

**Family  
Centered Early  
Supports &  
Services  
Monthly  
Newsletter for  
Families**



# HELLO DECEMBER

## Saving the best for last

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### Christmas toys for young children!

In addition to being safe, good toys for young children need to match their stages of development and emerging abilities. As you read the lists of suggested toys for children of different ages contained in this newsletter, keep in mind that each child develops at an individual pace. Items on one list—as long as they are safe—can be good choices for children who are younger and older than the suggested age range.

For this month's newsletter, we have included activities you can do with your children, ways to get holiday assistance if you need it, our Mindful Moments, and, of course, our calendar of events for December!

We've even included a toy list that includes developmentally appropriate toys for children, from birth to the age of 3. Thank you to Chelsy Moody and Christina Martlan, two occupational therapy grad students from the University of New Hampshire, for putting together the extensive toy shopping guide!

# Get Ready for Winter

Share some hot cocoa and a board book with your child this December. You can find some great books at **Pre - K Pages**



## Snowball

*Tune: Are You Sleeping?*

Make a snowball, make a snowball.  
(pretend to make a snowball)

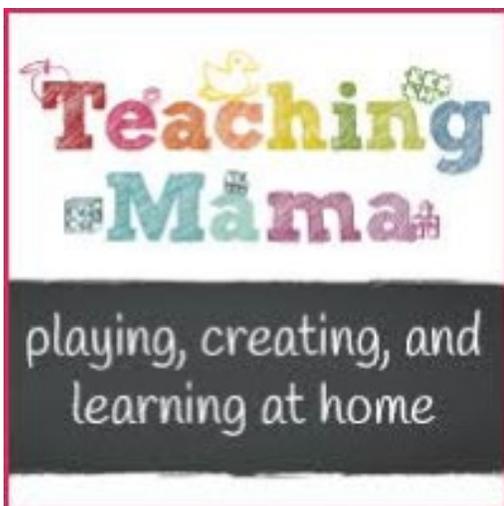
Throw it now, throw it now.  
(use throwing motion)

Make a snowball, make a snowball.  
(pretend to make a snowball)

Throw it now, throw it now.  
(use throwing motion)



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Find more winter songs to sing with your toddler at [Teaching Mama](http://TeachingMama.org)

# HOLIDAY TOY LIST

## Ideas for Christmas Shopping

Chelsy Moody & Christina Marland | UNH

### Developmental toys from 0-1 year

**Newborns** - One of the first developmental milestones for a newborn is stretching out of the fetal position. As infants become more comfortable laying on their back, they transition into tummy time to promote core muscles, arm strength and head control.

**Activity Mats** - Many play mats come with many toys to hang overhead. To a new baby, these toys can be very overstimulating. Begin using the mat without toys as a place for tummy time.

**Music playing devices** - Baby's hearing is one of the earliest senses to mature, making music both have both a calming and stimulating effect. Try playing soothing songs or singing to your baby.

**1 Month** - At this stage, babies begin to use their arms and hands more and more. You will notice your child looking around more and beginning to be more aware of his/her surroundings. As you continue to practice tummy time, your baby will begin to hold his/her head up for brief periods of bobbing and turning.

**Activity Mats with toys** - introducing toys to your activity mat will spark your babies curiosity and keep him/her engaged while lying on the floor. Try to position toys away from the center of the activity gym (not just overhead) to encourage the baby to turn his/her head and begin reaching toward the toys.

**Mobiles** - As babies eyesight begins to develop, they will enjoy watching mobiles overhead in their crib or play area. Infants do not see in color until 3 months of age, look for mobiles with high contrast, black and white decorations to engage your child's attention.

**2-3 Months** - As your baby continues tummy time, you will notice that he/she begins to hold his/her head higher and higher. By the end of month 3, your baby may begin to raise his/her shoulders and upper chest. At this age, babies begin to intentionally reach and

grasp for toys.

**Linkable plastic rings and lightweight crinkle toys** - these toys help your baby practice grasping. They will also become teething toys in a few months when your babies first teeth start to come in.

**Unbreakable mirror** - a mirror fastened securely to the inside of a crib allows your baby to look at his or her face, which can become fascinating to babies as they are beginning to see more and more.

**4 - 5 months** - At this point, babies are working to coordinate their senses (sight and touch) with their motor skills (rolling and grasping). Babies will begin to press up during tummy time, first through their forearms and then through straight arms. Babies are beginning to learn cause and effect, and may enjoy shaking rattles (to hear the noise) and will begin bringing toys to their mouth.

**Teething toys** - although teething doesn't typically start until 6 months, gum pain typically starts sooner. Introducing teething toys can help through this stage.

**Rattles** - babies will begin to play more with their hands and will enjoy using the rattle to hear the noises they make.

**Soft toys that make sounds** - simple lightweight objects - such as soft blocks or balls - are great for babies discovering cause and effect.

**6-7 months** - Babies are working to sit independently. Encourage your child to work on strengthening his/her trunk by having baby sit (with support) and put toys on the floor in front of him/her to reach for. Babies typically begin sitting using their hands in front of them for extra support. As their core muscles strengthen, they will be able to sit without relying on their hands, allowing them to play in a seated position.

**Books** - Board books are the perfect size for little hands, and they are indestructible.

Stack cups - These toys will help your baby practice hand eye coordination and object permanence, the concept that items continue to exist even when you cannot see them. Try hiding smaller items under the cups and making a game of lifting the cups up to reveal the hidden item.

Easy - to - hold balls or Oballs - hollow balls with holes will be easy to hold and allows your baby to continue to refine his/her grasp.

**9-10 months** - Babies are beginning to crawl and starting to put themselves in a standing position in preparation for walking. Babies are beginning to use their memory to recall and understand simple instructions.

Play kitchen items - babies love to explore at this age. Using empty egg cartons, cereal boxes and plastic food containers, babies can practice opening and closing boxes and putting objects in and out of containers.

Activity tables - these tables are sturdy, colorful and

have fun buttons and toys for a baby who is learning to stand.

**11-12 months** - Between 9 to 15 months, many babies begin to start walking. They will also start to play with toys in their intended use - talking on a toy telephone or drinking from a toy cup.

Push/pull toys - Pulling around an animal on a string or pushing a toy is great for children learning to walk and new walkers.

Ride - on - toys - wheeled vehicles will encourage your one year old to explore their environment more independently.

Large blocks - These toys help babies with many fine motor skills, such as using an accurate reach/release, refining their grasp and promote hand eye coordination.

Cars and trucks - babies this age love the cause and effect of wheeled vehicles (pushing it and watching it go). They are also familiar objects that allow children to begin early pretend play skills.

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## Developmental toys from 1-2 years

**13-14 months** - By this age, most babies are crawling and some may be taking their first steps. They are learning how to turn pages in a thick book and attempting to eat on their own. Babies are learning that objects can be thrown or dropped, and are learning to imitate adults.

Shape Sorter - these toys can teach your little one so much - problem solving, spacial awareness and determination.

Ramp toys - Ramp toys never get old to a child this age. They learn to put the ball in/out of the ramp and enjoy watching it make its way down the ramp.

Swing - Outdoor swings are a great way to entertain your one - year - old, and your child will enjoy this activity for a few years. It is a great way to get your baby enjoying time outside and gives him/her some good sensory input.

Pound and tap toys - these toys provide hours of fun and can begin to teach your child tool use, which will

translate over to using utensils as a tool for eating.

**15-17 months** - By this age, you will begin to notice that your baby will start recognizing people you see frequently, outside of your household. Your baby's language is increasing and he/she may have a few single words and gestures he/she uses to communicate with you.

Large legos - Legos are a classic toy that will engage your child for years. Children will begin playing with legos by just making towers, as their imagination grows they can make a variety of creations.

Animals - this is a simple toy to have, but is perfect for imaginary play. Children can use them in a variety of ways and let their imagination go wild - for years to come. They are also a great tool to teach animal noises.

Balls - Ball play is great to work on many skills. Motor skills include throwing, catching and kicking a ball, as well as refining hand eye coordination. Reciprocal ball play (rolling/throwing a ball back and forth) teaches children to take turns and engage others in their play.

Pretend play area - small toy kitchens, work benches, or doll stations are great pretend play toys for this age. They are at standing height, which is great for toddlers still working on balance and walking. They are also a great way to incorporate language in play - narrate in simple terms yours and your child's play to increase their word repertoire - i.e "You are mixing soup in a bowl" "I am making a sandwich on this plate"

**18-20 months** - By eighteen months, your toddler's gait will begin to smooth out, likely making him/her more interested in on - the - go play. More refined motor skills means building even taller block towers and enjoying scribbling on paper with a thick crayon.

Sorting toys - These toys can be used for both open ended play and to learn to sort (an early math skill). Toys can be sorted by color, object and/or size. As your child grows, he/she can learn to sort in many different ways.

Non - toxic art supplies - Finger paint is always a hit - just make sure the drawing tools you choose are appropriate for small hands - palm - grip crayons, sidewalk chalk and dot markers are great for this age.

Sandbox toys - Playing with sand gives is a great form of sensory play for your toddler. He/she will be able to explore a variety of textures and begin engaging in some solo play.

**21-24 months** - At around age 2, instead of just imitating the adults around them, kids start to use their own imagination. They are doing better at solving

problems through trial and error, and their desire for independence is getting stronger each day.

Dress up items - costumes and accessories help toddlers to begin to explore fantasy and pretend play.

Musical instruments - Music is a great way for children to learn how to not only listen, but also engage in more communicative gestures. These skills can help improve children's language as they get older.

Easy puzzles - puzzles work on a variety of skills, such as hand eye and fine motor coordination, encourage problem solving and boost cognitive skills including spatial awareness.

Connect toys - links, legos, stackable pegs, and beads that snap together are great learning toys for children who can sit down and play solo for longer stretches of time.

Baby dolls and accessories - Whether you have a son or a daughter, taking care of a doll can help your little one develop their nurturing side. A doll can also be a great teaching tool if you are thinking about adding another member to your family.

Nesting cups - If your child doesn't already have nesting cups, consider adding them to their collection. They are a great way to learn spatial concepts (under, on, etc), describing size and color, and fitting the pieces together. A homemade version of this toy can also be used - just give your child different size containers that can fit into each other.

## Developmental toys from 2-3 years

**24-26 Months** - Now that your baby is walking and talking more, he/she is beginning to learn more about how to interact and engage with others. Children are very curious and will spend time learning how things work. They will now start to pay attention to more details.

Books, books, books, and more books! - Books are great learning tools and can be used to teach children about many things - animals, colors, routines (bedtime, snacktime), how to behave in the community (doctor visits, shopping, school) and more! Interactive books, with touchy/feely objects, noises, buttons, flaps

and other things are great to keep a busy toddler entertained.

Drawing boards - create a fun 'art area' in your home for your toddler to explore and learn. Have your child explore playing with crayons, markers, chalk and paint - add in stamps and stencils for added fun. As your child gets older, this area can be used to learn to write letters, numbers and spell his/her name.

Outdoor play area - Now that your toddler is a more confident walker, they will love to climb and explore their environment. Creating a safe outdoor space for your toddler to run, climb and play with others will allow them to further develop their more advanced motor skills. Small playground equipment with

tunnels, slides and ladders are great for this age.

Play dough - play dough is a great toy for young children to use their imagination while engaging in sensory play. Play dough can be bought or made from scratch, additional toys can be bought or give your child some safe kitchenware to play with (spoons, plastic bowls, cups, cookie cutters etc).

**27-29 Months** - At this age, children are engaging with toys for longer periods and are developing more refined fine motor skills - making it a great age for crafts and art projects. Your child's vocabulary will grow each day and he/she is learning how to follow 1 - 2 step commands.

Toy barn, doll house or car shop - These pretend play items are great for children with growing imaginations. Children can play with these toys in a variety of ways and will stay entertained for hours. Doll houses can be used to teach children about routines (i.e daddy putting baby to bed) and work through worry your child may have about separation (i.e now mommy is dropping baby off at daycare while she goes to work).

Smaller blocks - By this age, your child's fine motor skills are becoming more refined allowing him/her to manipulate smaller toys. They no longer need the large/soft baby blocks, and can make many creations with a set of smaller blocks.

Crafts - This is a great age to for your child to begin more advanced crafts than just coloring. Introduce your child to scissors, glue and paint with paint brushes. This can be very messy, but also very fun!

Doctors Kit - playing with a simple play doctors kit can make going to the doctors a lot less scary for your little one. Begin to teach your child why they go to the doctors and the importance of their health - in a simple and child friendly manner. Encourage your child

to play doctor on you or a sibling - this will work on social skills as well as promote empathy and teach your child about feelings - physical (pain, hot cold) and emotional (sad, scared, comfortable).

**30-34 Months** - By 30 months, your child is now acting more and more like a 'big kid'. His/her language is continuing to develop, and your child may be speaking in short sentences, reciting songs and nursery rhymes,



NEW HAMPSHIRE LIQUOR & WINE OUTLET'S  
SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL

# Winter Wine Spectacular

Presented by **People's United Bank**

January 23rd  
6pm-9pm

Doubletree by Hilton

TO BENEFIT  
**easterseals**  
New Hampshire

[easterseals.com/nhevents](http://easterseals.com/nhevents)



and may even tell you stories. Your child has lots of energy and loves to run, jump and climb.

Trampoline - small indoor trampolines are a great way to get your child's energy out on a cold, rainy day. Set up your trampoline in a safe space and teach your child how to jump on it first by holding your hands or a railing. As your child becomes more confident, they will be able to jump on their own.

Tricycle, scooters, and balance bikes - these toys encourage coordination and balance. Use these toys to teach your children about safety and wearing a helmet and other safety gear as needed.

Storytelling - while your child is too young to read yet, learning to tell stories is a great way to promote your child's language, imagination and cognitive skills. The great thing about storytelling is it can be done anywhere - encourage your child to tell you a story in the car, at the store or in a waiting room. Children can also use the pictures in a book to create their own story. It is okay to prompt your child and ask him/her questions as he/she learns this skill.

Tools - Life like tools are always a hit for young children with big imaginations. Toy tools can 'fix' just about anything, and are always a hit when helping dad at his workbench. This toy can teach your child language skills (names for tools and how to use them), how to fix things and promotes pretend play.

**34-36 Months** - Each day, your child is becoming more independent, wanting to dress him/herself (and able to!), eating with utensils (most of the time), and may be beginning potty training.

Large beads - Beads are a great way to promote your child's fine motor skills - refine their grasp, and practice manipulating smaller objects with both hands. Start

with beads around 1 to ½ an inch, and encourage your child to be creative with what they make. Always supervise your child during an activity like this!

Train set - Train sets are great for three year olds developing spatial skills and experimenting with cause and effect. Children can build tracks in a variety of different ways and can include others in the fun - encourage your child to work with a sibling or friend to build the track together.



**2019 CHRISTMAS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM APPLICATIONS**

For Manchester/Bedford/Litchfield residents

**DAYTIME HOURS:**

Monday - Wednesday  
9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. (Noon)  
Nov 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20 Dec 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11

**EVENING HOURS: (For working families)**

Wednesdays  
7:30 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.  
Nov 13, 20 Dec 4, 11

**NOTE:** No children allowed in building on these dates

**PLEASE BRING WITH YOU:**

- Valid Photo ID
- Proof of address (bill or current mail)
- Identification for each child (birth certificate or health card with date of birth or household statement of benefits)
- A Christmas Spirit ... no Grinch's please : )

**CHRISTMAS TOY SHOP:**

- Bring your appointment slip to Double Tree Hotel on Monday, December 23, 2019
- No children allowed
- Food - Market Basket gift card based on family size
- Toys - for children up to 12 years old

God bless you

**2019 PROGRAMA DE REGALOS Y COMIDA DE NAVIDAD APLICACIONES**

Para residentes de Manchester/Bedford/Litchfield

**HORAS DURANTE EL DIA:**

Lunes - Miercoles  
9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. (Mediodia)  
Nov 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20 Dec 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11

**HORAS DE LA TARDE: (Para familias que trabajan)**

Miercoles  
7:30 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.  
Nov 13, 20 Dec 4, 11

**NOTA:** No se permite niños en el edificio en estas fechas

**FAVOR TRAER CON USTED:**

- Identificación valida
- Prueba de dirección (factura o correo actual)
- Identificación para cada niño (certificado de nacimiento o tarjeta de seguro que identifique fecha de nacimiento o declaración de beneficios del hogar)
- Espíritu de Navidad ..... no Grinches por favor : )

**CHRISTMAS TOY SHOP:**

- Traer su comprobante de cita al Double Tree Hotel el Lunes, Diciembre 23, 2019
- No se permite niños
- Tarjeta Market Basket - basado al tamaño de familia
- Juguetes - para niños hasta los 12 años

Dios les bendiga



The Salvation Army, 121 Cedar Street  
Manchester, NH 03101  
(603) 627-7013

# 2019 Holiday Assistance



**Community Church  
New Boston**

# Mindful Moments

## Hand Awareness

Those who are new to mindfulness sometimes find it difficult to focus on just breathing. This mindful hand exercise is an effective introductory exercise to try out!

Begin by tightly gripping your hands and holding for 5 to 10 seconds. Release your hands and pay close attention to how your hands feel. Keep your attention focused on the sensation for as long as possible.

For more exercises, go to [Thrive Global](#)



Sesame Street in Communities is a resource for both families and providers that provides resources, activities, strategies, and support regarding the developmental, physical, and emotional needs of young children. Topics addressed include: exploring emotions, handling tantrums, learning through play, self-care, and much more!

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Listed below are mental and behavioral health providers in the Manchester Area. Click on the logo for more info.



# Calendar of Events

## December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5 <b>Festival of Trees</b> Exeter <b>Holiday Mkt</b> Manchester	6 <b>Tree lighting</b> Goffstown <b>Midnight Merriment</b> Concord	7 <b>Holiday Parade</b> Manchester <b>Tree lighting</b> New Boston
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 <b>Jingle Bell Express</b> Portsmouth
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 <b>Boston Pops</b> SNHU
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**Goffstown, NH Tree Lighting** - December 6 from 5-8 p.m, Goffstown. The tree lighting will take place at 6:30 p.m. and there will also be a living nativity scene, hayrides, reading of “The Polar Express”, cookies and hot chocolate and, of course, Santa.

**Manchester, NH holiday parade** - December 7 at 4 p.m. (rain or shine!). This year’s theme: “Christmas Around the World”. Parade route is on Elm Street.

**New Boston, NH Tree Lighting** - December 7 from 4-6 p.m.. The New Boston tree lighting and S’mores with Santa event at the New Boston town common and gazebo.

**Exeter Festival of Trees** December 5th

**Jingle Bell Express** at Children’s Museum  
Portsmouth December 7th or 14th

**A Christmas Carol at the Palace** December

**Midnight Merriment** in Concord December 6th

**Boston Pops at the SNHU arena** December 21st

**Downtown Holiday Market** December 5