



When children have big feelings over the holidays...

It does not mean...

They are a bad child

You are a bad parent

**They are trying to ruin your
fun**

You need to fix their feelings

**They are trying to
embarrass you**

**You need to jump to
their demands**

**They are defiant and
refuse to listen**

They hate you

It may mean...

They need a break

They are overwhelmed

**They need a connection
with you**

**They need you to be
their calm**

**They are seeking a
quiet, calm space**

**They are figuring out
how to navigate
their big feelings**

**They are tired, hungry
or bored**



Plan for downtime and recovery

There can be a lot of expectation around Christmas time to visit family and friends, or have them visit you. Consider when your child may need time to recharge. This may mean a few hours break from social visits or visitors, or maybe a full day.

You could:



Prepare your child with visual cues and 'what ifs'

A visual timetable can be useful for laying out the day - it can help your child see:



Include 'what ifs', such as:

- If it is too loud, I can use my ear defenders
- If I don't want to play the games, I can listen to music
- If it is too hot, I can go outside
- If I need some quiet time, I can sit in my room

Grounding



Things you can see



Things you can hear



Things you can feel



Things you can smell



Thing you can taste



Snowball Squeeze

Imagine you have 2 icy snowballs in the palm of your hands. Squeeze them until they melt by clenching your fists 3-2-1. Now relax your hands. Notice how your body feels after the release. Repeat as many times as you like until you feel calm.

Hot Chocolate Breathing



Pretend you are holding a warm mug of hot chocolate. Take in a slow, deep breath through your nose to smell the delicious hot chocolate. Then breathe out slowly, through your mouth, to cool it down. Repeat this 5-10 times. Deep breathing is a great tool to calm your mind and body.

Winter Walk

Go for a walk and see if you can spot:



A robin



A wreath



An outdoor
candycane



A reindeer



A holly
bush



Fairy
lights



A
beautifully
decorated
tree



Snowflakes



Santa