

DU professor advises families to refocus for holidays to ease financial tension (w/ Video)

November 13 2009

Martha Wadsworth, associate professor of psychology at the University of Denver (DU), says during the holidays families should focus on what has been proven to matter most in psychological research - quality family time.

"I love the winter holidays because most of them are about being together with those you love and getting back to what is important in life and that's our relationship with each other," she says. "Psychological research has shown over and over again that what truly makes people happy is not money, not stuff, it's time with people you love."

Wadsworth's research focuses on coping processes in children and families exposed to overwhelming stress, including financial stress. She suggests that families take this opportunity to build in new [family](#) traditions that are more about spending time with each other and less about money. Wadsworth says some families have started giving traditions, where they plant trees, donate to a local shelter or volunteer in a soup kitchen.

"Giving of your time and your energy can be very satisfying," she says.

Wadsworth says some parents should sit down with their children to explain that the holidays will be different this year. She says parents can make that decision based on their child's age.

"Children who still believe in Santa Clause don't really know price tags

very well, so you can give them lots of boxes with little things inside," she says. "If they're old enough to not believe in Santa, then parents can have a conversation with them about how things are going to be different this year, but they're going to be good."

Source: University of Denver

Citation: DU professor advises families to refocus for holidays to ease financial tension (w/ Video) (2009, November 13) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-11-du-professor-families-refocus-holidays.html>

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