

# Tricks of the Trade

## Holiday Fun!

Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanza, December is a time to celebrate family and traditions! Set aside time from the hustle and bustle of the holidays and embrace family time. Use the following ideas to create your own memories! Want to take it a step further? Educate your little ones about other ways in which families celebrate this time by incorporating stories and activities from other cultures.

### Activity

#### Rudolph Says (take off from Simon Says)

The usual rules apply, but this time say "Rudolph says" instead of "Simon says." Make it even more festive - tape a red nose from construction paper on the person who is Rudolph.

### Quick Boredom Busters



1. Tie jingle bells on your toddler's wrist and sing "Jingle Bells!"
2. Using dental floss, string a dried cranberry and marshmallow tree garland. (Marshmallows are easier to thread than popcorn.)

### Books to Read

**It's Hanukkah!** Santiago Cohen

**Festival of Lights: The Story of Hanukkah** Maida Silverman

**The Polar Express** Chris VanAllsburg

**What Is Christmas?** Michelle Medlock Adams

**First Kwanza Book** Deborah Chocolate & Cal Massey



### Crafts

#### Merry Mini Houses

**Supplies:** Wax paper; Paintbrushes and small bowls; Ready-made frosting; Graham crackers; Edible decorations: Fruit loops, Cran-Raisins, marshmallows, etc.

**Directions:** Lay wax paper and give each child a paintbrush and small bowl of frosting. Use the frosting to glue together four graham cracker halves to make the walls of the house. Add two graham crackers to make the slant of the roof. Decorate houses with the edible decorations!

#### Handprint Menorahs

**Supplies:** Construction paper; Paintbrushes; Washable tempera paint; Crayons; Scissors; Glue sticks

**Directions:** Using a paintbrush, brush paint on your child's hand. Press one hand on a piece of construction paper. Follow with the opposite hand, overlapping the thumbs. The eight fingers represent the candles, which in turn represent the eight nights of Hanukkah. The "overlapping thumbs" represent the Shamash. Paint the Flame.

#### Child size Rudolph

**Supplies:** Large "poster size" paper, cut in half; Google eyes Red pom-pom; Brown Construction paper

**Directions:** Trace one of your child's shoes (this will be the face). Cut out. Trace your child's hands (this will be the antlers). Cut out. Glue the face and antlers on the paper. Finish off with adding the google eyes and pom-pom nose

#### Magic Reindeer Food or Winter Rabbit Food

**Supplies:** 1/4 cup oatmeal; 1/4 cup sugar; sprinkle of red or green sugar crystals (for cake decorating); Baby food jars or Ziploc bags

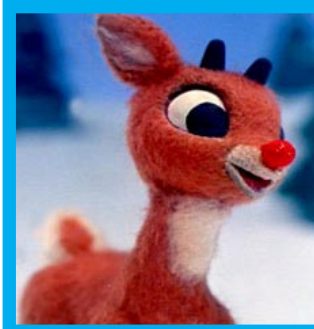
**Directions:** Mix together. If you use a baby food jar, you can layer the ingredients for a "sand art." Mix the ingredients together to create magic food to sprinkle on your lawn for the Reindeers to find your house Christmas Eve! Celebrate another holiday? Use the food for those adorable winter rabbits. Use the poems below:

#### Reindeer Poem to go with:

Sprinkle on the lawn at night  
The moon will make it sparkle bright  
As Santa's reindeer fly and roam  
This will guide them to your home.

#### Winter Rabbit Poem to go with:

Sprinkle on the lawn at night  
The moon will make it sparkle bright  
Winter Rabbits hop and roam;  
This will guide them to your home.



### Gibbles and Nibbles

*This month, we thought we would share tips on how to eat healthy during the holiday season. Have a safe, happy, and healthy holiday season!*

- **Avoid going to a meal or party hungry.** Try to eat a small meal or snack before hand. Make sure it contains protein, as this will help you feel full longer. Starving yourself to leave room for a bigger meal may lead to overeating and unhealthy food choices.
- **Mind your portions.** Try to sample small amounts of food rather than filling your plate. Avoid second helpings.
- **Opt for the healthier choices,** if available. If you must have something you know is higher in calories/fat, try to keep the portion size small. Also, limit other higher calorie foods throughout party/meal and save room for that special treat.
- **Plan ahead.** Determine must have foods and avoid others that are not as important to you.
- If you are preparing a meal or dish, **substitute lower fat/calorie ingredients,** such as egg whites, skim or low fat milk.
- **Bring a healthy dish you know you can eat.**
- **Drink plenty of water** during the meal or party. This will keep you hydrated and also help you feel full.
- **Beverages such as cider, eggnog, beer, wine, and other spirits do contain a significant amount of calories.** Again, mind your portions!
- **Make time for exercise.** Go for a walk after the holiday meal, make it a family/friend event. Take extra time during the holiday week to spend more time exercising to balance out your caloric intake.
- **Keep yourself busy doing tasks** such as setting/clearing the table, taking out the trash, etc. This can help minimize nibbling.
- **Eat slowly.** It takes 20 minutes for our bodies to realize we are full.
- **Do not stand to close to the food while you are socializing.** This may also help limit nibbling. Try to focus on socializing during the party and not eating.
- **Chew gum!!!** Chewing gum has been shown to reduce caloric intake. It is also a great way to relief tense jaw muscles caused by all that holiday stress.
- **Fundraisers:** If the item being sold is candy or some other high calorie food, then opt to just donate the money.
- **Cook up healthier recipes by swapping one ingredient for another.** These substitution tips can help. →

If your recipe calls for:	Try substituting:
All purpose flour	• Whole-wheat flour for half of the called-for all-purpose flour in baked goods
Bacon	• Canadian bacon, turkey bacon, smoked turkey or lean prosciutto (Italian ham)
Butter, shortening or oil in baked goods...and	• Applesauce or prune puree for half of the called-for butter, shortening or oil
to prevent sticking...	• Cooking spray or nonstick pans
Creamed soups	• Fat-free milk-based soups, mashed potato flakes, or pureed carrots, potatoes or tofu for thickening agents
Dry bread crumbs	• Rolled oats or crushed bran cereal
Eggs	• Two egg whites or 1/4 cup egg substitute for each whole egg
Enriched pasta	• Whole-wheat pasta
Evaporated milk	• Evaporated skim milk
Fruit canned in heavy syrup	• Fruit canned in its own juices or in water, or fresh fruit
Fruit-flavored yogurt	• Plain yogurt with fresh fruit slices
Ground beef	• Extra-lean or lean ground beef, chicken or turkey breast
Margarine in baked goods	• Trans fat-free butter spreads or shortenings that are specially formulated for baking
Oil-based marinades	• Wine, balsamic vinegar, fruit juice or fat-free broth
Seasoning sale (garlic salt, celery salt, onion salt)	• Herb-only seasonings, such as garlic powder, celery seed or onion flakes, or use finely chopped herbs or garlic, celery or onions
Table salt	• Herbs, spices, fruit juices or salt-free seasoning mixes or herb blends
White bread	• Whole-wheat bread
White rice	• Brown rice, wild rice, bulgur or pearl barley
Whole milk	• Reduced-fat or fat-free milk

