

Safety tips to keep your holiday safer

The holidays are filled with many time-consuming and busy activities such as shopping, decorating, entertaining, traveling and playing, so the Cabinet for Health Services wants to remind people to keep safety in mind to ensure the happiest holidays possible.

The holidays can be made more enjoyable taking some basic safety precautions about outdoor fun, food safety, visiting, and fireplaces, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Outdoor Fun
* Make sure children's gloves and shoes stay dry. If either becomes wet, change them right away.

* Prohibit strolling on or into the roadway. Look for shallow slopes that are free of obstacles such as trees and fences.

* Ensure that an adult is in charge of cutting down a live tree for the holiday. Young children can pick out the tree while an adult does the chopping or cutting. Check the tree for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.

Food Safety.

* Care should be taken to thoroughly wash all raw vegetables and fruits prior to preparing or serving them. These are foods that are typically grown outdoors and in the soil and possibly exposed to contaminated water or soil.

* Wash hands frequently and thoroughly - foodborne illness is easily spread by unclean hands.

* Always keep raw and cooked foods separate to prevent cross contamination. Thoroughly clean cutting boards between uses, use separate utensils when preparing foods, and always wash a spoon used to taste food before reuse.

* Fully cook all meats and poultry.

* Care should be taken in transporting potluck dishes. Keep hot

foods hot and cold foods cold prior to serving.

Entertaining and Visiting
* Clean up immediately after a holiday party. A toddler could rise early and choke on leftover food or come in contact with alcohol or tobacco.

* Remember that the homes you visit may not be childproofed. Keep an eye out for danger spots.

* Keep a laminated list with all of the important phone numbers you or a baby-sitter are likely to need in case of an emergency. Include the police and fire department, your pediatrician and the poison control center.

* Ask your neighbor if they have a gun before sending your kids over to play. If the answer is yes, you need to make absolutely sure that all guns are stored unloaded and locked - ideally in a gun safe - with ammunition locked separately. Include the question along with other things you might normally discuss before sending your child to someone's house.

* Plan a safe place for babies to sleep when traveling. Ensure that unfamiliar cribs and playpens meet current design specifications.

* A recent study published in the Journal of Pediatrics shows that babies who sleep in adult beds are up to 40 percent more likely to suffocate than those that sleep in an infant crib that meets current specifications because they can become entangled in openings such as between the bed and wall or suffocate in soft bedding material. "Check cribs and playpens for safety requirements such as the space between side slats (no more than 2 3/8 inches) and materials that could cause suffocation before putting baby down for a nap. You should remove suffocation hazards like pillows, blankets, and stuffed animals," said Dr. Rice Leach, Commissioner of Kentucky's Department for Public Health. "Just taking a few minutes to ensure safety can make all the difference between a happy holiday and a tragic one."

Fireplaces

* Use care with "fire salts," which produce colored flames when thrown of wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten. Keep them away from children.

* Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.

For more information on consumer product safety, visit www.saferkids.org or www.aap.org or www.cpsc.gov or call Mike Cavanah or Tammy Warford, Environmental Management Branch, Department of Public Health, 502-564-4456. For further food safety information contact Anita Travis, Food Safety Branch, Department of Public Health, 502-564-7181.

The CAP Corner

Adult Learning Center

Outreach Program

Christmas is the season of joy, peace, love, and exchanging gifts with your loved ones in the name of Jesus Christ, but sometimes it can be more of a burden than a joyful spirit. For some folks, just getting the bills paid is a battle won. We all know that Christmas comes once a year and it always comes at the same time - believe it or not, just a little sooner each year, but humans as we are, we wait until the last minute to get things done.

We all have had some hardships in our life at some point or another. The Outreach Program is here to help in those times of need. We serve low-income families who struggle with the necessities of life. We want to be a hand-up and not a handout. The Outreach Program wants to help you with your financial burdens. We are offering a 30-day budgeting class with all materials provided. We have had lots of success with this class in several other surrounding

counties. This not only helps you to spread your financial abilities a little further but you actually see where every penny is spent. This is available on an individual basis or in a group setting. The information is only for you and the Caseworker to see, so your information will be kept confidential.

We can help you to be prepared for the unexpected such as vehicle repairs, birthdays, doctor bills, and also help you to spread your money out for those bills that we know are coming each month but are not prepared to pay, such as high electric bills, car insurance, and other household items.

If you are interested in learning more about how to receive financial assistance, please call Janet Glovak at 256-3100. Please take advantage of this free opportunity to help you save money and not have to worry if your children or grandchildren will have a Merry Christmas. We would love to help! God bless you all and have a Merry Christmas!

"Family Room"

(Cont. From D7)

couple? The culture in which they live gives men permission to be violent. They grow up with heroes like

Arnold Schwarzenegger, the new governor of California, who is The Terminator on the big screen and treats women as playthings in private life. They watch professional wrestling which degrades women and glorifies violence. Their buddies may agree with them that sometimes it is necessary "to discipline the little woman" in the same way that children are disciplined.

The culture however does not make all men violent. Those who do become violent often have themselves been treated violently or have witnessed violence. When Dad abuses them or they see him abuse Mom, they become angry. That anger then comes out later on in life, often at women, the same target that Dad chose.

Men who desire "Peace on Earth" must stand up and say that violence

is not a part of what it means to be a man. The macho, machismo image of a "real man" must be laid to rest and replaced by the picture of a man who is tender and loving with his children and his wife.

Men who want peace must speak up and not tolerate violence. Men who want peace must not sit by while other men abuse spouses and children. Men who want peace must create a society which is not tolerant of male (or female) violence.

Some countries have much less violence than the United States. Japan's murder rate is lower than in the U.S., perhaps due to their strict gun laws.

Canada, which has more guns per person than the U.S. has a lower murder rate. Canadians have the means to kill but they do not, or at least not as often as Americans.

Something is wrong in America, and the problem begins at home. Stopping domestic violence will decrease the number of angry males who need to take their anger out on other citizens.

Tips to ease the pain of grief during the holiday season

For most people, the holidays bring about a time of joy and celebration.

Family get-togethers, home-cooked dinners and family traditions are just a few of the many cherished activities. Yet, for those who have experienced the loss of a loved one, the holidays are often robbed of their joy.

Instead, these and other important days, become a time of loneliness and sadness. What's more, throughout these seasons, we are constantly bombarded with happy family images through cards, television, commercials, movies and magazines. The contrast between what we see and how we feel, only amplifies the loneliness within.

Brook Noel, co-author of the noted book *I Wish I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye: Surviving, Coping and Healing with the Sudden Death of a Loved One* (Champion Press) and author of the new book, *Surviving Holidays, Birthdays and Anniversaries: a guide to grieving during special occasions* (Champion Press) offers these tips for easing grief's grip during the holidays:

Be prepared for the ambush: Deep pain and sadness, as if the death had just occurred, can surface at odd intervals. Anticipating these ambushes is half the battle. Know that they are part of the grief process.

Talk, talk, talk. With all the celebrations and happiness that surround us, we may feel awkward bringing up anything that isn't equally festive. But we must release our feelings through talking to others. If we don't, our feelings will lodge within us creating a dark sadness. The only way to get past our sadness is to move through it. If you do not have someone you can talk to, consider free online support, like that which is found at www.griefsteps.com.

Grieve in your own way. Sometimes societal and religious beliefs rules like time limits for grief, what we should wear, how we should behave, when and where we should talk about the death and to whom.

It is important not to weigh ourselves down with societal expectations.

We must find our own way through to embrace life again.

Hold a grief session. The goal of a Grief Session is simple: Set aside 20 minutes each day where we are safe to experience our feelings. When we don't do this, we let our feelings build inside our hearts and they cause sadness and depression.

Create a support group. Changes are that other family members and friends who were close to your lost loved one will be having equal difficulty with these difficult days. Consider asking one or more people who are facing similar emotions, to gather for a support group.

Choose activities wisely! During holidays and other busy seasons, not only do we have to face our grief, but we often have many other commitments and people that need our attention. As you look at the upcoming difficult days, take a personal "emotional inventory." Decide ahead of time how much you can handle during the holidays. Then make sure you don't take on more than feels right to you.

Do not try to outgrieve grief: As you face your holiday shopping, beware of the common pitfall of trying to "outgrieve" your grief. When we are feeling a hole or ache inside, human nature often leads us to purchase items to fill that hole.

Let your body lead you: Grief affects us all differently. Let your body lead you. If you feel tired-sleep. If you feel like crying-cry. If you are hungry-eat. Don't feel you need to act one way or another. There are no "shoulds" right now, simply follow the lead of your body.

Make new traditions: This new phase in your life deserves some new traditions. Hold onto the traditions that still offer comfort, but create new traditions as well.

Light a candle: Select a beautifully scented candle. Throughout the difficult days, light the candle as a reminder of your bond with the person you have lost.

Spread the gifts: Use the money that you would have spent on gifts for your loved one to make a special donation to charity in his or her honor.

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www.trustforlife.org

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And you're at the top of the list of people we'd like to thank this year!

It's always a pleasure seeing you.



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