



Winter Wonderland of Loving Relationships



- If funds are tight, local charities offer opportunities for children to shop for free for their family and parents to shop from donations for their children.
- The years our (Pam and Bill's) Christmas funds were tight, we exchanged names and gave each child a five-dollar bill and twenty minutes to find the best gift at the local thrift store or Walmart. The competition was fun and fierce as each boy hustled through the store—under the watchful eye of a parent.
- Churches host a wide variety of free holiday events.
- Give Jesus a birthday gift. As a family, decide on something special to do for someone else.
- Make hot cocoa with extra marshmallows to take along on a walking or driving tour of neighborhoods decorated with twinkling Christmas lights.
- Go caroling. Sing at stores in the mall, go to retirement homes, ask to sing at the hospital, and visit businesses. Take a shift with a Salvation Army red kettle and sing Christmas songs to those who pass by. Return home for bowls of hot chili-tos—chili poured over Fritos.
- Decorate your home for Christmas before your children go off to their other family. Invite friends to decorate with you.
- Read the Christmas story aloud while children move the pieces of the nativity into place.
- Throw an Ornament Party. Instead of storing keepsakes in the attic, decorate your tree with memories. Convert awards, trophies, and beloved toys into holiday ornaments. Glue and weave 4-H fair ribbons, sports medals, and photos into wreaths. Invite friends to bring their memories, glue, ribbon, and fabric scraps. Serve tea and popcorn while you create ornaments unique to your family.
- Hold a Little House on the Prairie Party. Read *A Little House Christmas* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Let children mix up a box of cornbread or, if you are brave, yeast rolls. Place cream in a jar for children to roll back and forth to one another on the floor until it becomes butter. String popcorn to hang on the tree. Make pulled taffy for dessert. Each child can bring a sock from home to hang by the fireplace. For party favors, fill each sock as Ma and Pa did with an orange, a ten-cent candy stick, and a small, inexpensive toy.
- Host a Make-a-Gift Party. Kids of single parents often have a difficult time shopping for gifts for their parent. Have a party where everyone makes gifts for others, including parents, teachers, Sunday school instructors, and siblings. Decorate pillowcases with handprints, create video messages, compile easy photo albums and calendars through online print companies, bead bracelets, use thumbprint art to design stationary, make baked goods, or fill jars with beans and attach a recipe for chili or Nine-Bean Soup.
- Christmas morning, have your child place the figures into the nativity scene as you read the Christmas story aloud.
- Stay in pajamas Christmas day.
- If you spend a holiday without your child, use the time to replenish and renew. Create an at home spa day.
- For a change of scenery, offer to house sit or pet sit for friends or family who travel over the holidays.
- New Years, invite friends and family to bring their holiday left-overs for an easy, no-frills potluck. Together, pack up holiday décor, play games, watch the game or a movie, pray together dedicating the year to Jesus.

Adapted from *10 Best Decisions a Single Mom Can Make* by Pam Farrel and PeggySue Wells (Baker Books) 2020 www.Love-Wise.com | www.singleomcircle.com

