



EXPECT SUCCESS

TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY



As the holiday season approaches, it is normal for parents to feel stressed. There is pressure to decorate the tree with the latest ideas from Pinterest and buying just the right gifts for your children, not to mention the relatives. There are parties to attend that require making a dish to pass, gift exchanges at work, and holiday cards to write. Then there are the deeper stressors such as concern over finances to pay for the gifts, family dynamics that make the holidays strained, and general fatigue from the non-stop hustle and bustle. It becomes difficult to be 'jolly' when we are juggling all the holiday balls in the air.

In light of the busyness of December, being 'jolly' might be just what we need; after all, they say laughter is the best medicine. Do you remember the last time you had a good belly laugh? The kind that makes your eyes water and your stomach ache. We can all do ourselves a favor and find a little humor in our daily lives this month. Here are a few tips to lighten your load and help you find your 'jolly'.

Did You Know?

- Laughing stimulates many organs in your body including your heart, lungs, muscles while increasing endorphins released by your brain. Think of it as a happy work out!
- A good laugh activates and relieves your stress response by stimulating circulation and muscle relaxation. That's why you feel relaxed after a hearty laugh.
- Laughter naturally improves your immune system since positive thoughts can release neuropeptides that help fight stress in your body. Free holistic medicine!
- Laughter improves your mood. Improving your mood, improves your outlook; it is a healthy domino effect that is infectious (in a good way) to those around you.

What Can You Do?

- **Share a good laugh.** Kids love 'knock, knock' jokes. Pick up a book from the library or print some from the internet. When things are getting tense, take a joke time-out to laugh.
- **Find humor in your daily life.** There are funny things happening all around us (because human behaviors are interesting to watch). While they don't all make us bend over in laughter, there are many that bring a smile to our face. A smile is a laugh waiting to happen.
- **Laugh at yourself.** You know the old adage, "if you don't laugh, you'll cry." Well, there is truth to that; sometimes life is overwhelming so choose laughter. It will make you feel better, plus crying makes your nose red, your eyes puffy and your head hurt (unless it's the good kind of crying that comes from laughing).

What type of cars do elves drive?