

By Kristen Stewart, writer and contributor to parenting publications including *ePregnancy Magazine*, *ParentGuide* and *Family Forum Magazine*, and mother of three.

We all know December is a magical month full of anticipation. Whether your family is looking for some fresh twists to old traditions or is anxious to make brand-new memories, let the Princesses inspire you and your loved ones to enjoy the month as you count down to the best Christmas ever!

- Deck the halls. Build a fire, brew up some hot chocolate and make an evening out of decorating. Make snow angels from white construction paper and glitter. Create "sparklydoos" with playdough and a star-shaped cookie cutter. Bake your own gingerbread cookie band. Don't forget to find the perfect Christmas tree!
- Share the Christmas spirit. Arrange a gift exchange with your friends and invite them to a "Chrissymas" party. Take turns making up Christmas songs and singing them to each other. See who can remember the most lines of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." Bring a card, poinsettia or small tree to an elderly friend or neighbor who might not otherwise decorate.
- Get moving. Don't let cold winter weather dampen your holiday spirit. Grab a partner, turn on the "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" and dance, dance, dance. Go ice-skating. Set up a stage and put on your own Christmas show. Take a sleigh ride (or drive around the neighborhood looking at Christmas lights).
- Cuddle up with a good book. Collect your family's Christmas-themed books into one basket and read a different one each night. Or have a reading marathon on Christmas Eve beginning with Hans Christian Andersen's "The Steadfast Tin Soldier" and ending with "The Night Before Christmas" by Clement Clarke Moore.
- Don't forget the true meaning of Christmas. Make a seashell necklace, special book or other unique gift for each member of the family. Talk about the importance of forgiveness. Offer hope to someone feeling discouraged. And most importantly, tell everyone how much you love them.