



Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

November /December 2012

In This Issue:

From the Director
pg. 2

Announcements/
Resources pg. 4

Teddy One pg. 7

Teddy Too pg. 8

Panda pg. 9

Koala pg. 11

Woolly pg. 12

Polar pg. 14

Grizzly pg. 15

Hanover
Celebration pg. 17

Managing Holiday
Stress pg. 19

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Look What Happened in Atlanta!



Jeff, Susan and Ray were all able to attend the NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) annual conference and expo in Atlanta, Georgia in November. They

had the opportunity to attend a wide range of workshops, meet many people who also love working with children, and renew their skills and spirits! Jeff also co-presented a workshop: **Men who change diapers change the world: A look at the critical need to hire qualified male teachers.**

And look what else Jeff did on a national level:



Congratulations, Jeff!

From the Director

Dear Big Jeff

I'm thinking about changing my child's schedule after the holidays. How soon do I have to let you know?

Waffling

Dear Waffle,

Give us 30 days' notice to drop days – that gives me a chance to fill in the space. If you want to change days, let me know. If I've got 'em, you can have 'em. If not, I'll make a note to watch for those days to open up. In March, I'll survey everyone to find out what you need for summer and fall schedules, so be thinking ahead.

Big Jeff

Dear Big Jeff,

My child is a Teddy. Will she be Panda next year?

Thinking ahead

Dear Ahead,

Good question! The short and true answer is "I don't know". The cut-off date for moving from one class to another is based on a variety of factors that include age, peer groups, space available and a variety of intangibles. Because the group composition is different each year I have to do some fancy thinking in March and April. Finalizing fall rosters takes even longer. If we work in reverse chronological order, I can give you some rough guidelines. I'm speaking about children's ages at the beginning of the school year. Everybody has a birthday, so by the end of the year everyone is a year older.

--Grizzlies all attend kindergarten, so school entry is the key there. In most school districts kindergartners must be five by September 30.

--The Woolly and Polar rooms are multi-age preschool groups. The minimum age is typically three by September 30, but not all threes may be in the Woollies and Polars (see Koalas). This year's threes are next year's fours. The group is about half and half, but that varies considerably from year to year.

--Koalas are typically are two or three years old. The age range may overlap with both Pandas and Woolly/Polars. I'm more concerned with composing congenial groups than with the exact age. This flexibility allows us to respond to the demographics of the year. The Koala program is intended to adapt to the ages of the children entering. It may include some Pandas and some older Teddies. Every once in a while, some children are Koalas for two years.

-Pandas are typically one and a half to two and a half. Ages may overlap with Teddies and Koalas. Again, there's not a definite cut-off date on either end.

--Teddies must be at least 8 weeks old and typically not more than 18 months old in September. The younger children are Teddies for two years giving them plenty of time to practice developing secure relationships.

Whew! That was a lot more words than I intended to use, but I've never been able to find a succinct way of explaining it. Feel free to ask me. I think the take away message is that it's best not to assume your child will be in a particular group, because each year is a little different.

Big Jeff

News for EVERYONE about the future of the Grizzly Program

Hanover is the only local school district that doesn't have a full day kindergarten program. I am on a school district study committee to explore the issue. There is an ever-growing body of evidence that children in full day kindergarten programs accomplish more work with less stress than their counterparts in part-day programs. If the study committee recommends a full day program it will go to the school board later this year. If approved by the school board, full day kindergarten would be implemented in September 2014. BUT, if the school board acted quickly it is possible it could happen for September 2013.

I think it is clear that full day kindergarten is coming to Hanover sooner or later. This will profoundly affect DCCCC as our After-K program will no longer be needed. If that were to happen, we would have more room for children under 5. We'll want to do some heavy duty planning to make best use of space. We'll look at age groups, curriculum, staffing, costs and the use of space. After 25 years of Grizzlies (we started that program when we moved to this building in 1987) we will surely miss our Kindergartners. The possibility of expanding our infant, toddler and preschool capacity is exciting, though. Stay tuned for further details.



ANNOUNCEMENTS/RESOURCES

DCCCC Will Be Closed On The Following Days:

**-December 24, 2012-January 1,
2013 – Winter Break**

**-March 18, 2013 – In-service
Training Day**

-May 27, 2013 – Memorial Day

-July 4, 2013 – Independence Day

Snow Days

Whenever Hanover schools close or open late due to inclement weather, DCCCC will have a late opening time of 9:00 a.m. A late opening at DCCCC will be announced on:

- WMUR TV Channel 9 and www.WMUR.com
- WCAX TV Channel 3 and www.WCAX.com, (go to weather, select school closings)

During school vacations, late openings will be decided by the Director in consultation with local authorities and will be announced in the same media as above.

Grizzlies may arrive at 9 a.m. too and pay the full day rate.

Ray School Art Exhibit in Hanover:

Mascoma Savings Bank, Main Street. Artwork from all classes at the Ray School is on display throughout the holiday season. Free. 603-643-6655.

Ongoing:

The Montshire Museum of Science in Norwich: 10 a.m.-5 p.m., 1 Montshire Road. Interactive science exhibits and artwork by Charley Harper and the Center for Cartoon Studies is on display until Feb. 3. Hands-on science activities, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. ^ \$10 or \$12, under 2 free. 802-649-2200.

Lights of Christmas in South Royalton: 6:45 p.m., Joseph Smith Memorial, 357 LDS Lane. Christmas light display includes live animals in a manger, hot cider and cookies. Free. 802-763-7742.

Christmas Illuminations in Enfield: La Salette Shrine, Route 4A. Mount Royal Academy Choir, 5:15 p.m. Mass, 6 p.m. Christmas lights, 5-9 p.m.. Free. 603-632-7087.

December 7,8

Santa Program at Christmas Illuminations in Enfield: La Salette Shrine, Route 4A. Christmas lights, 5-9 p.m. Santa program, 7:30 p.m. Free. 603-632-7087.

December 7, 8, 9

Wassail Weekend at Billings Farm in Woodstock: Billings Farm & Museum, Route 12 North. Tour a festive 19th-century farmhouse and make a keepsake ornament ^ \$3 to \$12, under 2 free. 802-457-2355.

December 7:

Celebrate the Season in Hanover: 4-8 p.m., downtown and on Dartmouth College green. Events include live music, visits with Santa, caroling with the North Country Community Theater, window decorating contest and more. Tree lighting on the green, 5:15 p.m. Free. 603-643-3115.

Holiday Open House in White River Junction: 5-8 p.m., Center for Cartoon Studies, 46 S. Main St. Event includes a tour of the renovated facilities at the former post office, live cartooning and more. Free. 802-295-3319.

December 7:

Holiday Open Studios in White River Junction: 5-8 p.m., Tip Top Building, 85 N. Main St. Open studio night features the work of local artists, live music and refreshments. Free. 802-295-5901.

December 8:

Hacker Space for Kids in Windsor: 10 a.m., Windsor Library, 43 State St. Children of all ages take apart appliances to discover what's inside. Appliances and tools provided. Free. 802-674-2556.

Holiday Festival With Santa in South Royalton: 10 a.m.- 2 p.m., South Royalton School, Middle School gym, 223 S. Windsor St. Local crafts, children's activities, stories, cookie decorating and more. Santa visits from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Free admission. Sponsored by Royalton Recreation. 802-299-9033.

The Family Place Gingerbread Festival in Norwich: 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. Festival includes a gingerbread house display, store, cafe, cookie decorating, silent auction and more ^ \$5 per person, \$10 per family. 802-649-3268.

Clara's Dream in Lebanon: 1, 4 and 7 p.m., Lebanon Opera House, 51 N. Park St. City Center Ballet's interpretation of *The Nutcracker* ^ \$10-\$15 in advance, \$15-\$20 day of show. Tickets: 603-448-0400.

December 8 and 9, The Polar Express in White River Junction: 10 a.m.-7 p.m., 100 Railroad Row. Train rides to the North Pole include a visit with Santa, storytelling and a special gift ^ \$20 and \$25. Tickets must be purchased in advance at hartfordvtpolarexpress.com.

News from Teddy One

Debbie Burnham,
Lead Teacher

Wendy Irwin,
Teacher

April Buchanan,
Assistant Teacher

The Teddy Rooms are always full of celebrations and firsts! This month we have new crawlers, new walkers and new eaters! Wow! We love celebrating with you on all these new developments. We have seen so much growth since school started in September. Friendships have formed and routines have developed.

Our youngest members have definitely settled in and smile at us more. Our oldest members are now playing together and look forward to activities and outside play. Even this week we see new changes: blocks are now being used for building with instead of just chewing on! That is a big milestone.



Sadly, we are saying goodbye to two of our families. Raeleigh and Ryan will be leaving us in December. We wish them all the best and they will be greatly missed.

We will be welcoming three new families: Elliott and his parents, Laura and Erich, Conrad and his parents: Jessica and Jason, and Scarlett Lewis and her parents: Liz and Ethan. Please introduce yourselves to our new additions.

Wendy, April and I love being part of your child's day and watching their development. On a personal note, my family recently had incident at our home. I arrived home to hear the sound of running water and opened the door to see a river coming from our dining room light fixture. An upstairs toilet had malfunctioned and our whole house was under water. At this point we are living without walls, ceilings or flooring. Rebuilding will start soon and we will have a beautiful new home for next year. I want you all to know how much I look forward to arriving at work each day. When I open the Teddy One door I am greeted with smiles, children crawling towards me and arms upraised for me to pick them up. The love I feel while at work carries me through dealings with contractors and insurance agents! I truly have the best job in the world and I know Wendy and April feel the same way. Thank you so much for trusting us with your most precious family members!

Fondly,
Debbie, Wendy and April



News from Teddy Too

Radoyka Garcia,
Lead Teacher

Lori Higgins,
Teacher

Denise Ayres,
Assistant Teacher

(¡Saludos!)

Greetings from Teddy Too's!

It has been an enjoyable few weeks with our Teddies! We've been excited about all their accomplishments—those that we hear about which are happening at home and those that we get to see here. Here are just a few things mentioned, but we know that each child has a much longer list of what they love to do!

Charlotte: pronouncing so many words (in context), including her manners

Eleanor: shows many skills in 'big body play': climbing, sliding and running fast

Caterina: standing and letting go of shelves, not realizing just her feet are supporting her

Jaelyn: can pronounce "Eleanor". She's taking a few walking steps while holding on to one of your fingers

Nivi: Can stand on her own without assistance and is an agile climber

Henry: Enjoys his Teddy friends: he smiles and coos and sings with excitement

Augustin: loves to dance to music and is very strong on his legs—may be walking soon

Joshua: Makes lots of new cooing, loud sounds, more like singing and loves to be tickled

Brody: Sleeps less, therefore he plays more. He's reaching for anything that is near him

Sophia: Is almost rolling onto her belly, she sings a lot and makes gurgling sounds when you speak to her.

They are doing wonderfully in our room, also considering the amount of children going through the very painful teething stage of infancy. We are so happy to have you all be a special part of life here at DCCCC.*

Hoping everyone has a safe and joyous Holiday Season!

Ray and the Teddy Too Team

News from the Panda Bears

Susan Young,
Lead Teacher

Jenn Boudro,
Teacher

Teresa Hahn
Assistant Teacher

The Pandas have totally settled in!! It is awesome to see the smiles and hear the laughter throughout the day with this group. We are seeing more dramatic play with dress ups and dollhouse furniture. We are seeing children verbalizing more with each other and the teachers. This is an amazing year for growth... the first of what you might notice being language development as your child might come home singing songs or telling stories about his or her day.

I was in Atlanta for the NAEYC conference in November and what a great conference it was! I am on a mission to develop a "natural play area" at the top of our playground over the next year or so. I have gone to several workshops and conferences over the years and have recommitted myself to get this up and running. (OKKKKKK.. the guy at the last workshop said if you say it out loud or to someone 7 times over 2 weeks, you have a much, much better chance of staying with it so I am saying it to you all!!) I may

ask for help here or there with a few things but I am so excited about this progressing!! I have a lot of ideas as do others so we'll be talking and planning a lot over the winter. One of the coolest things I heard was about were "willow huts." Apparently you can cut willow branches and stick them in the ground and they are supposed to grow. I have seen pictures of leaf covered huts and archways and by golly, I am on a mission!! We may even get a "master gardener" to help. Another thing I learned was that master gardeners must volunteer a certain amount of time to maintain that "master" status and it must have an educational component. I have already been in touch with the extension office and the woman I talked with thought it was a great idea. I am waiting for her to contact me back and we'll see where we stand.

As most of you know. Teresa is out with a knee injury and we are waiting word from her after her orthopedic appt tomorrow and will plan accordingly. Jenn and I will be starting to work on family conferences but it may take longer than we had planned. If you would like to talk sooner rather than later, let us know. I think there is a decent chance that we'll be into January before we get to everyone. I will tell you that it really is a time to sit down and talk about how your child is doing in the Panda program and how his or her development is progressing. If we had any pressing issues, we would talk with you and not wait until conference time.

Keep sending in warm clothes.... it's downright chilly these last couple of days. One thing I have found over the years is that it's really frustrating for kids to play outside if they can't move their hands or their mittens don't have a thumb hole. I am big on making sure mittens are on correctly with that thumb in place

and mitten pulled up and tucked into their sleeve. We've found that the little stretchy ones can be doubled up if need be but provides pretty good mobility. A lot of fleece ones work as well. If mittens are attached to the sleeves, it is a much less chance of them being misplaced! Ok.. I'm ready for a little snow!!

The Panda garden is one of much activity. Often there are children lined up at the window watching. We talk about the wide variety of birds and squirrels and I betcha your child will come home one day and say " I saw a chickadee or blue jay or woodpecker or junco or red breasted grosbeak"!!!! I love it!!!

Hope you all have a good Thanksgiving break!
Susan for the Panda team

Note from Sunnie: This article was written before Susan broke her ankle! Jenn is carrying on with Gladness and Liz. Conferences might be a bit later than planned! We are sending warm thoughts to Susan and Teresa for speedy recoveries!

Grand Opening: Koala Grocery Store!!!!

News from the Koalas

Terri Hollis,
Lead Teacher

, Jenn Sprague,
Teacher

Loey Crooks,
Assistant Teacher



News from the Woolly Bears

Deb Girdwood,
Lead Teacher

Barb Merchand,
Teacher

Moya Stevens,
Assistant Teacher

The Woolly Bear Walking Club

The Woollies continue to “go green” with the Walking Club scene as they explored the grounds beyond DCCCC. With a buddy in hand they traveled the ski trail; past the WB Woods to find the tunnel (water drain beneath the rugby house) they “spied” on their previous hike. *On the way they*

- *Discovered* a birds nest made with grass, leaves, branches, and a bit of plastic, built in the shrubby outside the Grizzly Rm.



- *Heard* the crackle of leaves and tiny branches beneath their feet when they hit the walking trail.

- *Found* not one but three round “signs” with the word sewer on each cover which prompted a detailed discussion of what they were and how they worked.



- *Moved* huge branches together that blocked the trail. According to Woollies they were “definitely” knocked down by the big hurricane.



- *Identified* human footprints in the mud by matching the size of a tread to a Woolly’s boot.



- *Speculated* about the numerous piles of scat. Could it be a bear, deer, (many of us have witnessed 3-4 deer in the early morning or evening leaving the parking lot), or some other woodland creature?

- *Swished* through the tall twisted grass and once around the bend “spied” the concrete “tunnel” straight ahead. Investigating up close Woollies noticed water trickling over the rocks and forming a small pool. Several friends announced it was a fish pool, but when they looked closer concluded with a bit of disappointment– no “fishies” were swimming in the water.



- Were *alerted* to a mushroom growing in the grass by their friends who sounded the alarm “don’t touch- it could be poisonous”!
- *Passed* the community gardens, tramped across the metal “troll” bridge, saw a jogger with bare feet, heard the rumble of the dump truck, and observed the dark clouds rolling across the sky.

On their return the Woollies were excited to *illustrate* a book page detailing their walking club travels. The next trail plan is to explore the big white wall “spied” on the last excursion. We have tentatively scheduled Friday mornings and invite families and friends to add their footprints and explore with the Woollies.

Watch for an update in the next WB Weekly to find how the Woollies create a mini-wilderness in the classroom and the forest critters that emerge.

-The Woolly Bear Team

News from the Polar Bears

Sunnie
McPhetres/Eileen
Ruml, Interim Lead
Teacher,

Tatyana Bills,
Teacher

Miranda Arrunda,
Floating Assistant
Teacher

Hello Polar Families!

It was lovely to see you all at the Polar Thanksgiving Feast! The kids had a great time sharing a meal with their families and each other. It was an exciting day and they all pulled through most excellently!

Space has been a topic of conversation in the Polar Room lately. You may have noticed the space rocket in the corner of the room. The children have been donning their oxygen tanks and heading into space! They have visited many planets as well as the moon. They even went to the planet of cheese once!

The space rocket serves several purposes in the Polar Room. The only reason the children know about is that it is fun. Some of the other reasons: having a space where only two children can play at a time creates opportunities for different pairings of children to experience being together. If you want to play in the rocket, it might be with someone other than your

best friend. Another benefit is the opportunity to practice self-control. This is a big deal for preschool aged children. The rocket ship is actually a piece of apparatus that is used for climbing in the multi. It is not appropriate to climb on it in the classroom. Remembering that and playing inside it takes a great deal of thought, planning, and control on the part of the children. It is a great way to practice a skill that will serve them well throughout their life times. Are they successful every time? Oh, no! But they are successful most of the time and they feel really great about that!

The Polars have had another new experience for this school year; they have been listening to chapter books at quiet times. This has been an experience that they have really enjoyed. Once again, that's the aspect of the experience that is important to them. The teacher in me just has to tell you that there are other benefits to reading chapter books that the children are not aware of! Listening to a story without the aid of pictures is a big step in the development of listening skills as well as reading skills. They are using their of hearing to really attend. They are concentrating on the spoken word more than on visual clues. They are getting the idea that reading involves words not pictures. They are developing a sense of context based on the words and their past experiences with the concepts that they are hearing. It is a relaxing activity that allows them to experience the rest that their bodies so desperately need!

Afternoons have been full of group activity lately. Circle times have included stories, songs, games, books, and breathing activities. Ask your Polars about Sunnie's song box, magic stories with Sunnie and Tatyana, and Eileen's breathing toys. The Polars are having fun with all of these things; we won't tell them how much they are learning! As always, if you have any concerns or questions, let us know!

Happy to Be a Polar for a while!

Sunnie (on behalf of the Polar Team)

News from the Grizzlies

Karen Gray,
Lead Teacher

Kristin Ball Cole,
Teacher

I'm not sure about you, but I go home almost every night stuck with "Gangnam Style" in my head as many Grizzlies sing it throughout the day! The Grizzlies sure enjoy singing, dancing and moving especially when they get the attention of others and begin doing it together! Being physically active makes children feel good! They breathe deeply, filling their lungs with energizing oxygen. They use their muscles, releasing mood-improving endorphins. Regular physical activity helps children eat well, sleep well, perform well in school, resist illness, and grow strong, cheerful and confident! Since being physically active is a natural and fun thing for children, especially with this group, we thought we would help the Grizzlies to better understand about the remarkable potential of their bodies and how our bodies work.

While pretending in the "doctor's office" (with stethoscopes that really work) and exploring books and new songs, Grizzlies have been researching the following questions: Why do I have bones? Why do I have muscles? Why do I have skin? What happens to the food I eat? What do my lungs do? What does my heart do? How does my brain work? Grizzlies were amazed to discover that 206 bones make up our human skeleton. We have had discussions about being brave to try new foods as well as understanding that food and drink build, protect and energize our bodies. We want children to know about how much our bodies do for us and think about all the ways we can thank our bodies by taking good care of it. So... now the new favorite song may become "Dem Bones" but I'm doubtful of that!

Why stop there! In addition to talking about ways to take care of our own bodies, we are using this opportunity to continue to discuss the importance of taking care of each other. We have been talking to the group about making kind choices and getting along with others even if they have different interests or are playing in different groups. We have been creating different scenarios of how children feel when they are getting along and not getting along. We are mentioning about personal responsibilities and having the choice to treat others the way you like to be treated. In the book We Can Get Along: A Child's Book of Choices by Lauren Murphy Payne she ends with these words, *"I can get along with many people. People who are like me, and people who are not like me. I can learn*

new things and try new things...I can be a friend. Friends are people you can count on. Friends are people who talk to you and listen when you talk. Friends are fun to play with...And nice to be around. At school, in the neighborhood, and on the playground, we all have our own wants and needs. We have our own thoughts and feelings...No two people are the same. Even though we are different, we can talk together. We can laugh, work, and play together. Or we can just be quiet together...We can get along.”

With the days getting shorter, we have begun doing some activities with night...particularly about nocturnal animals and stars. We are trying to get a better understanding of the words “revolve” and “rotate” to figure out how we get day and night. We will be making some crayon resistant night time paintings as well as using the gel markers and pencils on dark paper. We will make origami stars and paper towel tube rockets. We have added some festive lights to our room as the afternoons are so dark. We are discussing how many cultures use light to celebrate or commemorate special occasions during the winter holiday season.

We have enjoyed meeting with all of you for family conferences. It is always pleasant to have the chance to connect, share insights and work together to help each child be safe, be kind, feel confident and succeed.

We hope that you will experience the warmth of family love and togetherness, the joy of life and friends and peace for everyone this holiday season!

Happy Birthday to:

Alex and Andrew Valentino on December 12th

Kate Wheatley on December 15th

Sean Nam on December 16th

Lily Smith on December 30th

Happy Holidays,
Karen

Celebrate the Season 2012

Friday, December 7, 2012 ~

4:00 – 8:00 PM

Come and **Celebrate the Season** in
downtown Hanover!



Activities

3:30-4:45pm	Visit with Santa	
Claus		Norwich Inn
4:00-5:30pm	Bookmark	
Making		Left Bank Books
4:00-8:00pm	Downtown stores open with	
discounts,	All around town	
	refreshments, crafts, raffles & more	

4:00-8:00pm Free Horse Drawn Wagon Rides All around town
 Gingerbread House & Model Train Exhibit Hanover Inn
 Ray School Art Gallery Mascoma Savings Bank
 Children's Book Signings with Local Authors Dartmouth Bookstore
 Sugar Cookie Decorating Mascoma Savings Bank
 Create a Dog Treat gift Mascoma Savings Bank
 Create your own Holiday Ornament League of NH Craftsmen

 5:00-7:00pm Gingerbread Cookie Decorating Lou's
 Restaurant & Bakery
 5:00-8:00pm Seasonal 'Mechanical' Animal Rides Mascoma
 Savings Bank
 5:15-6:00pm Christmas Tree Lighting (and singing) The 'Green' in
 Hanover
 5:30-7:30pm Visit with Santa Claus Mascoma Savings Bank
 5:30-7:30pm Meet the Grinch & Toy Soldier Mascoma Savings
 Bank

Performances

4:00-4:30pm Waldorf School Orchestra Mascoma Savings Bank
 4:30-5:00pm UVMC – String Quartet game, set, mat
 5:00-5:30pm UVMC- Youth Chorus Dartmouth Bookstore
 6:00-6:20pm Revels North Corner of Lebanon & Main St.
 6:00-7:00pm Banish Misfortune-Cello group Six South Street
 Hotel
 6:30-6:50pm Revels North Sotheby's International Realty
 6:30-7:00pm Hanover High School- Jazz Ensemble Hanover
 Park Building
 6:30-8:00pm Rowley Hazard–Jazz Music Left Bank Books
 7:00-7:20pm North Country Chordsmen Hanover Park Building
 7:15-7:45pm UVMC- Fiddle Group The Mountain Goat
 7:15-8:00pm Reckless Breakfast Khawachen/Inner-Asia Rugs

Managing Holiday Stress 2012



Although it's easy to envision a marvelous, relaxed holiday season full of pageantry, positivity, and perfect pies, this is not what the splendor of the season always delivers. For many, this time of year is the most stressful.

If you feel stressed out by the thought of holiday chores, obligations, and the clan dropping in for a spell—or if this year's circumstances make the holiday season difficult for whatever reason—start preparations now to manage your holiday stress.

Holiday Myth Busters —

Along with good tidings come high expectations based on the commercialization of the holiday season, past childhood memories we may long to duplicate, and the expectations of others.

If family members count on your “holiday magic” to make every year special—the cooking, cleaning, baking, decorating, and gift-wrapping—you face a bigger challenge letting go or finding balance.

Here's how to cope better with expectations, demands, and added pressure during the holidays.

Decision Time —

Make a decision to take charge and tackle holiday stress. This mentally prepares you to enjoy the time while facing demands of the season with better endurance.

Your Priorities —

Decide on your priorities to make the season meaningful. Did you miss the tour of homes last year because the Waltons next door had their open house on the same day? The idea here is to plan a few “non-negotiable” events for yourself.

Now the Rest —

What activities are important to your brood this year? Seek to trim the “idea tree” to reduce stress from trying to fit it all in. A family meeting to gather ideas can work, and chances are activities you thought everyone still wanted are no longer of interest.

Avoid the Rush —

Are holiday lights on the house critical? If yes, go for it, but if it seems more like a “chore” than a pleasurable task, that's a clue about its priority and importance to you. Activities that feel like chores get delayed. Pay attention to procrastination. It is insight to help you decide whether it's thumbs up or down on something that seems desirable.

Fight the Blues —

If the holidays are a sad time of year because of difficult memories or because a loved one can't be there, then discover a personal intervention strategy. Volunteering for a local charity is an interactive experience, and those who've tried it claim it works to lift one's mood. You'll feel empowered and more positive, and the experience of helping others anchors you to a memory that lasts.

Navigating Family Conflict —

If you can't avoid holiday gatherings with family members who experience feuds and conflicts, try discussing with kin your desire to avoid conflict. Be up front and ask that differences be set aside.

Older adults criticizing teenagers is a famous trigger. So are statements from in-laws that appear critical, interfering, or meddling. Self-awareness is power, so you stand a good chance of at least minimizing this behavior.

Take Care of Yourself —

What improves your mood—exercise, positive affirmations, alone time? During the year, have you been promising to do something for yourself, but keep putting it off? Do it. The holiday season is a perfect time to reaffirm your love, not only for those you care about but also for yourself.

FEAP Can Help —

Holiday stress affects everyone differently, so suggestions here may not match what's unique for you. Don't face the stress alone. Instead, talk to your organization's employee assistance program. The FEA professional will help you find the resilience and strength you need to face any challenge the holidays may bring.

Dartmouth College
Faculty/Employee Assistance Program
646-1165
Or
FEAP@Dartmouth.Edu