17 2024

Homemaker Council Meeting - 10 a.m. CT

Homemaker Holiday Luncheon - 11:30 a.m. CT

Plan to bring a tasty holiday dish for a potluck lunch!

Each member is invited to bring a Christmas ornament for a fun exchange.

Also, members are invited to donate personal care items, such as, soap, shampoo, toothpaste, etc. The items will be donated to the blessing boxes at the public library locations. Donations will be accepted all the way through December 22nd.





 Cooperative Extension Service

YOU ARE INVITED

TASTE OF Christmas



Sunday, December 8, 2024
11 AM - 2 PM, CT

Breckinridge County Extension Community Building,
1377 S. Hwy 261, Hardinsburg

HEARTY SOUPS : SANDWICHES : DELICIOUS DESSERTS

Enjoy a delicious lunch and a stroll through the
3rd edition of Quilts with a Story Exhibit!

\$10 Event Ticket

Children age 4-10-\$5, 3 and under free



Proceeds to benefit the Breckinridge
County Extension Homemakers Senior
Scholarship program.



Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.
Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.



A Quilt's Story

Name of quilt pattern? _____

When quilted? _____ or How old? _____

Who made the quilt? _____

Why is this quilt special?

Quilt Exhibited by _____

National Cut Your Energy Costs Day - Jan. 10, 2025

Do you want to save money, help others, and conserve our natural resources? If so, then this day, National Cut Your Energy Costs Day, is for you.

As the world's population continues to grow, the demand for more energy will increase as well. The U.S. Department of Energy has some steps you can take to lower your energy use footprint. While there may be some upfront costs, these steps can pay for themselves in the long run.

1. Remember small steps, add up.

Turn off the lights when you leave the room. Same with the TV. Don't leave the water running while brushing your teeth. Regularly change your furnace filter. Clean out the lint filter in your dryer on an annual basis. Only use the washer and dishwasher when you have full loads of clothes and dishes.

2. A Smart Idea.

Another easy step to take is changing the light bulbs in your home to LEDs. LED (light emitting diode) bulbs can be 90% more efficient in producing light as compared to traditional light bulbs, and they last longer.

3. Get a home energy audit or assessment.

This is the process of having a certified professional come to your residence and see how efficiently your home uses energy. The auditor will walk throughout your home to see where there are possible issues such as air leaks and drafts around windows and doors, checking the attic and walls for the correct amount of insulation, and examining home appliances for energy use. Another step to consider when it comes to energy conservation in your home is installing appliances or electronics that can help:

- Solar panels,
- Programmable thermostat,
- Heat pumps, and/or
- Tankless water heaters.

References:

<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/professional-home-energy-assessments#:~:text=Your%20state%20or%20local%20government,assessments%20or%20recommend%20local%20auditors.>

Accessed 8/27/24

<https://www.energy.gov/articles/celebrate-national-cut-your-energy-costs-day>

Accessed 8/27/24

https://www.energystar.gov/products/light_bulbs/learn-about-led-lighting

Accessed 8/30/24

<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/tankless-or-demand-type-water-heaters>

Accessed 8/30/24

Source: Hardin Stevens, Senior Extension Associate, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

HEALTHY HOMES

HEALTHY HABITS

Join us every month for sessions dedicated to making healthier choices for our homes. During these sessions, we will talk about embracing healthier food and home practices. Participants will receive FREE kitchen incentive items and have the opportunity to taste-test nutritious recipes.

- 1 August 28th 1 p.m. CT**
Healthy Snack & Beverage choices
Healthy Cooking
Time Well Spent
 - 2 September 11th 1 p.m. CT**
Food Safety & Healthy Homes
 - 3 October 2nd 1 p.m. CT**
Affordable Meals & Smart Spending
 - 4 November 6th 1 p.m. CT**
Reading Labels and
Stress Free Holidays
 - 5 December 4th 1 p.m. CT**
Healthier choices, Fruit and Vegetables
Healthy Habits for the New Year
- All sessions will be held in the Breckinridge County Extension Office Basement**
For more information contact
Tasha Tucker or Lynnette Allen
at (270) 756-2182

REMINDER

There will be no
December meetings for
Diabetes Support Group
or Wits Workout.

Wits Workout will meet
again Wednesday,
January 8 2025

Diabetes Support Group
will meet again Tuesday,
January 14 2025



Fiesta Snack Mix

Servings: 8 Serving Size: 1/2 cup

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cornflake cereal with freeze-dried berries
- 1 cup chex-type bran cereal
- 1 cup O type cereal
- ¼ cup raisins
- ¼ cup peanuts or shelled sunflower seeds
- ¼ cup shredded coconut
- Milk (optional)

Directions:

1. Mix cereals together in a large bowl.
2. Add raisins, peanuts and coconut. Mix well.
3. Eat dry or with milk.

Source: LEAP...for Health: United States Department of Agriculture, Food Stamp Nutrition Connection, Recipe Finder.

<https://www.planeatmove.com/recipes/recipe/fiesta-snack-mix/>

NUTRITION FACTS PER SERVING: 110 calories; 3.5g fat; 1.5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 0mg cholesterol; 95mg sodium; 18g carbohydrate; 1g fiber; 7g sugar; 0g added sugars; 3g protein; 0% Daily Value of vitamin D; 2% Daily Value of calcium; 30% Daily Value of Iron; 2% Daily Value of potassium.

Southern Biscuit Christmas Tree



Ingredients

3 C Packaged Biscuit Mix
1 C Milk (or Buttermilk)
1 T Minced Garlic
4 T Melted Butter
 $\frac{3}{4}$ C Freshly Grated Parmesan
1 T Fresh Chopped Parsley
Marinara for Dipping

Instructions

Preheat oven to 400°.

Combine biscuit mix, garlic, $\frac{1}{4}$ C Parmesan, stir in milk. Be sure there are no dry pockets of dry mix.

Using a small portion scoop (#40), drop dough balls onto cookie sheet forming a Christmas tree pattern starting at the bottom and working up.

Bake for 12-15 min or until golden brown.

In a small bowl mix melted butter and garlic to brush the tops of the biscuits. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ C parmesan and chopped parsley. Serve biscuits warm.

Servings : 12-16

Ready in : 30 Minutes

Source: homebaking.com/recipe-items/southern-biscuit-formula-i-christmas-tree

Stay Connected

Office Hours

Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. CT

Address

Breckinridge County Extension Office
1377 South Highway 261
Hardinsburg, KY 40143

Online

breckinridge.ca.uky.edu
facebook.com/breckinridgeextension

Contact Information

Lynnette Allen
Extension Agent
For Family and Consumer Sciences Education
Breckinridge County
Phone: (270) 756-2182
Email: lallen@uky.edu



Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.

Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.