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kern county Family magazine

FREE
December 2021



plus: 11 Ways to Make Magical Holiday Memories pg. 26

Find Rudy Reindeer and Win! pg. 6 • 2021 Holiday Fun & Games Book look inside!

Goodbye Paper Checks,

Hello WIC Card!



Families can now get the new California WIC Card at their local Women, Infants and Children (WIC) office. Flexible shopping and easier checkout at the grocery store with the WIC Card!

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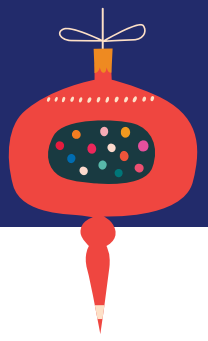
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MEMBERS OF



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Hello, Happy Mama

Local author and educator Allison Crotzer Kimmel on childhood daydreams coming true

Photo courtesy Allison Crotzer Kimmel



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Holiday Sweets:
Gluten-free Buttery Snickerdoodles



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2021 Holiday Fun & Games Book:
A holiday tradition from Kern County Family!



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11 Things:
Making Magical Holiday Memories

PLUS

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For Local Happenings, Events, and MORE Kern County fun, visit kerncountyfamily.com

dear reader



Vaun Thygerson,
Contributing Writer

We recently took a mid-week getaway to Mammoth with some friends, and as we were heading to play in the snow, my friend's three-year old daughter yelled, "This is more fun than Target." I gave her a fist bump and said, "My kind of gal!" Target really is the pinnacle of fun for a lot of people, including me, but I did agree with her, a visit to Mammoth does win in comparison!

When my kids were younger, I spent hours walking through Target pushing them in the cart. I have some really great memories spent shopping, but also some not-so-great times. One trip, my two boys tipped over a completely full cart onto the ground

with groceries spilling all over the floor. Sometimes they cried for toys that I didn't want to buy, but most of the time we negotiated a "treat" for their good behavior. During an especially tear-filled visit, an older lady told me I would miss these days when they got older. And, she was right, I really do miss pushing them in a cart, tantrums and all. Nowadays, we hardly ever even go to Target together. Usually I run in for an item or two or I send one of them in to grab it for me. Or, since the pandemic, I have heavily relied on curbside pick-up or an Instacart delivery.

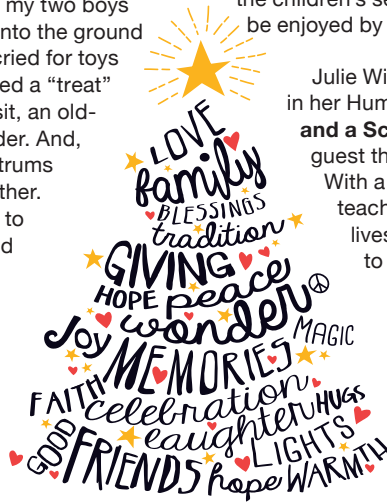
I also miss perusing the toy aisle with them as they excitedly talked about all their favorite characters and games, especially at Christmas time, when they would write their "wish" list. I loved buying the Legos, Barbies, Polly Pockets, Hot Wheels, and Marvel characters because I knew how much they would love opening them on Christmas morning. Shopping with teenagers is easier because they really only want money or electronics, but it for sure isn't as fun.

One family Christmas tradition that we still get to enjoy is singing around the piano. We are lucky that my husband and youngest son play the piano for us to enjoy the Holiday Carols in our home. Make sure to check out the annual **Holiday Fun & Games Book** from KCFM starting on page 12. This is the perfect place to find your favorite songs of the Season, complete with fun and games!

In this month's Hello, Happy (Creative) Mama, **Local Author Allison Crotzer Kimmel on childhood daydreams coming true**, Callie Collins interviews Allison Crotzer Kimmel on page 24. An English teacher at Centennial High School, Allison is also a well-known author with five books already published and more on the way. Although her books are found in the children's section of book sellers, she says the information inside can be enjoyed by all ages.

Julie Willis shares her unique perspective of teaching via Zoom in her Humor at Home article, **Working from Home with Kids (... and a Scorpion?)** on page 23. She writes about an unexpected guest that her daughter found while she was teaching her class. With a mix of fear and humor, Julie kept her calm and made it a teaching moment. We have all learned about changes in our lives, especially these past 18 months, including how to adapt to new situations.

It's hard to believe that Christmas is here again, but oh how much I love this time of year. I love everything about it – forest-scented candles, peppermint hot cocoa with lots of marshmallows, bright sparkly lights and decorations, and most of all, spending time with my family. Hopefully this Holiday Season, you will enjoy all things Target, and maybe even find something that is more fun than that.



The Spirit of
Christmas

Have a Happy, Happy Christmas!



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19th Annual Holiday Lights at Drive through!



Nov. 27, 2021 thru Jan. 1, 2022

5:30–8:30 p.m.

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What's Your Holiday Shopping Plan?

Santa's sleigh may experience some delays this holiday season. Shipping has been a significant source of concern as freight and labor issues affect online purchases. We asked our readers about their plans to avoid trouble. Here are some of their answers.

Q. This holiday season, shipping delays are anticipated, especially for toys. Will you be shopping locally, or do you have another out-of-the-box idea?



This year, I am only shopping locally, giving gifts cards and small shop items in hopes to help out our local business that struggled over Covid! We need to help our community survive!

- Mariyah Flores

We are keeping it very minimal this year, due to the rising costs of everything we've been experiencing all year long. I plan to shop locally as much as I can, to support other families who are experiencing the same hardships. Communities prosper when we stick together and support each other. - Sheila Lemburg



We shop locally for almost everything! I start buying early and hit a lot of the pop-up shops from the small businesses! We love it!

- Krista Padgett

To avoid crowds, I will continue to shop online being aware of shipping dates or curbside pick up.

- Dominica Dominguez



I plan to purchase everything locally. Besides gifts for children, I will be making gift baskets for all adults. I feel it's important to help our local businesses. - Wanda Bakich

The holidays are not about gifts for us. There is a reason for the season. Yes, it is nice to enjoy happiness in gift giving but time spent with our families is the most important.

- Jennifer Quick



I try to shop local as much as possible, always. Growing up in Bakersfield, I've met so many people who own their own business, especially those who do it so they are able to spend as much time with their children as possible.

- Noelle Barfield

Find more local news online!
kerncountyfamily.com

JJ's Legacy Honored as California Nonprofit of the Year

Local nonprofit, JJ's Legacy, was selected as a 2021 California Nonprofit of the Year and recently honored by Assemblymember Vince Fong. JJ's Legacy is one of one hundred nonprofits that will be honored by their state senators and assemblymembers for their tremendous contributions to the communities they serve.



photo courtesy of JJ's Legacy

"The pandemic and shelter-in-place orders of the past year and a half have put nonprofits – usually hidden in plain sight – in the spotlight," says Jan Masaoka, CEO of the California Association of Nonprofits (CalNonprofits). "California Nonprofit of the Year is an opportunity for our elected officials to celebrate the good work they see nonprofits doing in their districts, and for everyone to appreciate the collective impact of nonprofits in our communities."

The mission of JJ's Legacy is to honor Jeffrey Johns by educating Kern County residents on the value and importance of organ, eye and tissue donation, increasing the number of registered donors and providing compassionate support to donors and recipient families. **For more information, please visit www.jjlegacy.org.**

Frontier High School Student Awarded 2021 Beautiful Bakersfield Youth Award

Frontier High School Senior Taylor Dougherty recently accepted the 2021 Beautiful Bakersfield Youth Award with a heartwarming speech in front of 600-plus attendees at Mechanics Bank Arena, Theater and Convention Center. Taylor has had a speech impairment ever since she can remember, specifically a stutter. Although she was teased by her peers in junior high, she bravely delivered her class graduation speech to an audience of 4,000 people. Her lifelong speech disfluency struggle has made her a proud advocate for children and teens who stutter, encouraging them to use their voice for good and to feel heard. She also mentors children and teens who are new to speech therapy.

Taylor Dougherty



photo courtesy of Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce

"Since I was little I've always had a stutter, so winning this award was truly a blessing," Taylor says. "There is a quote I have always loved and looked up to which is a person who stutters has the unique opportunity to teach the world to listen."

Last year, Taylor gave more than 30 presentations called "Hear Me Out" to high school classes to educate people on how to interact with someone who stutters and dispel stuttering misconceptions. She plans to extend her presentations to include junior high and elementary schools.

In 2019, Taylor spoke at the American Institute for Stuttering Gala in New York City where she met Emily Blunt and other national advocates and raised \$300,000 for children who cannot afford speech therapy. She plans to attend college and major in Speech Sciences to become a Speech Pathologist to continue her passion of advocating for those who stutter.

Sponsored by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS), this award category exemplifies an individual or group under the age of 17 years old, that through personal involvement and endeavors, has answered the challenge of good citizenship. For a complete list of all winners, please visit www.bakochoamber.com.

Disease Spreading in Local Animal Shelters

The City of Bakersfield Animal Care Center (CBACC) is seeing an alarming rate of distemper and pneumonia spreading across the shelter and across the community, receiving positive distemper tests almost daily. Vaccines can combat the spread of this highly contagious and deadly disease.

Critters Without Litters offers a low-cost vaccine clinic open Mon. through Thurs., 10a.m. to 2p.m. Vaccines are \$18. The City of Bakersfield Animal Control holds monthly clinics. The next one will be held December 4 at Liberty Park at Brimhall Avenue and Jewetta Avenue. Vaccines cost \$10.



Find Rudy Reindeer

Count the number of Rudys you find throughout this issue, then submit your answer by **December 22** at bit.ly/findrudy_2021 for your chance to win a:

DeLonghi Nespresso Vertuo Coffee & Espresso Machine
 (value \$160)



This Rudy doesn't count!



Healthy Teeth, Healthy Child!

1. Brush your teeth twice a day for at least two minutes
2. Floss every day
3. Limit the number of sugary snacks you eat each day
4. Visit your dentist every six months or as recommended



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Merry Christmas! *Jesus is the Reason for the Season Luke 2:10-11*


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2021 Holiday Fun
&
Games Book

Our Gift to You from Kern County Family Magazine





The holidays are upon us, and this year seems especially magical here in Kern County.

We're making lists, shopping small and decking the halls, as we think about the importance of family, friends, and our community this season.

We are grateful for each and every member of our Kern County Family and we hope you will find peace and joy in your homes this season with your family and friends.

To help you find festive fun with family, we offer our annual holiday kids' activity book where you will find puzzles and games, because it's great to take some time to just have a little fun!

And what would the holidays be without music? We've included a few carols, so your family can lend some song to the season.

So gather your family, friends and neighbors—whether in-person or virtually—for some holiday merriment!

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Wonderful New Year—from our family to yours!

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Wintertime Word Search

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards

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COAT

DOWNHILL
DRIFT
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SLED
SNOW

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WARMTH
WINTER
WONDERLAND



*Wishing You a Joyful &
Prosperous New Year*

Ira and Carole Cohen

Deck the Halls

English lyrics written by Thomas Oliphant
Lyrics courtesy of Digital Music News

Deck the halls with boughs of holly,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

'Tis the season to be jolly,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Fill the meadcup, drain the barrel,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Troul the ancient Christmas carol,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
See the flowing bowl before us,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Strike the harp and join the chorus,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Follow me in merry measure,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

While I sing of beauty's treasure,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Fast away the old year passes,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Hail the new, ye lads and lasses!
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Laughing, quaffing all together,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Heedless of the wind and weather,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Find the Difference

There are at 8 differences between the Santa below and the Santas to the side.

Can you find them all?



HINTS: (clockwise from top left)
Puff ball, mail box, top of cane, letters, bow, eyebrows, belt, mustache



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Dear Post-Pandemic Santa

by Andrea Rose, KCFM contributing writer

(To the tune of Santa Baby)

Santa, baby,
Just bring my family up to the tree for me
It's been an awful rough year,
Santa baby,
So meet us here at our house tonight!

Santa baby,
This COVID thing has been a real drag,
So sad. We're ready for some holiday fun,
Santa baby,
So meet us here at our house tonight!

Think of all the fun we've missed
Think of all the lips we haven't kissed
This year, it would be so good,
If you check off our holiday list!

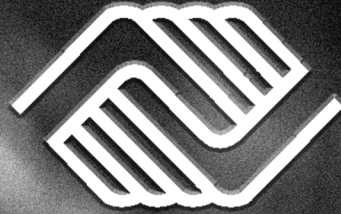
Santa darlin',
They say the shelves could really be bare
That's no fair!
I've got a long shopping list
Santa baby,
So meet us here at our house tonight!

Santa honey,
Forgot to mention one little task
The mask.
You've been all over the world,
Santa baby,
So meet us here at our house tonight!

Hurry over to our house tonight!



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



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Peace, and Love.*

*Merry Everything, from
Kern County Family Magazine*



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Jingle Bells

Lyrics written by James Lord Pierpont
Lyrics courtesy of Digital Music News

Dashing through the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go
Laughing all the way

Bells on bobtail ring
Making spirits bright
What fun it is to ride and sing
A sleighing song tonight! Oh,

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh. Hey!

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh.

A day or two ago
I thought I'd take a ride
And soon, Miss Fanny Bright
Was seated by my side,
The horse was lean and lank
Misfortune seemed his lot

He got into a drifted bank
And then we got upsoot.

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh. Hey!

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh.



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A golden silhouette of a nativity scene is positioned at the top of the page. On the left, three camels with riders are shown in profile, moving towards the right. On the right, a stable with a thatched roof contains several figures, including the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus. The entire scene is set against a dark background with numerous small, bright white stars.

Bakersfield Swim Academy



Wishes You a Very Merry Christmas!



I SPY



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from your friends at

19th Annual HolidayLights at CALM Drive through!



PRESENTED BY



Nov. 27, 2021 through Jan. 1, 2022 • 5:30–8:30 p.m.

CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY

The 19th annual HolidayLights at CALM again celebrates the season with a drive through experience! With holiday music broadcast on your FM dial, you will enjoy millions of lights from the comfort of your own vehicle. *Tickets for this family favorite sold out last year, so get your tickets now!*

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www.calmzoo.org for more info

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Working From Home With Kids (...and a Scorpion?)

I was making drop biscuits in my online baking class when my daughter yelled from across the house that she had found a scorpion.

Now, I have been teaching for 24 years, and I have dealt with every kind of interruption and disaster imaginable. Interruptions in the early years usually took place in the form of an announcement on the school's PA system. Disasters involved things like forgetting my lunch or having trouble getting the technology to work.

But a scorpion? I have never even had a night-before-the-first-day-of-school nightmare that could compare to a scorpion.

This would not be the first scorpion at my house, either. We once found a dead one by the back door the day after the exterminator had come. Which led me to believe that no matter how many lizards and spiders they get, they cannot be responsible for all the pests—and so, our extermi-

nator has some job security.

I am not allowed to leave my class unattended. But there was, apparently, a scorpion in my house. I wasn't sure whether to laugh or cry or end the meeting or scream or ignore my daughter or run outside or grab a frying pan. (Could I squish it with a frying pan? How fast do those things move? Are they faster than cockroaches? I could not believe I was thinking about this while my hands were wrist-deep in dough. Gross.)

"Don't worry, Mom! I will bring him and show you!" my daughter called from a bedroom. I was not sure I wanted her to do that. But I found myself explaining to my 9- and 10-year old Zoom students that there was a scorpion in my house. I tried to read their faces, but they were blank. I think they did not hear me or did not believe me or did not know what a scorpion is. Or they live in Arizona and are not afraid of scorpions.

I, however, was afraid. But I was also playing it cool with my students. I told them again, and I said it like it was the most interesting thing that had happened all week (and it was). But I was also keeping very calm. I was pretending to be a science teacher and to see this as a "learning opportunity" not to be overlooked. (In reality, I was

teaching a book club with cooking activities. I am not even a real cook or baker or chef or anything. I am not even the one who does the household cooking for my own family.)

As I was trying to act like this is the sort of thing that happens all the time, my daughter did indeed enter the kitchen with the scorpion. And it was, in fact, a scorpion.

Like his cousin from the patio, this guy was dead. Or dying at any rate. He was still moving, but not enough to actually be scary. Ashley had him in a plastic dish. I held him up to the camera for my students to see. No reaction. I mean, it's not like I was going to let the guy get into the dough. But still, there was a half-alive scorpion in my kitchen, and I was preparing food. It was the kind of thing I expected kids to go crazy about.

I shoed my daughter out of the kitchen and finished class. And I figure I will have no more nightmares about teaching because, after all, how much worse could it be than that?



creative
Hello, Happy^Mama:
Local Author **Allison Crotzer Kimmel**
on childhood daydreams coming true.



photo courtesy of Kern Literacy Council

Allison Crotzer Kimmel teaches by day and writes by night. She may be best known locally as an English teacher at Bakersfield's Centennial High School, but her work as an author is recognized nationwide. With five books already published, her titles are available at local bookstores and carried by national retailers.

Allison's most recent titles are relatively new, with two history-centered works published in just over two years.

"The Eternal Soldier: The True Story of How a Dog Became a Civil War Hero" introduces Sallie the bull terrier best known for accompanying wounded infantrymen at the Battle of Gettysburg. *"Unbeatable Betty: Betty Robinson, the First Female Olympic Track & Field Gold Medalist"* recounts the incredible life of its athletic heroine before, during and after the 1936 Olympics.

Although Allison's titles are most often found in the children's section, her material transcends its assumed audience. She agrees with "Jeopardy" star James Holzhauer, who publicly credited children's books as an effective way to absorb key information on a vast number of topics.

"Picture books are not just for little kids," Allison said with certainty when asked to clear up a common misconception. "They are a great way

to give an overview of a topic in simple terms as a condensed version for people of all ages to understand a slice of history."

Allison is always on the lookout for figures whose stories are amazing but for whatever reason, got left out of the broader narrative.

Originally from the tiny town of Clearfield, Pennsylvania, Allison's creativity bloomed from a young age. Always singing, drawing, reading, making up poems and stories, adults seemed to know she would do something creative long before Allison did.

"I didn't understand I would be a writer, but it sat in my heart and in my mind," she explained.

Allison majored in English at Bucknell University, explored her love of British literature abroad at Oxford, and found a passion for working with students during student teaching.

The idea that creative people live in California was something she simply believed, and that ultimately spurred her to move across the country. A job fair for teachers yielded two possibilities, one of which was Kern High School District, with an open position at Highland High School.

Nearly 20 years later, three dogs and two children later, she and husband Eric continue to enjoy family life with Aidan, 13, and Anneliese, 11. Allison earned a Master in Professional Writing (MPW) from the University of Southern California (USC).

"I was still thinking about children's books that profoundly impacted my life," she said.

Her best advice to potential writers of any age is to find a writing partner who shares similar views, challenges and sensibilities to exchange work with on a regular basis.

"Also, keep reading. The more you read, the better writer you become," she offered. "Read what you want to write, but find your own voice in that genre. Don't limit yourself to just that genre, though. Read across genres and you'll take what you need from them."

Writing can feel like a lonely process. The first time Allison saw her newly published book in the hands of a child who was not her own was at Russo's last year. The sight almost made her choke up, she recalled, as the absence of author visits and other events (due to limited gathering opportunities), has an effect on both writers and readers.

"The message we have for children is 'We have missed you and we are ready to see you'," said Allison. Her plans for 2022 include submitting a manuscript about her experiences as a teacher during the pandemic.

Follow her progress and find out more at <https://www.allisoncrotzerkimmel.com/>.

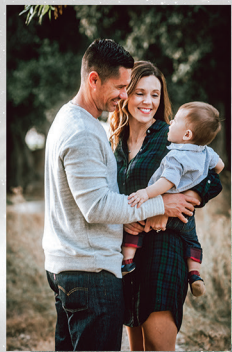
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11 Ways to Make Magical Christmas Memories

December can feel like a rushed month for families. Making Christmas magical doesn't have to be complicated. Instead of adding more to your holiday to-do list, consider these intentionally simple ways to make the season special.

1. Count down the days: Whether you use an advent calendar or create a paper chain, looking forward to something is part of the season's joy. Make it a nightly ritual leading up to the big day.

2. Shop local: Locally-made, handcrafted items can add holiday joy. Supporting a small retailer in Kern County can make your family's Christmas merry but also help make another family's future bright. Our business community thrives when we buy artisan bakery goods, order from familiar florists, and choose California-made toys. Shopping local can also be a good solution to anticipated shipping delays.

3. Change out the usual bedtime stories for holiday books: Favorites like "Merry Christmas, Mom and Dad" by Mercer Mayer, "If You Take a Mouse to the Movies" by Laura Joffe Numeroff and illustrated renditions of classics like "The Nutcracker" or "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" add verse and vivid narrative to what children will remember sharing with you.

4. Give electronic peace a chance: Choose to spend a whole day without distraction from phones, tablets, or other devices. Reconnect through focused time together.

5. Host a movie night: Slow down from the hustle and bustle by hosting a night in with seasonal popcorn, hot chocolate, and a favorite film. Check out what you can stream. You might be surprised at the surprising variety of both old and new movies available for the whole family.

6. Decorate together: It can be tempting to coordinate holiday decorating for efficiency and the sake of everything matching. Let children help where they can. Handle what is fragile and precious, but let them participate where possible. They'll remember placing the star on top of the tree and so will you.



7. Let children's art shine: Give art from school a prominent place. Frame it. Display it. And finally, store it at the end of the season. If it's, shall we say, less than Pinterest-worthy, you'll laugh at finding or remembering the item years later.

8. Choose a wreath or centerpiece: If you usually add to the holidays with fresh greenery, choose garlands, a balsam wreath, or table decor together. If buying isn't in your plans this year, tell your child the story of the current items you own.

9. Break out the bakeware: Are your children always asking to cook with you, but there just isn't time? Schedule an afternoon of baking. Even if they're just from slice and bake dough, make cookies together. Try puppy chow. If you're feeling adventurous, go for a new recipe from our website.

10. Just add Christmas socks: Family pajamas are fun but pricey. If they're out of the budget, pick up dollar store Christmas socks instead for a cozy comfort.

11. Give to others: Find a way to support a cause you care about, together. Choose a family from a local angel tree, donate food, or get involved with another local charitable cause. Better yet, sign up to volunteer the same Saturday of the month throughout the year. Many families and work teams sign up for holiday participation, but volunteers may be scarce in other months.

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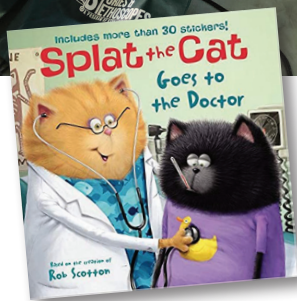
The Gift of Reading

The holiday season is here and that means gifts. A great gift idea for young children are fun and informative books. Currently only half of the children under five years old in the United States are read to on a daily basis. Reading to young children is proven to improve cognitive skills and help along the process of cognitive development. When you begin reading aloud to your child, it essentially provides them with background knowledge on their young world, which helps them make sense of what they see, hear, and read.

The Stories & Stethoscopes program recently held a read-aloud session with a special guest reader – Dr. Luis Mariscal, a radiation oncologist, Medical Director for AIS Cancer Center at Adventist Health Bakersfield and

also Chief of Staff of Adventist Health Bakersfield. He took time from his busy schedule to read a variety of books from the Stories & Stethoscopes program to our five-year old friend, Naimah Arriaza.

During the 30-minute story time, Dr. Mariscal introduced Naimah to a variety of fun topics including: healthy eating, the importance of hand washing, and of course, what to expect from a trip to the doctor. After the story time was finished, Dr. Mariscal commented that “it was my pleasure to be a part of this program.”



Before heading out to purchase gifts this season, check out the tips for safe toy ideas from Adventist Health in the Stories & Stethoscopes Healthy Tips section.

Stories & Stethoscopes focuses on teaching children the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, from healthy eating to physical wellness and is a great way to inspire, encourage and advance literacy in pre-K through elementary age children. Sponsored by a generous donation from Adventist Health Medical Staff Kern County, the program takes place throughout Kern County.

Look for additional read-aloud story time sessions from other Adventist Health medical team members in 2022.

Happiest of Holidays to all!

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Stories & Stethoscopes HEALTHY TIPS

If a toy is on your holiday shopping list, you're not alone. Toys are fun—and traditional—holiday gifts for kids of all ages. The ideal toy for a child is one that brings happiness. And that means the perfect plaything should also be safe.

Before you settle on a plaything, ask yourself: Is it age-appropriate? Read the toy's warning label. Toys above a child's age range may pose a safety risk.

Are there choking hazards? Toys with small parts can be dangerous for babies, toddlers and curious older kids who put toys in their mouths. If these kids are on your gift list, skip marbles, small pieces and toys with removable parts.

If it's a stuffed toy, is it well-made? Be sure all parts (such as eyes) are on tight. Skip toys stuffed with small, bean-like pellets, which babies and tots might choke on. Do you see any loose strings or ribbons? Take them off.

Does the label say "non-toxic"? Otherwise, toys might contain materials that could cause poisoning.

Does it make loud noises? Noisy toys can harm hearing. If you can, listen to a toy before you buy it. If it's too loud for you, it's too loud for kids.

Keeping this checklist in mind, here are great toy ideas for:

BABIES

- Soft, washable stuffed animals; rattles larger than a baby's mouth; unbreakable mirrors; stacking rings; and squeeze toys, especially ones that make gentle noises.
- Push-pull toys, puzzles with only a few pieces, sturdy building blocks, shape sorters and simple musical instruments (such as tambourines).

PRESCHOOLERS AND GRADE SCHOOLERS

- Non-toxic art supplies and craft kits, bikes and other riding toys with helmets, construction toys, board games, and role-play toys (such as doctor's kits).

TEENS

- Chemistry sets, model and magic kits, strategy games (such as chess), three-dimensional puzzles and sports equipment with protective gear.
- Books. Books are always a great gift idea no matter the season!



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