

HOLIDAY HINTS

Give Your Celebration Extra Sweetness

(NAPSA)—Creating new family traditions and fun memories for Christmas can be both easy and inexpensive.

That's because candy has been a popular "guest" at holiday celebrations for centuries and lends itself to many memory- and merrymaking activities.

As a National Confectioners Association survey discovered, 81 percent of parents said they received holiday stockings filled with goodies when they were kids. Now, 85 percent of the parents say this is a tradition they are continuing with their children.

Here are some delightful holiday activities you may care to try:

- Make a gingerbread family—gingerbread cookie cutters are inexpensive. Decorate the cookies with icing and candies to create a special centerpiece.

- Create candy ornaments from red and white peppermints or other hard candies. Arrange six candies in a circle with edges touching on a piece of aluminum foil. Place in a conventional oven set at 350 degrees just until they stick together, about one to three minutes. Cool, then tie a ribbon to the top to hang on the tree.

- Create holiday table favors or crackers—with bathroom tissue cardboard rolls. Wrap the roll in holiday-themed paper that extends 3 to 4 inches beyond it. Twist and tie off one end with ribbon. Fill from the open end with wrapped candies, small toys and even a special holiday note for the recipient. Tie off the end with ribbon.

- Pair candy with a gift to make it more memorable (and delicious). For example, pamper Mom with a spa service such as a facial or fancy pedicure. Wrap the spa certificate inside a luxurious



Here's a sweet idea: Start a new holiday tradition of creating candies as gifts for—and with—your family.

towel along with a relaxing CD, a gourmet dark chocolate bar and an aromatherapy candle. Give your teenager a gym membership. Tuck the membership card inside a sports duffel bag—don't forget a water bottle, new sneakers, energy gum or mints and a portable music player for those high-energy tunes. Treat the movie lover in your life to a gift certificate to the theater or movie store. Place the card inside an empty popcorn bucket with a few boxes of movie-theater-style candy and a film trivia book.

Keep these hints in mind and you can have tasteful holidays and a sweet new year.

For more information, recipes and tips, visit www.candyusa.org; write to the National Confectioners Association, 8320 Old Courthouse Road, Ste. 300, Vienna, VA 22182; or phone (703) 790-5750.