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# MetroParent

PDX for families

## WINTER DAYS

your family's guide  
to snow play,  
great gifts and  
holiday fun





# Wishful Thinking

Tops on the holiday wish list: No more stuff.

BY CATHERINE RYAN

*Dear Family and Friends,*

*You've written and asked for suggestions for presents for our two little elves. You are too sweet to think of them! To help your shopping this season, I've put together a wishlist of things I know would make this Christmas morning one to remember.*

*Happy holidays!  
Love, Catherine*

**Toys we already own.** We have more lovies, action figures and pretend food than a Twice Around the Block consignment sale, so sift through their toy bins and regift something they already have (and love). Tip: The girls haven't seen the goodies at the bottom of the basket in a while, so they'll be the biggest surprise. Wait, the toys at the top of the basket were most recently played with, so they're guaranteed to please. Then again, they've probably forgotten about the toys they threw under the couch and behind the book shelves, so they'll be especially surprised when those goodies resurface.

**Boxes.** Go out and buy an expensive present, take it out of its packaging and leave it in a corner. Then give the box to my girls. They'll play in it, color on it and turn it into a kayak. Alternatively, you can give them wadded-up gift wrap. They love that.

**Books.** Every time the UPS man shows up, our 2-year-old literally jumps up and down. "What's the surprise?" she asks, dancing around the box. "Maybe there's books in there!" Sadly, it's usually something like dog food.

And if we already own the title, that's okay. She keeps a library's worth in the car, in her bedroom, in the living room and — now that she is potty training — in the bathroom, so duplicate copies will find a home somewhere.



All it takes is one good yank...

**Spa gift certificates.** What, they don't do facials and Swedish massages for tiny tots? Hm. I'll make sure they don't go to waste.

**Bunny crackers and puffs.** The girls go bananas over these special snacks, so we can never have too many. Plus, they double as confetti when we're in the car.

**Clothes.** You know, because their 87 other outfits are lonely.

**Ornaments.** Now that the tree is up, all their toys are forgotten. Stacking blocks and stuffed animals got nothing on the family's heirloom ornaments.

**An absence of shoes.** Is that even possible? I have no idea. But since neither of my girls wants to wear them, regardless of how freezing and wet is it outside, they'd love the gift of going barefoot.

**Anything/everything.** Chances are, you'll disregard this note — and our pleas to please not buy our kids any more stuff. So go ahead and buy the latest "it" gizmo, probably something with obnoxious music and flashing lights that turns on by itself just as I'm putting the girls to bed.

But be warned. We'll regift it to your kids next Christmas. ■

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Catherine Ryan Gregory is a writer who blogs at [TenThousandHourMama.com](http://TenThousandHourMama.com), sharing milestones, craft ideas and the epic fails that go along with raising two kids. This holiday season you can find her and her family engaged in their favorite traditions: decorating sugar cookies, hoping for snow and making sure every square inch of the Christmas tree is covered in tinsel.