



Family Gatherings

Family gatherings are fun but can also be overwhelming for young children. Here are three tips for preparing for, managing, and learning from family gatherings.

Before the Gathering

- Make sure your child is well-rested.
- Keep your child's schedule as normal as possible.
- Bring comfort items your child needs to be at their best.
- Let your child know what to expect by telling the story of how things will go.

During the Gathering

- Remind your child of the rules ahead of time (is hugging OK, are there limits on sweets).
- Tell your child about activities, schedules, and who you expect to see during the gathering.
- Balance the newness and excitement with activities that are predictable.
- Know when it's time to go (even if the event is not over).

After the Gathering

- How did your child's participation compare with what you had planned?
- What do you want to do the same or differently for the next family gathering?
- How do you plan to talk with your child about the experience?