



## A stress free holiday

- ☐ Expect less! Don't compete with past holidays or try to make this one "the best ever". Set realistic goals, pace yourself, and organize time. Write a list of the most important activities and things to do. Don't plan too much. Be realistic about what you can do. Don't spend too much time preparing for one day (Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.).
- ☐ The holiday season does not automatically make feelings of sadness or loneliness go away. Allow yourself to feel however you feel but talk with others about how you feel when you begin to feel down.
- ☐ Let go of the past! Don't be disappointed if your holidays are not like they used to be. Life brings changes. Each holiday season is different and can be enjoyed in its' own way. You set yourself up for sadness if everything has to be just like the "good old days". Especially with the loss of a loved one, keep memories in your heart and dedicate new traditions to them and look toward the future.
- ☐ Do something for someone else. Try volunteering to help others.
- ☐ Enjoy "free" holiday activities: Drive and look at Holiday decorations, go window shopping, ice skating etc.
- ☐ Do not drink too much. Alcohol is a depressant. Drinking can make you feel more depressed.
- ☐ Don't be afraid to try something new. Celebrate the holidays in a way you have not done before.
- ☐ Spend time with "supportive" people who care about you. Even those who care about you might not always be supportive (both family and friends). Make new friends if you are alone during special times. Contact someone you have lost touch with.
- ☐ Spend less and not over what you can afford. Make gifts & be creative. Don't get caught up in the "buying trend".
- ☐ Get plenty of exercise, sleep, and time to relax by living in the moment.
- ☐ Find time for yourself! Don't spend all your time providing activities for your family and friends.

**If you feel down and need someone to talk to, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

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## Before leaving to shop

- ❖ Turn off all lights & blow-out all open flame candles before leaving home
- ❖ Never leave children home alone without an adult or child 13 years of age or older
- ❖ Avoid shopping alone
- ❖ Shop during daylight hours, if dark:
  - ✓ Shop with a friend
  - ✓ Park in well-lighted space
  - ✓ Avoid carrying large amounts of cash
- ❖ Keep your purse or wallet with you
- ❖ Keep valuables out of plain view in your car
- ❖ While shopping never leave children alone:
  - ✓ In a car
  - ✓ In public facilities (arcade or playground)

## After shopping-walking to car

- ❖ When leaving the stores, if late at night ask security to escort you to your car
- ❖ When walking to your car:
  - ✓ Notice your surroundings
  - ✓ Walk in well-lighted areas where there are people
- ❖ Be aware of people around you. Scan the area around your car. Make sure nobody is hiding nearby-If someone looks suspicious report them and request for an escort
- ❖ Have car key in your hand, ready to unlock the car
- ❖ Once at your car:
  - ✓ Look inside to make sure nobody is hiding
  - ✓ When loading purchases put your purse in first, then children, packages, etc.
  - ✓ Once in vehicle, lock doors immediately

## During shopping

- ❖ Don't carry too many packages-*lock them in car trunk or not in plain view*
- ❖ Avoid carrying large amounts of cash
- ❖ Wear your purse strapped across your body and wallets in front pocket
- ❖ Use credit or bank ATM card or checks rather than carrying cash.
  - ✓ Keep credit slips-tear & discard later
  - ✓ If ATM is used, use as "credit" so you do not have to use your PIN number
- ❖ If you need an ATM, use one located in a mall, store, or well-lighted location
- ❖ In public restrooms-do not hang a purse on handles/hooks and never on the floor
- ❖ Always go with your child when taking them to the restroom
- ❖ Teach your child, if a stranger asks them for help, that they run and tell you or another adult immediately
- ❖ Use the shopping cart safety belt for a child
- ❖ On escalators-hold a child's hand facing them forward and make sure shoes are tied



## Once at home

- ❖ Take infants & toddlers from car and into to home first, then remove gifts
- ❖ Keep all wrapped gifts hidden in closets, not under your tree, so they are out of sight to prevent a burglary
- ❖ Put gifts under you tree on December 24<sup>th</sup>



**Remove baby from car first**



*Happy kids while you shop*

## Set boundaries with your child

Plan ahead, when you take your child to any store during the holidays, let them know what your intent is. Let them know what you are shopping for. If gifts for others, try to have them help by asking for their ideas. Let them know that it is ok if they see something they like, but this is not the time for us to buy it.

## Validate your child's feelings

So plan ahead, be aware and ready to respond, because you know you will hear "I want...". So as you shop, when you hear "I want", remember to first validate their feelings. Even if you are shopping for others, still validate them by letting them know you are happy they showed you what they would like. Acknowledge them by asking them to remember that item and write it on a list when they get home. Then, if they keep asking then simply remind them again that you are shopping for others and let them help you.

By simply setting boundaries and validating your child will help give you and your child a much happier holiday.

Throughout the holidays children are targeted by television, internet, radio, and even their friends.

It's no wonder why you hear your child saying "I want..."

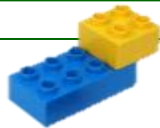
## Set boundaries & validate your child



**Get this!**



**Not this!**



## More tips

Be a positive role model by teaching your children that the holiday season is a time for giving and how to be realistic. Remember trying to meet all of your child's wishes can cause stress to you and your bank account.

- ✓ Let them know if a toy is unsafe or too expensive
- ✓ Let them know that you and Santa will do their best to get them a special gift
- ✓ Enjoy time with your children. Have them choose a craft or activity at least once a week. Bake cookies, write a story, or make up a game, even as a gift. Your children will remember these moments much more than anything you will ever buy!





## Ages 0-3 years

### Be aware!

- ❖ Children can choke on small things of 1 ¾ inch or less
- ❖ Toys with strings, straps or cords more than 7 inches-*strangulation hazard*
- ❖ Avoid toys with small removable parts-*choking hazard*
- ❖ Check small parts, like a teddy bear's eyes and nose are securely attached
- ❖ Balloons are not recommended
- ❖ Toys with lithium battery-*burn risk*



### Gift Ideas!

- ☐ Infants: Soft dolls, stuffed animals (with no buttons or small parts), or cloth covered books
- ☐ Ages 1-3 years: Books, blocks, shape toys, or balls (no smaller than 1 ¾ inches)
- ☐ Read tags to make sure gifts are age-appropriate

## All ages

### Be Aware! & Never Buy

- ✓ Propelled toys such as darts
- ✓ Toys with lead-based paint
- ✓ Toy guns, or pellet or BB guns
- ✓ Toys with sharp point or edges
- ✓ Toys that make loud noises-can injury hearing

### Always!

- ✓ Follow age recommendations
- ✓ Read instructions and teach your child how to properly use any new toy
- ✓ Immediately discard plastic wrappings, which can lead to suffocation in small children

## Ages 4-8 years

### Be aware!

- ❖ Electric toys can be a burn hazard for this age
- ❖ Electronic devices are distractions and do not stimulate creative learning that helps brain development

### Gift Ideas!

- ☐ Non-toxic arts and crafts
- ☐ Books
- ☐ Musical Instruments
- ☐ Outdoor toys



## Ages 9 and older

### Be Aware!

- ❖ Electric trains and battery operated toys are safe for this age, but:
  - ✓ Children should not change batteries
  - ✓ Adults check for loose wires
- ❖ Electronic devices do not promote physical activity or brain development

### Gift Ideas!

- ☐ Sports equipment
- ☐ Bicycle, scooter, skateboard, roller blades or skates
  - ✓ Helmet & protective gear





## Choosing a tree

- ❖ Artificial trees: Labels must read "Fire Resistant"
- ❖ Live trees: Make sure no needles fall off- if so its not fresh.
- ❖ **Keep stand filled with water** so tree does not dry out quickly



## Setting up a tree

- ❖ Place the tree **away from** fireplaces, radiators, or portable heaters
- ❖ Be sure the tree is **mounted on a sturdy base** and placed away from walking areas so children cannot pull it over onto themselves

## Decorating a tree

- ❖ **Snow spray:** Follow directions to avoid lung irritation
- ❖ Use only flame-resistant decorations and ornaments
- ❖ Small/breakable ornaments: Keep on upper branches to keep away from children
- ❖ Keep Decorations that are sharp, breakable, look like candy, or have small parts out of the reach of children.
- ❖ **Never** use lighted candles on trees
- ❖ Choose tinsel or artificial icicles made of **non-leaded material**. Lead materials are hazardous to children
- ❖ Holiday plants: Mistletoe, holly berries, and Christmas cactus if swallowed are poisonous. Keep these up high, away from small children and animals. Poinsettias may cause stomach aches if swallowed. Questions call Poison Control at **1-800-222-1222**



## Lights

- ❖ **Indoor lights** use "indoors" only
- ❖ **Outside lights** use "outdoors" only and those with a label "certified for outdoor use"
- ❖ **Throw away lights with** broken sockets, frayed or bare wires
- ❖ **Outdoor lights and decorations** plugged into ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), purchased where electrical supplies are sold
- ❖ **Use no more than three strings** of lights for each extension cord
- ❖ **Never** use electric lights on a metallic tree.
- ❖ **Stay away from** power lines leading from the home to utility poles
- ❖ **Fasten outdoor lights securely** to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect from wind damage. Use insulated staples to hold strings in place-not nails or tacks. or hook strings of lights on hooks
- ❖ When removing outdoor lights never pull lights down



## Fireplaces

- ❖ **Do not burn** wrapping papers or tree branches in the fireplace-these ignite rapidly!
- ❖ Keep "fire salts," that make colored flames when put on wood fires, stored high, away from children. These salts contain heavy metals that can cause severe stomach irritation and vomiting if eaten.



## **If this is your first holiday after losing a loved one, these steps offer an easier way to get through the holidays.**

**Meet with family.** Discuss the importance of doing something different to honor your loved one. Exchange ideas. Not everyone will want to join and that is fine. Everyone goes through the grieving process differently. Each person has to do what is best for them. So it is fine if some family and friends do things separate.



**Plan something different.** Try not to recreate the past. Celebrate the holidays differently, however that may be. Go to a restaurant; visit old friends or relatives; go someplace you have never been before; if you choose to put up a Christmas tree, make new, or buy, decorations for it; have a special thought or some way of honoring and expressing your loved one together.

**Keep it simple.** Do not stress about gifts. Buy less or maybe just for the children. Or make homemade gifts. Keep it simple and different. You can have a fun activity by making decorations with others. For meals keep them simple too. Go out to eat, make different foods, etc.

**Take care of yourself.** Find time to relax. Eat nourishing healthy meals. Avoid alcohol since it can intensify depression and keep you from sleeping well.

**Plan to keep busy.** Grief can take all your energy away and even though we know we need to get up and do something, we do not have the energy. Have friends help you plan things to keep you busy. If you need to rest is fine but keep busy so you do not start feeling down or depressed.

**Pay attention to how you feel.** It is ok to let others know how you feel. If you begin to feel down and depressed talk with anyone. Let them know you need to talk and express how you feel to them. When you let people know you have experienced a loss of a loved one and need to talk, you will be surprised how people will offer to listen and help. So let others know how you feel. Be gentle to yourself and to others as well.

**Express your feelings.** Expect to feel some pain from your loss. This is normal. When you feel sad during the holidays, this is normal. Experience tears and express how you feel. Have faith in yourself and know you will get through this and will be fine.

**If you need help get help from others.** Grieving is difficult and should not be done alone. Share your feelings with others. If a friend or family member is not able to give you the support you need, call and talk with a lifeline counselor 24 hours a day at 1-800-273-8255 (FOR VETERANS PRESS "1", EN ESPAÑOL OPRIMA EL 2)

**Give something of yourself to others.** One of the most helpful things you can do to help you feel better is to help others, especially during the holidays. And do this in honor of the loved one you lost.

Remember to express your feelings, make plans to keep busy, do something different with others to honor your loved one, and if you need help call the lifeline at **1-800-273-8255**. Doing something different with others this holiday season can help you create new traditions to honor your loved one and get through the holidays in a different but special way.

## Kitchen safety tips



- ☐ Never leave food that is cooking unattended
- ☐ Turn all pot handles toward the back of the stove
- ☐ Keep flammable items, such as towels & dishrags, away from the stovetop
- ☐ Never put water on a cooking fire...use baking soda or flour to help put it out
- ☐ Turn off all appliances before leaving the kitchen

## Cooking with children as helpers

- ☐ Before introducing children to the kitchen, make sure you have taken essential safety steps such as having a fire extinguisher nearby
- ☐ Wash your hands frequently as well as your children
- ☐ Never leave a child unattended in the kitchen
- ☐ Never carry a child while cooking
- ☐ Make sure you & your child wear close-fitting clothing when cooking
- ☐ Always supervise a child when using the microwave
- ☐ Children under age 10 should not handle the stove, electrical appliances, sharp utensils or hot dishes
- ☐ Be sure to keep hot liquids and foods away from counter or table edges where they can be easily knocked off by children
- ☐ Unplug appliance cords when not in use and keep them out of children's reach



## Food & Cooking Safety

**Clean:** Wash hands & food-contact surfaces often. Bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen & get onto cutting boards, knives, sponges, & counter tops.

**Separate:** Don't cross-contaminate--don't let bacteria spread from one food product to another-especially true for raw meat, poultry and seafood. Keep these foods and their juices away from ready-to-eat foods.

**Cook:** Cook to proper temperatures. Foods are properly cooked when they are heated for a long enough time and at a high enough temperature to kill the harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness.

**Chill:** Refrigerate promptly. Refrigerate foods quickly keeps most harmful bacteria from growing and multiplying. Keep refrigerator set at 40 F & freezer at 0 F, check settings occasionally with a thermometer.

US Department of Agriculture

Meat and Poultry Hotline:

1-800-535-4555

1-800-256-7072 (TDD/TTY)



## Menorah safety

- ☐ Place menorah on a non-flammable, solid, level surface
- ☐ Make sure the candles are secure in each holder
- ☐ Keep any flammable material (drapes, blinds, decorations, plants) away from the menorah
- ☐ Before lighting the menorah make sure it is intended to be lit and not for decorative purposes only
- ☐ Never leave a lit menorah unattended



### **Basic Fire Safety Preparation:**

- ✓ Before Hanukkah begins, test each smoke detector/change batteries if needed
- ✓ Keep a fire extinguisher handy near the menorah



## Cooking safety

- ☐ When cooking latkes, keep children away from the hot oil
- ☐ Keep frying pans of hot oil on the back burner and keep the handle of the pan away from the edge so children cannot reach and grab the pan
- ☐ If you prefer children to help out, give them tasks that will not put them in close to knives, scissors, kitchen appliances or hot food.
- ☐ Older children can assist but only with adult supervision
- ☐ Never leave stove unattended while cooking





## Home Safety

- ☐ Anchor furniture and televisions to the wall to prevent from tipping over
- ☐ Remove guns from your home or keep locked in a gun safe with trigger locks
- ☐ Install a Carbon Monoxide detector in your home. Call your local Fire Department for information-NEVER bring a BBQ indoors and NEVER use an oven to warm your home
- ☐ If you take prescription medication, BEFORE buying over-the-counter medication-check with a pharmacist

If you have infants or toddlers in your home:

- ☐ Use protective devices on bathroom door, cabinets, toilet seat locks, electric outlet covers
- ☐ Install stair gates at top and bottom
- ☐ Install window and balcony safety guards
- ☐ Keep items with lithium batteries out of reach of infants & toddlers (car key remotes, remote controls, electronic books, greeting cards, candles)
- ☐ Keep all medications and cleaning products locked up or out of reach of young children
- ☐ Remove poisonous plants from home
- ☐ Poison questions, concerns call 1-800-222-1222



## Bike, walk & skate safety

- ☐ Wear a helmet flat on your head, fastened snugly when you ride a bicycle, scooter, roller blades/skates-*It's The Law!*
- ☐ When riding a bicycle follow the "rules of the road"
- ☐ Obey pedestrian signals and always cross a street at an intersection or crosswalk



## Pool Safety

- ☐ Visiting a home with a pool? Remember most toddlers who have drowned in pools were not expected to have been in the pool area but elsewhere in the home, asleep or playing

If you own a pool-when the pool is not-in-use:

- ☐ Have a perimeter fence that completely surrounds it with a self-closing, self-latching gate, and keep it locked
- ☐ Keep inflatable items and toys out of the pool and pool area

If you own a pool-when the pool is in-use:

- ☐ Designate an adult who knows CPR and swims to "watch" the children. This means watching actively, not reading, sleeping, eating, talking to others, etc.
- ☐ Make sure children 5-years of age and older know how to swim
- ☐ Have lifesaving equipment at the pool and know how to use it



## Car safety



- ☐ Drive-Don't text!
- ☐ Always wear a seat belt when riding in a vehicle
- ☐ Keep children safety buckled in the back seat until they learn to drive
- ☐ Always have children properly fastened in an appropriate child safety seat or booster seat in the back seat when riding in a vehicle
- ☐ Remember take your baby out of the car first. Never leave a child alone in a vehicle-*It's The Law!*



*Happy Holidays*



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[www.ProCarSeatSafety.com](http://www.ProCarSeatSafety.com)

