

7 Holiday Hints Using Keepsakes to Bring Your Family Closer

Keepsakes make us feel connected to each other, the past, and the future. They are meaningful, unique gifts and a way to build closer bonds across generations. They can be big or small, expensive or inexpensive. The value isn't in the item itself, but in the memories associated with it. Here are some holiday keepsake ideas. For more great holiday activities, crafts, and meaningful, creative gift ideas for all ages visit the Legacy Project website at www.legacyproject.org.

① **Start With Story:** *Something to Remember Me By* by Susan V. Bosak is the award-winning bestseller that inspired the national Legacy Project. The heartwarming storybook is about the special keepsakes a grandmother gives her granddaughter through the years. Share the story with young and old. You can give the book with a personal keepsake, or use it to prompt stories about family keepsakes.



www.legacyproject.org



② **Give Keepsakes Old & New:** It may be the necklace from your great-grandmother, the ornament you made yourself, or the special figurine you searched for across the city. The important thing when you give a keepsake is to explain or write down the story behind it. Where did it come from? Why is it important? That's what brings the object alive.

③ **Bestow Your Furniture:** Assign a special piece of furniture (like a cedar chest) to each of your children and grandchildren. It makes both young children and adults feel special and remembered. It's also like giving twice – now and in the future.

④ **Start a Collection:** Whether it's stamps, maps, shells, rocks, coins, baseball cards, comic books, or miniatures, a family collection is something you can add to over time. It becomes a shared interest all ages can enjoy and talk about.

⑤ **Cook It Up:** A special recipe can become a treasured keepsake. This holiday, get the whole family together to learn how to make a family favorite. As you're cooking, write out exactly how to make the recipe, including a title that ties the recipe to the family member who made it (e.g. Grandma Ann's Honey Cake), yield, list of ingredients with measurements, and preparation instructions.

⑥ **Hang "Best Memory" Ornaments:** Each person writes out their best memory of each family member from the past year. Brightly decorate the outside of the notes (or write the notes on wrapping paper), roll them up (secure with a small bit of tape), and use gold thread through the center to hang them on the Christmas tree.

On Christmas day, open and read the notes aloud. Collect each year's notes in a scrapbook.

⑦ **Make a Family Time Capsule:** Make a time capsule an annual tradition in your family. Each year, include items that represent the past year for your family – schoolwork, photos, greeting cards, letters, handwritten family stories or a videotape of people sharing memories, and anything else you can think of. Put all the items in a container, mark it with the year, and store it in a safe place. Each holiday, you can look back on mementoes from past years.