



THE VALUE OF CHRISTMAS

By Tahlia Mandie
Psychotherapist & Family Counsellor

The festive season has certainly begun, with decorations, fairy lights, and Christmas trees already on display in most stores. While our eyes instantly wander to this section our mind is thinking "gee...what do I get my kids for Christmas?" For some of you, your children may have already dropped a few pointers, hints and cheeky remarks of what they want Santa to bring them.

The latest TV commercials and mailbox catalogues are similarly telling us what the latest gadgets, gismos and crazes are with discounts and specials that are hard to refuse. So what do we do when we are inundated with special wishes, greasy smiles and wanting to please our children without going over board?

One of the key messages I give to parents is to teach and empower their children about their family's special value of Christmas. We all celebrate and hold different values toward the holiday season. For some it may be about spending time with the family while for others it may be about giving. Giving is such a broad term that can be applied in so many ways. Giving does not necessarily have to be about the most expensive toy on the market, but rather about the opportunity of sharing love, compassion and kindness to others in need.

An idea I give families is to encourage their children to give away one toy for every new toy they get for Christmas to less fortunate people – to families that struggle through the holiday season. It's a simple way of teaching our children about what we can be grateful for.

Ensure your children understand your limits of toy giving and ask them to write down their Christmas wishes, remembering that these wishes do not have to be about toys. Keep your Christmas holiday spirit to what you value, not what the toy company's want you to value.

Tahlia Mandie is a psychotherapist and family counsellor for Direction Exploring, which helps adolescents by inspiring, empowering and motivating them to find their potential and pathway while giving them more energy, confidence and belief in themselves and their abilities. Direction Exploring also works with parents and families and runs group programs and workshops.

If you have a topic you would like Tahlia to discuss in the coming months please send through your question or suggestion to the editor.

tahlia@directionexploring.com.au
www.directionexploring.com.au