


The WHALE Study  
Family Newsletter  
December | 11<sup>th</sup> | 2020

## Holiday Edition Newsletter

A circular inset image showing a woman with curly hair sitting and holding a young child. They are both looking at something in the child's hands. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting with flowers.

The winter holiday season is upon us. Every year there is pressure to buy things, decorate, cook, and spend time with loved ones -- but this year also brings unique challenges related to visiting family and even shopping. Here are some over-simplified tips for parents and caregivers this holiday season regardless of what or if you celebrate. We recognize these strategies may not apply to everyone, but recommend using them as inspiration to meet your needs:

**Let perfectionism go.** Is any of your holiday stress self-induced? That is, in addition to the regular responsibilities of taking care of your family and finances, are there any things you are working too hard to complete? When you can, say “no” to things that don’t serve you. Lowering expectations and trimming the “to-do” list for ourselves can remove some of the pressure.

**Treat yourself!** You deserve joy this season, too. This can be adding an item to the shopping list for yourself. If finances are limited, consider something small like a to-go coffee or putting on a movie for the kids so you can take an adult moment alone. Prioritize opportunities to make healthy choices.

**Spend only what you have** whether that’s time or money. Holidays in a pandemic don’t need to look like previous years. Even young children understand things are different. **Get creative with gifts** if you have the brain space. Kids can make crafts for loved ones.

**Reach out for support** if you have loved ones willing to help. This can mean asking others for help completing tasks, or emotional support. Even if others can’t assist you, having someone to validate your struggles or make suggestions can be useful. Ask for what you need and **openly accept help**. Community resources also exist for this purpose! If you could benefit from a local food bank or toy drive for your family, we’ve included a few resources to help get you started. (If you have more than enough and can provide for others, we also encourage you to connect with these community resources.)

Check out the page below for **virtual school** and **community resources!**



Please reach out if you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding The WHALE Study or the COVID-19 situation. Staff can be reached by call, text, or email: [whalestudy@unc.edu](mailto:whalestudy@unc.edu) | 919-914-0588  
Find us on Twitter: [@circlab\\_unc](https://twitter.com/circlab_unc), Instagram: [circlab\\_unc](https://www.instagram.com/circlab_unc), and [Facebook!](https://www.facebook.com/circlab_unc)

## BACK TO SCHOOL AND HOLIDAY RESOURCES

- General Back to School Tips & Resources:
  - Click [here](#) for Parenting Guide to meeting the challenge during COVID-19
  - Click [here](#) and [here](#) for recommendations from CDC for both in-person and virtual school
  - Click [here](#) and [here](#) for tips from the APA on motivating children
  - Click [here](#) for tips from the APA on fostering self-regulation and creativity
  - Click [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) for tips from Healthy Children
  - Click [here](#) for tips from Read Brightly on getting kids into the learning mindset
- Holiday Assistance:
  - [Salvation Army](#)
  - Click [here](#) for low cost toy ideas
  - [Freecycle](#)
  - [Buy Nothing Project](#)

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES (CLICK BLUE LINKS)

### HOUSING

- [Durham Continuum of Care \(CoC\)](#)
- Eviction Information
  - 216-965-5095
- [Durham Rescue Mission](#)
  - 919-688-9641
- [Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness](#)
- [Urban Ministries of Durham](#)
- [Durham County Social Services](#)
- [Orange County Social Services](#)
- [Wake County Social Services](#)

### FOOD & GROCERIES

- [Wake County Public Schools Free Meals](#)
- [Durham County Public Schools Free Meals](#)
- [Orange County Food Resources](#)
- [Chapel Hill/Carrboro Schools](#)
- [TABLE](#)
- [Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina](#)
- [Wake County Food Resources](#)
- [No Kid Hungry NC](#) - Text FOODNC or COMIDA to 877-877 to receive information about 3 drive-thru or pickup sites with meals for kids closest to you

### HEALTH & SAFETY

- [Compass Center for Women and Families](#)
  - 919-929-7122
- [Durham Crisis Response Center](#)
  - 919-403-9425
- [InterAct Family Safety and Empowerment Center](#)
  - 919-828-7501
- [Orange County Rape Crisis Center](#)
  - 866-935-4783 (call) , 919-504-5211 (text)
- [Freedom House](#)
  - 919-967-8844 (Crisis Unit, Chapel Hill)
  - 1-877-967-8844 (Mobile Service)
- Suicide prevention lifeline: 1-800-272-TALK
- Hope4NC Helpline: 1-855-587-3463

### CHILDCARE

- [NC Hotline for Critical Workers Seeking Child Care Options](#)
- [Covid Childcare Co-op Creator](#)
- [Covid Urgent Childcare](#)
- [Child Care Services Association](#)

### LEARNING

- [Scholastics Learn at Home](#)
- [Khan Academy](#)
- [PBS Kids](#)
- [CDC Tips for Talking with Children about COVID-19](#)