



CROSSWAY CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS



PRESCHOOL

Holiday traditions can create some of the most nostalgic, treasured memories for you and your family.

We know it's likely you already have an awesome list of things you do every year—maybe even some things you did as a kid! But we also know that as your kids grow and change, traditions need to grow and change, too.

That's why we've created a list of holiday traditions and organized them by phase. (But don't worry—we've included some suggestions that will work for all ages, noted by an *.)

Check out these ideas on how to celebrate Christmas and the New Year with your family.



PRESCHOOL

Preschoolers are just beginning to understand what all the holiday fuss is about. Since time (especially distant, future time) can still be an abstract concept for them, preschoolers love to participate in the right now.

The best traditions for preschoolers involve hands-on activities that result in instant gratification.

DECORATING CHRISTMAS COOKIES*

Dust off your favorite cookie recipe and set up a decorating station complete with red and green icing and toppings. Try to ignore the mess as your preschooler uses their artistic skills to create colorful Christmas confections. (P.S. There's no shame in using break-and-bake cookie dough!) Divide the cookies in half and place a portion of them in a disposable container. Choose one person or family each year to share your beautiful baked goods with!

ABBREVIATED ADVENT

Counting down from 30 will feel like an eternity for your preschooler... and for you! Try using a smaller number for this phase, like a 10-day countdown. Say things like, "There are only 8 days until Christmas! Can you show me the number 8 using your fingers? In 8 days we will celebrate Jesus' birthday with some fun surprises!" Make the countdown tangible for your preschooler by creating a Christmas-colored paper chain and tearing a ring off each night or morning.

NEW YEAR NO-NOS

Whatever you do, do not put your kids to bed on New Year's Eve by saying, "See you next year!" If you do, you're likely to find your little concrete thinker attached to your leg for the next 24 hours. The week leading up to the New Year, and especially New Year's Eve, read a New Year's book with your preschooler. (We love *Happy New Year, Spot!* by Eric Hill, but there are tons of options.) Each time you read the book, get out a calendar (your phone calendar works great) and show your preschooler today, then count how many days are left until the New Year.