

CREATIVE DAY SCHOOL

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Just Right Gift Giving without Going Overboard

Parents wonder if they can give their kids a holiday to remember without breaking the bank. Is it overindulgent or will they discard the expensive toy hours later, in favor of playing with the box it came in? Even if they stretch their budget, will their kids appreciate it?

Buy gifts for your kid, not what is popular this season.

Consider your kid's unique interests and developmental stage when buying gifts. Creative gifts such as a superhero costume or a play kitchen will foster creativity and develop learning skills.

Giving kids meaningful gifts without going overboard can be a challenge, acknowledges Elise Judkins, LCSW, a social worker with Menninger's Comprehensive Psychiatric Assessment Service and a mother of two young children. Here are her tips for giving gifts that strike the right balance:

Make smart decisions when picking technology gifts

Purchase technology that incorporates learning skills. Don't get caught up in needing to be the first to get a first-generation product. Set boundaries in the use of technology and encourage play dates where the children are playing outside instead of on devices with each other.

Emphasize experience

Fun family experiences include driving around and looking at holiday lights, attending cookie exchanges or watching holiday parades. Parents can also give experiences as gifts, such as a family membership to a zoo or museum, or give an item the entire family can use, such as a ping-pong table for the playroom or basketball hoop for the driveway.

Hand down an heirloom

Judkins says families should also consider shopping their own homes, yard sales or thrift stores to find one-of-a-kind items that don't cost a mint. When customized, these items can become valued family heirlooms, passed down through generations.

Give back to give perspective

Giving to charity helps widen a child's perspective — whether by donating money to hungry children overseas or selecting and wrapping a toy for an underprivileged child closer to home. "Thinking about other people who may not have as much helps kids develop gratitude and makes them want to spread the holiday spirit to others."

Don't overdo it

Finally, don't be tempted to equate buying gifts for your children with buying love. Don't make up for their perceived inadequacies as a parent. In the case of divorce, too many gifts from one parent can be confusing, and they can send mixed messages to children. Time and memories are much better gifts.

"I think meaningful time with parents is what kids want," Judkins says. "Even though kids may not be able to articulate that, that's what they are going to remember at the end of the day. That is what lasts."

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Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning is an excellent method of engaging children, but it needs originality and advance thought and planning from parents or teachers. One place that is great for getting kids to develop more physical confidence is the beach, where they can jump, play ball games, dig, surf, race, and swim. It is a good idea to set physical challenges that your kids may initially balk at and to encourage them to keep trying until they succeed.

Especially beautiful are places that are near water, offering kids lots of chances to write poetry, sketch, or paint. Woodlands and forests are also excellent places for firing-up children's imaginations, particularly at dusk, as well as for building tasks and teaching more practical skills such as tying knots, whittling sticks, and how to safely use a knife. Parks, gardens, and other open spaces are particularly ideal spots for teaching kids how to navigate, using basic or picture-based maps for younger children, and more sophisticated maps and compasses for older kids.

Like our CDS Facebook page and receive parenting tips and see pictures of our children in fun activities!

Take A Look At What We Are Doing...

This month's theme is: "The Holiday Season"

- **Infants:** During the month of December, we will be nurturing the young infants' imagination and celebrating the holidays. We will be making Reindeer Crunch snack and creating the Christmas Tree Thumbprint art. We will be doing activities that will build the infants' developmental skills, social and emotional skills, and building their language.
- **Toddlers:** This month in the toddler classroom, we will focus on the Holiday Season. We will learn about how other cultures use this season to celebrate and what that involves. We will have fun games and activities, songs, and fingerplays, and books and pictures. It will involve how we celebrate Christmas and how other people and cultures celebrate this time of year. We will have a fun, exciting month focused on the holiday season as well as learning about different cultures and the way they celebrate.
- **Twos:** We will be talking about the holidays and what they mean to us. We will talk about spending time with our families during the holidays. We will discuss the healthy foods we can eat during the holidays. We will focus on the colors, Red, Yellow, and Green. We will continue to work on recognizing our numbers, color, and shapes. We will continue working on the alphabets, sorting, and comparing different items.
- **Threes:** This month, we will be discussing Christmas celebrations! The children are so excited! We will be talking about Christmas celebrations in different countries. We will also be discussing how different cultures celebrate Christmas, how some cultures do not celebrate Christmas by giving gifts, but in other ways. We will learn about these differences in our classroom centers. We are also asking parents to bring in any sale ads with toys and children's clothes on it. The children will be making Santa wish lists.
- **Fours:** 'Tis the season to be jolly. It is the holidays and we will be discussing Christmas traditions in different cultures and countries. We will be making wreaths using handprints, decorating a snowman, and making a Santa's wish list. We will also be discussing all the wonderful snack and foods we eat during this festive season. We will be wishing for snow this winter!
- **After-schoolers:** We will be discussing the Holiday Season. We will talk about the different cultures and how they celebrate Christmas and other holidays. We will be making decorations for home and school. The children will make a wish list of the things they want for Christmas. We will be having a holiday party as well. Merry Christmas and Happy New Years!



Happy Birthday!

Dec 1 Jourdan

Dec 3 Jadavion

Dec 6 Kylan

Dec 7 Ayla

Dec 11 Darius Jaka'i

Dec 12 Jeremiah

Dec 12 Paisley Dec 19 Tashun

Dec 14 Angelina Dec 26 Jashun



Center News:

We would like to welcome Rasheda, Stewart and Skylyn to our Creative Day School family!

Thank you, Jillian Thomas, for referring Rasheda and her children to CDS.
Our children will be making ornaments for our Christmas Tree.



Creative Day School will be closed Monday and Tuesday, December 24th & 25th and Tuesday, January 1st. Have a safe and Happy Holidays!