

# FAMILY RESOURCE

C O N N E C T I O N

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“Stupid  
busy world!”

-Nate B. said  
one day to his mother.  
His mother took note  
and shared the quote  
with others  
knowing that  
this one statement  
from her son  
carried wisdom  
beyond his years.

## Holiday Home Time:

### *An Opportunity for Lifetime Memory-Making*

The holidays of recent years have proved to be a hurried time of activities with parties, shopping, decorating, food preparations, as well as increased volunteer efforts. All of these are important, but not nearly as important as the time spent with our children and our families during this special time of the year. Even though we may have our children and families around us while we dive into the holiday preparations, are we really taking the time to “be there” for our children and to include our children?

This year, our economy may force more of us to slow down with many of our previous activities and shopping. With less buying and attending fewer functions, there just may be more time to be at home and more time to spend with our children and families. This is the good news amongst otherwise dismal news. These are the times when opportunities to create lasting memories naturally present themselves to us, so let’s take advantage of these times and see them as a rich investment in our children and our families.

Let’s look at food preparation first. Perhaps a creative gift to give to a neighbor, teacher, or friend, is the gift of a homemade treat. Homemade treats are always a welcome gift to receive, but perhaps the greater gift is the time and fun you have with your children while you prepare the treat. Children can be a wonderful help in the kitchen, as long as you have the time and the right attitude.

Pull out the family cookbooks and find the recipes that you loved as a child. While you prepare them with your child, give your child the gift of your cherished memories by telling them stories of when you helped make or eat the food. You’ll be creating your own memories as you allow your child to measure and stir and lick the spatula.

### Puppy Chow

#### Ingredients:

6 cups Crispix cereal  
½ cup peanut butter  
½ cup butter  
½ ounce chocolate chips  
2 cups powdered sugar

Melt peanut butter, butter and chocolate chips together in the microwave or on the stove. Stir into the cereal. Put powdered sugar in a paper sack. Put cereal mixture in the paper sack and shake until well coated.

#### Mission

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Next, let's look at decorations. No matter what type of holiday you celebrate, there are often decorations involved. If you have young children, this is the time when your idea of decorating may need to take a backseat. When all the decorations are on the bottom third of the tree, chances are that the children were at the forefront of that decorating task. No worries; there will be many years ahead for evenly decorated trees! Savor the fun and humor of these special times with your young ones. Take pictures and laugh together down the road. There are a variety of ornaments and decorations that you and your children can create together. Again, these make lovely gifts, but the time spent together is the true gift you give to yourself and your children. Here is an ornament idea to get you started:

## Salt/Flour Dough Ornaments

### Ingredients:

1 cup flour  
1 cup salt  
½ cup water

Mix together. You can even use your hands, which can be a nice sensory experience for your busy little ones. Roll out the dough with a rolling pin. Select your favorite cookie cutter shapes and cut out. Place on a cookie sheet. Take a drinking straw and make a hole in the top of the dough shape for a ribbon later. Bake at 250 degrees for an hour. Once the shape has cooled, it's ready to be painted. Remember to write (or have your child write) his or her name and date on the back.

Lastly, let's look at having fun together. If you choose to skip a few of your regular parties or events this year in favor of time at home with your family, you all win! The time you spend together having fun is, again, an investment in your relationship and in lifelong memories. Whether going for a winter scavenger hunt or creating snowmen and snow angels outside, your time together will always be cherished.

There are also a lot of games you can play together indoors. Winter is a wonderful time to pull out the board games, cards or even create your own games together. The old-fashioned game of Racko is a wonderful game to play with your preschooler or early elementary-aged child to help develop his or her math skills. Most board games are magnificent ways to help your young children learn how to follow rules and directions along with developing their vocabulary. It's also a great way to teach good sportsmanship by modeling a good attitude about winning and losing. Games provide not only lasting memories, but lifelong lessons for a good foundation for your child. Here's a great non-competitive game you can play together this month:

## Frosty

### Supplies:

- Roll of toilet paper or white crepe paper (which can be sturdier), construction paper and scissors
- First, create hats for your child and yourself using the construction paper. You may wish to decorate your Frosty hats with crayons or markers, too. Then, let your children turn you into Frosty and then they will enjoy becoming Frosty themselves. Invite your child to wrap you in toilet paper or crepe paper from head to toe. Then have your child put your Frosty hat on your head. This should elicit lots of giggles and fun. Take pictures and perhaps use for this year's holiday greetings.

Enjoy the holidays with your child and your families. Heed Nate's advice and resist being too busy. Spend time with your children and if you would like more ideas for crafts, games, or activities, please feel free to ask your child's teacher. Teachers are a great resource, and they also know your child and your child's interests and strengths, too. New Horizon Academy has literally thousands of hands-on ideas in the curriculum, and your child's teacher will be happy to prepare a list of great ones just for you!

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