

2001

# How Can I Help My Children With The After Holidays Letdown?

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## Recommended Citation

Lee, Tom, "How Can I Help My Children With The After Holidays Letdown?" (2001). *All Archived Publications*. Paper 256.  
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**A weekly question/answer column**

**How Can I Help My Children With The  
After Holidays Letdown?**

*Tom Lee\* answers:*

When the holidays are over, we often feel letdown despite our best intentions not to overdo shopping, socializing, and spending. While adults may feel the need to rest and recuperate, children may need increased time and attention.

- Children will be tired, overstimulated, and dealing with mixed feelings. These mixed feelings can stem from not getting the present they wanted or feeling like a sibling got more than they did. Children may have built up expectations for Christmas that no reality could meet.
- Many children will be dealing with spending time in two households of divorced parents — which can be fun but also sad when they leave that parent to return to their usual residence. They may also get there and feel like that they missed out on the fun activities there.
- Parents can help children by reestablishing a routine. Children thrive on structure and predictability. Plan some structured activities for some of your Christmas vacation days. Reestablish bedtime routines and some daily tasks.
- Nothing spells love to a child like “TIME....” Plan some one-on-one time during the holidays with each child if possible in addition to whole family activities.
- You might also have the children help you plan a special family activity for January or February, so that you will all have something to look forward to.

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\* Tom Lee is Utah State University Extension Family and Human Development Specialist