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## **Ampifying Life**

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### **Make the Holidays Special**

This time of the year can be challenging as everyone gears up for the holidays. Trying to balance the meaning of Christmas for your family with the commercial side of Christmas. Parents are looking ahead to time that kids will be home from school. Sometimes in the race of time during the holidays it is important to slow down and think about activities you want to accomplish with family or friends. A few ideas to add something special to your holidays could include some of the following.

**Bake something.** This can be an individual event as a stress reliever, a family event for fun, or taking the time to help a kid learn to bake. You might try baking a family favorite, passing on a time honored recipe, or trying something new.

**Enjoy the magic of the holidays.** This might include taking a drive to explore the lights and decorations. Determine what represents the magic of the holidays for your family and take time to enjoy it.

**Make something.** There are many holiday related crafts that are simple for kids to do this time of the year. Take the time to document the size of their feet or hands, painting skills or crafting abilities. They will change each and every year and this creates something to see the child's changes through the years.

**Help someone in need.** Take the time to focus on lending a helping hand. It might be helping a friend, helping an elderly person with yard or housework, donating to an angel tree, or helping with a community holiday meal.

**Learn holiday songs.** Singing helps to lift spirits. Sing all of the holiday songs you are familiar with. Maybe try to learn a new song. It's the holiday gift that keeps on giving.

**Take time to write what the holidays mean to you.** Have kids write each year what the holidays mean to them. It is a great way to help teach kids family values, practice writing and expressing themselves. Kids, depending on ages, can help address Christmas cards and share in family traditions.

Watch a holiday movie. Maybe it's a new release at the theatre or maybe a family favorite that you watch each year at home. Take the time to sit down together as a family or with friends to watch a Christmas movie.

Each of these can be personalized to fit each family's lifestyle, values and beliefs. Take time to make it a special time of the year.

For more information feel free to contact me, Shandi Andres, at the Flint Hills District Extension Office in Council Grove, 620-767-5136 or [sdandres@ksu.edu](mailto:sdandres@ksu.edu).