

# South Orange and Maplewood Schools



December Parent Training Series

# HOW TO HANDLE THE HOLIDAY BREAK



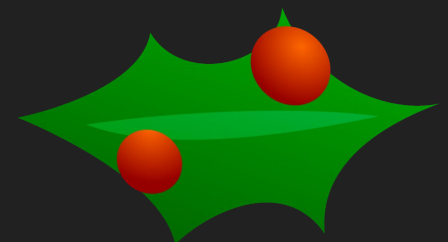
Longer breaks from school can be difficult for our students.

Why?

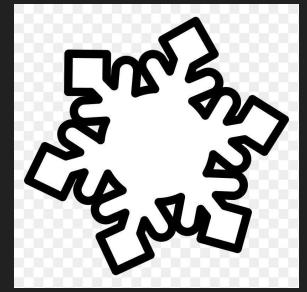
- There is a change in routine
- There is more activity happening at home (i.e., decorations, visitors, traveling)
- There is less structure

# THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Talk about the changes
  - Before the change happens talk about what is going to happen.
  - Set expectations - What do you expect from your child? When can they open presents?
    - You can use visuals to help with this (i.e., calendars, pictures, schedules, symbols)



## THINGS YOU CAN DO



- Maintain a routine
  - Having a schedule that is similar each day can be helpful and ease the anxiety of the uncertain
  - Using a visual schedule will not only provide structure for the day but can also build in breaks for you when your cooking, cleaning, talking with family your child can be doing something more independently at different times during the day.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Be mindful of sensory overload
  - Try to limit or avoid things that can be over stimulating to your child (i.e., lights, sounds, textures)





## THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Be mindful when decorating
  - Have your child be a part of the decorating process
  - Let them make choices in decorations
  - Limit the number of decorations with flashing lights or sounds
    - The change in the look of the house can be a lot for some of our kids - think about how your anxiety gets stronger when you think about all the things you have to do to get ready for the holidays - same concept

# THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Have an exit plan if you go out or to family's house
  - Have a quiet place for your child to go to if they are overwhelmed.
  - Make sure you are heading home at a reasonable hour
  - Keep a schedule - have an idea of how long you will be somewhere so that you can build that into your child's schedule.

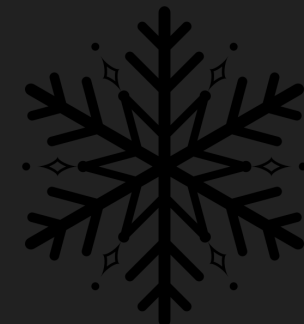


# THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Plan for breaks
  - Have a plan if your child needs breaks during holiday activities
    - Coloring activities
    - Sensory activities
    - Books
    - Any item or activity that will be calming, and give your child a break from the social interactions that occur
      - remember we all need time to ourselves to unwind, and decompress







# THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Provide positive reinforcement
  - During the holidays there are new foods, new people, and new experiences
  - Use those positive words when they try something new, or do something that was hard for them.
  - Praise should be behavior specific

Trying new foods: You can start with just tolerating something new near them, or on their plate, then you can try having them touch it, tap it to their lips, touch their tongue, take a small bite

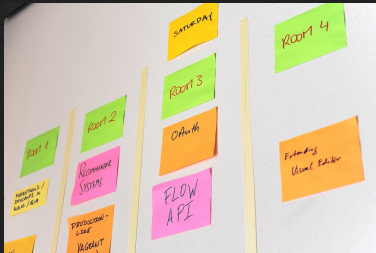
With each new thing that they do make sure that you are providing that positive praise (i.e., Way to go! I love how you tried the apple pie)

# Things to try out in the community

- Arc Winter Camp
- We Rock the Spectrum
- Liberty Science Center
- Adventure Aquarium Sensory Sundays
- Sen-Sational craft December 29 run by Moms Managing Behaviors
- LifeTown (Livingston)
  - LifeTown Shoppe experience- December 20th 10:00-12:00
  - Family Fun- December 22 and December 29 10:00-12:00

# MATERIALS THAT MAY HELP

- Visual schedules



- Social stories



## MATERIALS THAT MAY HELP

- Sensory Toys
- Timers
- Packing your child's preferred items and snacks when going out in the community/to visit friends and family.

# Questions?

Are there any topics we did not cover?

Are there any issues you foresee running into over winter break that we did not address?

Do you need more information on anything that we covered tonight?

Scan here to access this powerpoint for future reference



[Cheat Sheet](#)



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