The days are shorter, and colder! Some days it even feels like it’s going to snow. That means it’s almost time for winter break—a time to kick back and enjoy the holidays with family and friends. Doing things together can make holidays memorable. So before your holidays slip by, let the CYWH peer leaders show you 10 ways to make the holidays worth remembering.

1 - Surprise Party
Have fun throwing a party for visiting relatives! Everybody loves a great party and you know what’s even better? Planning a party! First, pick a theme like “Holidays in the Tropics”. Make invitations from tropical printed wrapping paper. Encourage your guests to come in shorts and Hawaiian shirts. Serve delicious tropical treats—it’s party time!

2 - Winter’s Cool
New England winters can be bone chilling but that shouldn’t stop you from having fun outside. There are always fun outdoor activities you can do with friends and family like skating, sledding and ice hockey. If it’s snowing, you can make snowmen and snow angels, or have a friendly snowball fight!

3 - Bake Together
Get your family together to bake holiday cookies. Sugar cookies are easy to make, and for those of you looking for a challenge, build and decorate a gingerbread house! Helping with holiday meals can be fun and it makes life easier for the cook. Lasting memories are waiting for you in the kitchen!

4 - Lights, Camera, Action
Have you ever wished you could see your relatives more often? Make a holiday video of family and friends so you can keep them close all year long. It doesn’t have to be a huge production. Tape random activities you do with your family, or interview family and friends about their New Year’s resolutions. No doubt you’ll have lots of laughs watching homemade videos each year. Don’t forget the popcorn!

10 Ways to Make Your Holiday Memorable

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How to Get More out of 2006

By Caitlin

“RESOLUTIONS!” — the one word synonymous with the New Year. As 2006 quickly approaches, don’t let yourself get stuck in a resolution rut. It’s great to plan ways you might want to improve yourself in the next year, but the key to achieving those goals is to keep them realistic. Setting unrealistic goals can be very discouraging. As psychologist Harriet Braiker once said, “Striving for excellence motivates you; striving for perfection is demoralizing.”

One thing that always bothers me as the holidays approach is diet advertising. Don’t be sucked into the New Year’s weight loss resolution craze. If you are really looking to lose weight for all the right reasons, it doesn’t matter whether it’s January or July, you can do it. Sure, you might get a free T-shirt if you sign up for a gym in January, but should you sign up for a gym just for the free T-shirt? Consider your options then plan out your goals. Remember, you don’t have to figure everything out by January 1st.

Not all resolutions have to be about weight loss or self-improvement. For example you could resolve to be kinder to your siblings and parents, help out more in your community, or even go to bed a little earlier! All of these positive changes will improve your year! You could also take an active role in school, run for student government or coordinate a benefit for a charity.

If you’ve always wanted to volunteer, the New Year is a great time to start. If you are at least 16 years old, you might be able to volunteer at a hospital, homeless shelter or animal shelter. If you score high in some subjects, you could tutor children in your community. The possibilities are endless! If you do decide to volunteer, it’s a good idea to sign up for just a few hours a week in the beginning. If you like what you are doing, and you find that you have extra time, you can always increase your volunteer hours later.

Before you commit yourself to a New Year’s resolution, think about it. Make sure that it’s something that you want to do. It’s better to set realistic goals so you won’t get discouraged or feel overwhelmed. Most importantly have a safe 2006, and a great year for realistic self-improvement.

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Get Crafty: Make a Snow Globe! — by Asharee

Roll up our sleeves, and get ready to create your very own personalized snow globe! These are fun and easy to make, and are good decorations and gifts for the holidays.

What you will need:
- One glass jar with a tight fitting lid (baby food, jam, or pickle jars work great)
- Silver or white glitter, or fake snow crystals
- Silicon sealant (aquarium sealant works great, get some at a pet supply store)
- Small plastic toys or figurines
- Scissors

What to do:

1) The first step is to pick a theme for your snow globe, then gather small toys or figurines that will make your scene complete. If needed, trim them with scissors, so they’ll fit in the jar.
2) Next, use the silicon sealant to glue the figures to the inside of the jar lid and set it aside to dry. Make sure the sealant is completely dry before the next step.
3) Fill the jar with water and then pour in a little glitter or fake snow crystals, for a snowy effect. Add a little at a time, until you have the amount you like.
4) Finally, take the lid with the figures attached and screw it onto the jar tightly. Add a line of sealant around the lid edge, to make it watertight.

Voilà! Turn the jar upside down and you have made a fabulous, homemade snow globe. Make sure to show it off to your friends and family!