



BLUE KIDS | Mental Health & Children Series

■ by Dr. Janet Irvine, Psychologist and Clinical Coordinator

After the holidays, most people feel a bit of a let-down after all the festivities are over and life goes back to its normal routine. The same is true for children, who spent much of December in choirs, pageants, family visits, and anticipating surprises, planning for special events and getting gifts. The holidays are an exciting time for children, and while they are exhilarating, they can leave a child exhausted due to “good stress.” The post-holiday blues are the body’s way of coping with little nervous systems that were on sensory overload for an extended period of time.

Common indicators of children experiencing post-holiday blues include:

- Irritability
- Reluctance to resume school
- Tearfulness
- Poor concentration
- Fatigue
- Withdrawal
- Non-compliance
- Tantrums



While most post-holiday blues only last a few weeks, parents and caregivers can try these ideas to reduce the symptoms and help children recover more quickly.

- Enjoying outdoor activities
- Planning an unusual dinner
- Inviting a friend over
- Developing a fun family night
- Being involved in church activities
- Participating in sports
- Planning for Three Kings Day in January, Ground Hog day and Valentine’s Day in February
- Inventing a holiday - there are lots of ideas on the internet!
- Laugh together!

Creating a gentle sense of anticipation for other less extravagant experiences can be a helpful way not only for children, but the entire family to recover from the post-holiday blues and survive the long cold winter months. ■



Dr. Janet Irvine sees clients in our Orland Park location.

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www.chicagochristiancounseling.org

800.361.6880 | info@chicagochristiancounseling.org

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