

Let 'em deck the halls! Crazy-cute Santa crafts

ISSUE 270
DEC/JANUARY 2013

parenting

modern families + fresh ideas

Unwrap. Squeal. Repeat.

Our top toy picks

THE BEST
elf on the shelf
IDEAS EVER

#1 *secret of*
HAPPY
FAMILIES

They do
what in
kindergarten?

New
BABY
FOOD
Rules
p. 28

THE GREAT
CHICKEN
FINGER
MAKEOVER

"I ONLY WANT
ONE CHILD."

p. 50

U.S. \$3.99 Display until January 15





An elf's four main food groups: candy, candy canes, candy corn, and syrup.

L-O-Elf

Snow angel in flour: Been there. Raiding the candy jar: Done that. Here are 8 fresh, funny Elf on the Shelf ideas.

BY KELLY LADD SANCHEZ

1 Just Chillin' Stick your elf in a bowl of water. Place it in the freezer. The next morning, your kids will find him in an ice Jacuzzi.

2 What's for Lunch? How about a B-Elf-T? Sandwich your elf and a slice of tomato between two slices of bread.

3 Gone Fishin' Fill your bathroom sink with water, and place your elf next to it, holding a candy cane with a long string tied to it. Place a few drops of blue food coloring in the water, and toss in a few goldfish crackers.

4 Chocolate Compass Create a trail of Hershey's Kisses leading from your kid's bedroom door to your elf, who is found in a bowl full of silver wrappers.

5 Sick Day Situate your elf on top of a tissue box, with crumpled-up tissues around him. Write a note telling your child he has the sniffles from his latest travels to the North Pole. (innerchildfun.com)

6 Friend or Foe? Trap your elf in an upside-down glass cup or vase. Set up your toy soldiers around him as

if he had been captured overnight sneaking back into the house from the North Pole. (blindmom.com)

7 Win, Lose, or Draw With a dry-erase marker, draw mustaches and glasses on your framed family photos. Place your elf next to the frame, with a pen in his hand. (beatricekillam.com)

8 All I Want for Christmas Situate your elf so it looks like he's cutting out pictures of toys from a catalog or newspaper advertisement. (blossombunkhouse.com)

Flicks Yule Love

Buy instantly to watch round. entertainment

INSTEAD OF Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
WATCH *The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About Christmas!* (premieres November 21 on PBS KIDS, with encores throughout December)
Another lost reindeer is reunited with his family to pull Santa's sleigh on Christmas Eve.

INSTEAD OF Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town
WATCH *It's a SpongeBob Christmas!* (premieres December 1 on Nickelodeon)
Plankton is (of course) on the naughty list and sets out to get the rest of Bikini Bottom to join him. It's up to SpongeBob this time to save Christmas.

INSTEAD OF A Charlie Brown Christmas
WATCH *Jingle and Bell's Christmas Star* (premieres November 23 on Hallmark Channel)
No tree-trimming controversy here. Two Husky pups, Jingle and Bell, lead kids through a snowstorm, which ends just in time for them to place the star atop the town's Christmas tree.



Christmas Music That Rocks

Listen to this NOW!

A LAURIE BERKNER CHRISTMAS
The Pied Piper of the preschool set is back with her first Christmas album, featuring three original tunes with catchy, fun hooks. **DOWNLOAD THIS NOW:** "Candy Cane Jane"



KIDZ BOP CHRISTMAS!
Sung by kids for kids, these 15 Yuletide jams are probably what Santa's elves are belting out at karaoke night in the North Pole. **DOWNLOAD THIS NOW:** "Christmas Wrapping"



Appy Holidays

Download this NOW!

SKYPE With *Video Calls With Santa* (\$2; itunes.com), you and your kids can give Santa a firsthand report of their naughty or nice behavior.

E-MAIL When your kids write a letter or send a picture with the free *Santa Express for Kids* app, they'll receive a response back.

INSTAGRAM Upload a pic of your living room and the free *iCaughtSanta* app drops in Santa, so you'll have proof to show your kids on Christmas morning.