

Holiday Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November						
<p>17 Look through cookbooks together to find holiday dishes your child will eat. Add them to your menu or offer to bring one to the holiday meal at someone else's home.</p>	<p>18</p> 	<p>19 Call your holiday host for the guest list. Your child can make place cards and find in advance who will be there.</p>	<p>20</p> 	<p>21</p> 	<p>22 If light bothers your child, search online together for pictures of holiday displays. Talk about what your child would be OK with before you decorate.</p>	<p>23 Create a family holiday calendar with activities you'll do and people you'll visit. You can even attach photos.</p> <p>Use Velcro dots so you can move things if the schedule changes.</p>
<p>24 Look for comfortable clothes for holiday events.</p> <p>A tuxedo T-shirt or black leggings with a long, soft sweater can look dressy but still feel comfortable.</p>	<p>25 As you're adjusting plans for your child, touch base with other family members about what they'd enjoy for the holidays. Let them know about any changes to family traditions.</p>	<p>26</p> 	<p>27 Take time as a family to give thanks. Ask what everyone is most grateful for this year. Then gather their thoughts in a list, collage, or video.</p>	<p>28 Happy Thanksgiving! Celebrate being with family and friends, and let little things go.</p>	<p>29 Check out online shopping deals. Let your child help you pick out gifts so you can both avoid the holiday crowds.</p>	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December						
<p>1 Set up a “holiday-free” zone at home — a place without holiday decorations, food smells, and people, where your child can decompress.</p>	<p>2 Brainstorm foods your child will eat that also fit your holiday traditions. Jelly doughnuts instead of potato pancakes? Punch instead of eggnog?</p>	<p>3 Look into sensory-friendly festivities in your area, like movies and concerts.</p>	<p>4 Decide how your family will handle presents this year. Exchanging gifts is stressful for some kids. “Secret Santa” and “Yankee Swap” games may add to anxiety.</p>	<p>5</p> 	<p>6 Send a note to friends and family you’ll visit this season. Explain that you may arrive late or leave early, and share your child’s sensory needs when it comes to affection.</p>	<p>7 Make cookies together. Using a rolling pin helps kids practice motor skills. If your child doesn’t like the feel of cookie dough, you can decorate store-bought cookies.</p>
<p>8 Read books about the holidays your family celebrates and your family traditions.</p>	<p>9</p> 	<p>10 Line up babysitters for special events. Even if your child is coming with you, you may want someone on call in case your child needs to leave early.</p>	<p>11 Create a fun “survival kit” of calming items for your child. One idea is a winter-themed sensory bottle.</p>	<p>12 Role-play different social situations that might be tricky for your child.</p>	<p>13</p> 	<p>14 Take a day off from holiday planning. Let your child choose dinner and relax together.</p> 

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December						
15 Watch your child's favorite holiday movie together. Snuggling is a great way to provide sensory input for kids who like that.	16 Think of simple ways to reply to comments or questions about your child's sensory challenges.	17 Call your house of worship and ask which service times are likely to be less crowded.	18 	19 If you're traveling, pack a sensory travel kit.	20 Practice friendly holiday greetings that your child is comfortable with. Your child may prefer to nod and say "Happy Holidays!"	21 Come up with a creative "escape" signal your child can use to signal "I need a break from the festivities!"
22 Happy Hanukkah! If your child is sensitive to the smell of candles, put your menorah on a cookie sheet and carefully move it to another room after you light it.	23 Try to take a break from holiday activities to just enjoy being together.	24 	25 Merry Christmas! The prep work is done, so you can focus on enjoying the day.	26 Be flexible with your plans for today. If you celebrated Christmas, your child may need time to recover from yesterday's excitement.	27 Check in to see if your child wants to make plans to hang out with a friend for a low-key vacation day.	28 Visit some of the holiday sights or see that holiday blockbuster movie now that the crowds have died down.
29 This is a low-stress day to meet up with people you didn't see at the holidays. Keep it small and simple.	30 	31 If you have New Year's Eve plans, keep the day calm.	January 1 Happy New Year!	2-5 With the holiday season over, it's time to get back in shape for school. Return to a regular sleep schedule and talk about goals for the next half of the school year.		