15 USA HOLIDAYS
NEW YEAR'S DAY, a federal holiday, is celebrated on January 1. Fireworks, noisemakers, confetti & festive parties begin on the night before with a countdown to midnight & continue into the next day. Many people make "resolutions", or set new goals as a way to improve themselves and/or their lives.

FAMILY ACTIVITY
Cut out several 2" x 3" cards ~ at least one for each person. Pass them out & write out a resolution. On the back of the card, brainstorm with other family members tips for how to successfully meet that goal. Pin the goals next to the calendar or fridge for an easy reminder.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY, a federal holiday, is observed on the third Monday in January, close to his birthday. Parades, speeches, and memorials celebrate his peaceful, yet powerful protests against racial segregation, discrimination, and other human prejudices.

FAMILY ACTIVITY
Have a family discussion about defining what are basic Civil Rights, how to peacefully protest an injustice, and how all humans are alike & different (personality, favorite things, clothes, cultures).

VALENTINE'S DAY is celebrated on February 14. Although it began as a day to commemorate the martyr, St. Valentine, it is now a day to express your love to people you care about. Sending cards, flowers, gifts, and/or chocolates are common forms of expression.

FAMILY ACTIVITY
Cut a giant heart out of poster board & fasten to a wall with a pen or marker attached. Title it: "Love Is All Around Us" & write inside the heart how, as family members, you can show your love for one another.


**PRESIDENTS' DAY**, a federal holiday, is celebrated on the third Monday in February. It began as a day to celebrate the lives of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, who both have birthdays in February. Today, it also honors all presidents who have contributed great leadership qualities for the good of the USA.

**FAMILY ACTIVITY**
Have a family discussion sharing thoughts on the qualities of an effective leader, what every candidate should experience before even running for president, and how would you behave as a president.

**EARTH DAY**, is celebrated on April 22. This day marks the anniversary of the "environmental movement" that began in 1970. (It began way before that day...) People make special efforts to plant, recycle, and practice conservation as a way to save energy & stop pollution.

**FAMILY ACTIVITY**
Plant a tree, vegetable garden, flowers, and herbs. Start a compost heap as a natural fertilizer for your gardens. Set up a home-recycling center. Go through your "stuff" to see what can be reused. talk about how to save energy & water at home everyday.

**MOTHERS' DAY** is celebrated on the second Sunday in May. Children, young & old, express their affection to their mothers with gifts, flowers, cards, and special home-cooked or restaurant meals.

**FAMILY ACTIVITY**
Make sure your mother has the day off from all her "motherly" duties, especially in the kitchen. Breakfast in bed with flowers, a gift & handmade cards are endearing to all mothers. A Spa Day gift card is always welcome as well as a foot massage.
MEMORIAL DAY, a federal holiday, is celebrated on the last Monday in May. It commemorates and honors those soldiers who sacrificed their lives in service to the USA during war. People visit grave-sites, memorials, and military cemeteries to honor and pay tribute to those who gave their lives to defend and preserve our freedom.

**FAMILY ACTIVITY**

Every American family has a loved one or knows of other families whose loved ones have given their lives for their country. Visit a Memorial that was erected to pay tribute to these fallen soldiers.

FATHERS' DAY is celebrated on the third Sunday in June. Children, young & old, express their affection to their fathers with gifts (another tie?!?), cards, and by either taking him out for a meal or preparing his favorites during the day, especially while he watches TV.

**FAMILY ACTIVITY**

Upgrading your father's favorite tools as a gift is always appreciated by dear ol' dad. Share some of his chores, like yard-work, car maintenance, home repairs, and trash duty for a period of time.

INDEPENDENCE DAY, a federal holiday, is celebrated on July 4. Patriotic parades & music, community & family picnics/BBQs, outdoor games, and lots of firework displays at nightfall are traditional activities on this day. Be sure to wear your red, white & blue!

**FAMILY ACTIVITY**

Have a family discussion about liberty and freedom. Talk about how to be a good citizen. Make a sheet cake decorated with white icing, strawberry stripes & a star-field of blueberries.
LABOR DAY, a federal holiday, is celebrated on the first Monday in September. It is a day to recognize and appreciate the working people of the USA. The tradition of hard-working citizens is what helps keep America strong and moving forward. Make sure you thank someone who is working to make your life easier.

FAMILY ACTIVITY
Talk to your family about interviewing a special Community Helper you are interested in becoming and/or curious about how s/he does his/her job. Ask them to help you set up an appointment with them. Go on a Family Field trip to a local factory that produces some goods you use at home, like crayons, bread, or bicycle tires.

COLUMBUS DAY, a federal holiday, is celebrated on the second Monday in October. Although he never set foot in the USA, he did visit the Americas, specifically the Bahamas, in 1492.

FAMILY ACTIVITY
Today would be a good day to hold a family meeting regarding the next BIG vacation to a place, perhaps, you have all wanted to visit, but never have. Use this time as a pre-planning stage, exploring sights, accommodations, customs, and weather.

HALLOWEEN is celebrated on October 31. This evening candy-fest is a favorite among youngsters and becoming more popular every year by adults. Dressing up as a favorite character or alter-ego can be fun.

FAMILY ACTIVITY
Hold a Halloween Party at your house with some spooky foods, drinks and games. Use candy as prizes and don't forget to wear your favorite costume. Make sure you take into account the ages of your ghosts and goblins as you plan the scariness of the party. Pumpkins are a must!
VETERANS' DAY, a federal holiday, is celebrated on November 11. It is a day to recognize, honor, and appreciate the military personnel of the USA who are serving or have served our country during wartime. Ceremonies & parades are held in various places to acknowledge the bravery of these men & women who are living or retired.

FAMILY ACTIVITY
At 11AM on this day, remember to have a few Moments of Silence to honor those people who have died during the wars. Make a Flag of Peace and discuss with your family how we can help to make the world a more peaceful place to live.

THANKSGIVING DAY, a federal holiday, is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November. This evening candy-fest is a favorite among youngsters and becoming more popular every year by adults. Dressing up as a favorite character or alter-ego can be fun.

FAMILY ACTIVITY
Hold a Halloween Party at your house with some spooky foods, drinks and games. Use candy as prizes and don't forget to wear your favorite costume. Make sure you take into account the ages of your ghosts and goblins as you plan the scariness of the party. Pumpkins are a must!

CHRISTMAS DAY, a federal holiday, is celebrated on December 25. For some people it is a religious holiday, while for others it is a day/season to celebrate the spirit of giving. Lots of decorations and festive foods are prepared during this time of year.

FAMILY ACTIVITY
Use this family time to make gifts and decorations together. Scented & glittered pine-cones are fun to make and a welcome seasonal gift for anyone to receive. Make a wreath out of old Christmas cards to hang anywhere inside your home. Simmer water with a cinnamon stick.