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## SHARE THE JOY

A couple of ideas to spread around the joy of the holiday season this year.

I plan to write a note to all those people who have helped me or gone out of their way to be nice to me in the past year. No gift, no fancy holiday card. Just a heartfelt message that says I noticed the kindness and I appreciated it. I got the idea from an old friend who, on HIS birthday every year, wrote to an author whose words had special meaning for him during the year. All he did was say why the book or article meant so much to him and thank the author for writing it.

Let me suggest that parents pick out a children's charity to support this year. I bet you can set aside just 5% of what you would spend on your own kids to buy a toy for a needy child. This could make another kid happy without depriving thereby making another child happy without depriving your own one bit. Be sure your children are in on this deal. Explain that there are kids whose families cannot celebrate the holidays the way you do because they don't have the money. Let them pick out the toy or book. Take them along when you deliver it.

How about having your children make a special greeting card for an elderly person, perhaps living alone or in a nursing home?

How about baking extra cookies and dropping a plate off at a nursing home or at the house of a shut-in neighbor? I'm sure there are other great ideas out there for spreading the joy. If you want to share your own, drop me a note at [info@parentkidsright.com](mailto:info@parentkidsright.com) and I'll start keeping a list of creative ideas for holiday sharing.

Happy Holidays!

Happy Parenting,  
Marilyn Heins, M.D.