

CREATING TRADITIONS IN YOUR FAMILY

By Larry and Deb Walkemeyer

“What an enormous magnifier is tradition! How a thing grows in the human memory and in the human imagination, when love, worship, and all that lies in the human heart, is there to encourage it” – Carlyle

Take advantage of the opportunities that life offers to create traditions. Keep it simple and inexpensive. Make it enjoyable for everyone. Find reasons to throw a simple celebration! Here are fourteen great ideas that really work.

1. DAILY, WEEKLY, MONTHLY, YEARLY TRADITIONS AND CELEBRATIONS

- a. Daily - family devotions (5 fun-filled minutes at meal time)
- b. Weekly - Special food nights (favorite food night, Dine out night, China night)
- c. Monthly - Special calendar days (“It’s happy 6th of June.” if child is 6 years old)
- d. Yearly - Use holidays, birthdays, off the wall celebrations, annual kidnap your child from school day

2. BIRTHDAYS:

- a. Celebrate the uniqueness of each child. Buy a “red” plate to show they’re special
- b. Make a special plate.
- c. Put a homemade crown on the child’s head at meals

3. MOMENTOUS OCCASIONS:

- a. Tooth losses
- b. Baptisms
- c. First band concert
- d. First anything!

4. THANKSGIVING:

- a. Every person share what they are thankful for
- b. Turkey on the table
- c. Inviting an exchange student into your home
- d. Retell the story of the pilgrims

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5. CHRISTMAS:

- a. Special meal
- b. Reading the Christmas story
- c. Cutting your own tree
- d. Decorating the tree
- e. Playing special music
- f. Viewing the Christmas lights

6. NEW YEAR:

- a. Making those infamous resolutions
- b. Pick three new traditions
- c. Pray in the new year
- d. Stay up until midnight and drink sparkling cider from champagne glasses

7. SUMMER VACATIONS:

- a. A special place or a special kind of trip you take
- b. July 4th unique traditions.

8. GRADUATIONS: Celebrate with them when they graduate from anything to show your pride in them...

- a. Preschool
- b. Elementary
- c. Jr. High
- d. High School
- e. College

9. SCHOOL:

- a. Pictures of the first day of school
- b. Back to school nights
- c. Scrap book for each grade

10. START OF SEASONS:

- a. Special foods
- b. Put out seasonal décor
- c. Story time by the fire
- d. Picnics in the park

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11. CULTURAL HERITAGE:

- a. Find special ways to celebrate your cultural heritage as a family (i.e., Norwegian bread)

12. STORIES:

- a. Pass down the special family stories (connect kids to their extended family)

13. BEDTIME RITUALS:

- a. Create a secure feeling (ours is: talk, story, prayer, kiss, special blanket placement)

14. KODAK MOMENTS:

- a. Take lots of pictures
- b. Display them proudly
- c. Make photo albums for each child to take with them when they leave home

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