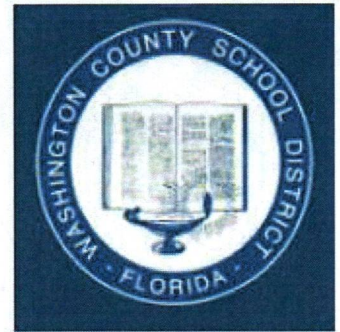




# THE EXCEPTIONAL EXPRESS

2025 Holiday Edition



-Address: 652 3rd Street, Chipley, FL 32428  
- Phone: 850-638-6222  
- Fax: 850-638-6226

## TIPS FOR WINTER TRAVEL WITH YOUR CHILD TO SUPPORT:

- Reducing Anxiety and Uncertainty
- Protecting Routines That Keep Your Child Grounded
- Preventing Sensory Overload
- Making Travel More Enjoyable for the Whole Family

## This issue:

Using Assistive Technology  
(AT) to Support Your  
Child's Holiday Season

Exceptional  
Encouragement

Resource Highlight

## Winter Newsletter Activities

- Winter Word Search!
- Decorate Your Hot Cocoa Mug!



Florida Diagnostic & Learning  
— RESOURCES SYSTEM —



FDLRS PAEC  
Parent and Family Services  
753 W. Blvd. Chipley, FL 32428  
Phone: 850-638-6131  
Toll Free: 877-873-7232  
Fax: 850-638-6142

FDLRS is funded by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Public Schools, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, through Federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B and State General Revenue funds. Section 1006.03 Florida Statutes (F.S.)- Diagnostic and Learning Resource Centers



# Using Assistive Technology to Support Your Child's Homelife

Assistive Technology doesn't replace holiday traditions - it supports them! AT helps children stay regulated, communicate clearly, and feel included so families can enjoy safer, smoother, and more meaningful celebrations together.

## Sensory Regulation Tools

- Noise-cancelling headphones
- Weighted blankets or lap pads
- Fidgets, chewable jewelry, or sensory rings

## Visual and Communication Supports:

- Timers
- Social Stories
- Printed Schedules

## Mobility & Safety Supports

- GPS trackers or safety bracelets
- Adaptive strollers or mobility aids
- Portable ramps for visiting relatives

# Exceptional Encouragement

The holidays can be magical, but it can also be overwhelming, especially when you're balancing your child's unique needs, family expectations, and your own hopes for the season. If you're feeling stretched thin, uncertain, or simply tired, you're not alone. And you're doing more than enough.

This season doesn't need to be perfect - it just needs to be yours. You're building traditions rooted in love, understanding, and connection, and that is the greatest gift you can give.

# Resource Highlight

## FREE Parent Trainings:

FDLRS PAEC hosts free parent trainings on a variety of topics. Use your phone's camera to click the pop-up link attached to each QR code below for upcoming trainings:

### STEAM-POWERED LEARNING AT HOME



March 10, 2026 @ 11:30am CST  
STEAM = Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. Join for Activities and Tips for How Parents Can Support STEAM-Powered Learning at Home.

### ROAD TO BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES



December 2, 2025 @ 11:30am CST  
March 10, 2026 @ 5:30pm CST  
Better understand what behavior is, how behavior is handled, how to examine challenging behaviors, and how to utilize behavior strategies in your home.

### DADS IN EDUCATION: SIDELINES TO FRONTLINES



February 10, 2026 @ 5:30pm  
Intended to educate and empower fathers and father-figures about the importance of their involvement by providing strategies and practical examples/ideas for supporting reading and math at home.





# Success Support

Holiday travel often brings new environments, loud spaces, different routines, and sensory challenges. For many children, especially those with disabilities, these changes can feel unpredictable or overwhelming. Preparing ahead of time isn't just helpful- it can make the entire experience safer, calmer, and more enjoyable for everyone.

## For Long Drives:

- Audiobooks or calming music
- Interactive apps
- Story apps that use their AAC or communication system
- Window clings or car-safe sensory toys
- Planned predictable breaks

**TIP:** Use visual supports such as timers, maps, and checklists so kids can see how much longer it will be until the destination or the next stopping point.

## Pack a "Comfort & Regulation Kit"

Include items that help your child stay regulated:

- Noise-canceling headphones
- Chewelry or fidgets
- Weighted lap pad
- Sunglasses or hat for sensory overload
- Favorite snacks or drinks
- A cozy blanket or stuffed comfort item

**TIP:** Keep this in an easily accessible bag, not checked luggage.

## Bring Backup Assistive Devices & Chargers

If your child uses AAC, hearing aids, mobility equipment, or medical devices, pack:

- Extra batteries or chargers
- Backup communication boards/book
- Copies of important documents (medical, travel letters)
- A small toolkit if equipment adjustments might be needed

**TIP:** Designate a small, easy-to-reach bag for all critical items that stays in arm's reach during travel.

Travel doesn't have to be flawless to be meaningful. Every family has its own rhythm, and every child has their own way of experiencing the world. When we prepare thoughtfully, we create space for flexibility, calm, and connection - even when things don't go exactly as planned. With preparation and the right tools, travel can shift from a stressful experience to an enjoyable one. It becomes an opportunity for connection, discovery, and new traditions that reflect your child's strengths and your family's values.

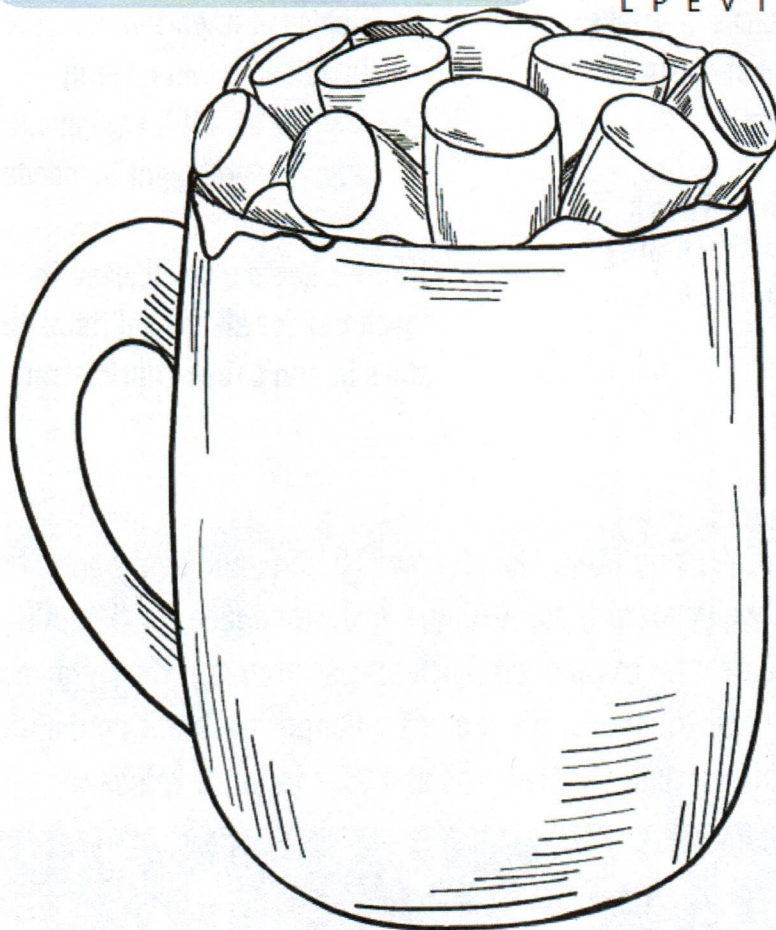


# Seasonal Word Search

## Word Bank

WINTER	BUDDY
BOW	BELLS
HELPER	WHEELCHAIR
STOCKING	PIE
TREE	FAMILY
JOY	ADAPTIVE
GIFT	ELF
LOVE	STAR
CHRISTMAS	SEASON
GUIDE	HOLIDAY
COOKIES	SUPPORT
HOLLY	JOLLY
LIGHTS	

ESLOHELFIPOVESUSTSKWBRCIT  
HEVOIREWSLNGDTJGIOCTOKTRW  
OIUDOEERDGOHRIAHCLEEHWVALO  
LMRYLRWLPHBELRWFFFYDOHHAWS  
ITCKEOEIASRTALKSSJPEGITAI  
DCOFISIOILOLESOSSORLPEITI  
ALYETDDERSYLSSTHGILHPJMSLR  
YDDUBHADREEOOLSNERLLRTUPCE  
POFPHAMELLIVLOOLGYDBHYHAI  
HHSYRLLWQDIEELBOGEDIMCLLI  
TVWOSINRKSAAOSTOCKINGMRYOE  
TOCOLAALYATYLDITBOISOIYUO  
YGSTCTBBOFEFWONOSAESOKOAE  
OPLCSIREGETFIGTOTEGIIICECA  
ULHOLLYPEHTILOLMHLUESMHIT  
LRJOYAESLOELEWJMBAITIAEER  
SAIKRESLTICPWDEAEIDHODHPE  
DEEIRLYYILHLTHIRLAEHGBETE  
EYRETNIWSLLEBTIMLLJYLULEI  
SPRSUPPORTHBHJHLHTLLTCRPEL  
RPHOOEREAYLIMAFGHSTGAEECH  
CLLLEEDORFWPLYEYEFFLEFIREO  
UTSRBPIEGRLJCUKSAMTSIRHCO  
WHSEYSURLTPPSDELNMOHHSIV  
LPEVITPADAWIDGSPGDFTCVJJ



DECORATE YOUR  
HOT COCOA CUP!