

What is HYGGE?

By Kim Westfall, Head of School at Christ Church School

Hygge (*hue-geh* - noun, verb, adjective) is a Danish tradition of coziness and relaxation, gratefulness, being present in the moment, and celebrating the everyday moments that make life special. This concept encourages us to take pleasure in simple, every-day, cozy comforts to create an atmosphere of sanctuary, warmth, and community. Put on your favorite yoga pants and fuzzy socks when you arrive home or light a candle and sip your favorite beverage while reading a book – and you're in super hygge mode. You can hygge by yourself, but it is equally valuable to share hygge moments with others.

So why is hygge important? Hygge creates a state of happiness derived from feeling comfortable, safe, and relaxed. This state allows us to operate in an optimal atmosphere of cooperation and collaboration. Isn't that what we all want for our children – to learn, grow, and thrive in a cozy and comfortable environment?

It is simple to add hygge to a home or classroom – and the return is ENORMOUS: less stress, more memorable moments, calm relaxation, and additional appreciation for all the little things that give your life meaning.

Here are some examples of hygge in action at Christ Church School:

Teachers at Christ Church School have taken hygge to heart by using flameless candles at lunch, creating cozy and comfortable reading nooks, hanging twinkle lighting, playing soft music in the classroom, and orchestrating mindful breathing activities. Classes have morning circles to encourage discussions and bond as a school family. Students even work together to earn cozy sock days!



The cooler days of fall and winter are a perfect time to turn up the hygge with your family:

- **Eat dinner by candlelight** (flameless) one night a week.
- **Connect with the people around you** – put down your phone.
- **Bake and eat warm cake**, muffins, or cookies.
- **Add a touch of twinkle** (lights) - and turn down the rest of the lights.
- **Eat hearty comfort foods** (oatmeal, soup, mac & cheese, chili, stews, etc.).
- **Drink warm beverages** (coffee, tea, hot chocolate).
- **Play card or board games** with friends or family.
- **Read books.**
- **Snuggle in for a favorite movie.**
- **Diffuse essential oils.**
- **Keep a daily gratitude journal.**
- **Put on your fuzzy socks and/or favorite oversized sweater.**
- **Stock up on cozy blankets and comfy pillows.**
- **Chocolate.** Eat lots of chocolate.
- **Listen to music.**
- **Take a nap.** Or several.
- **Enjoy the slow moments:** pause, watch, breathe, listen, and feel. Take your time!

Happy hygge!

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