

WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

DECEMBER 12, 2018



Managing Holiday Stress

What is holiday stress?

In Great Britain the word "holiday" has the same meaning as vacation. Many Americans would find this comparison laughable. For most of us, the holidays come with our own "to-do" lists. Too often we take holiday stress for granted. What's worse, we often have higher expectations for this season than for any other time of the year. Planning for the holidays can leave us feeling impatient, cranky, and – in some cases – depressed. When the realities of day-to-day life conflict with our efforts to make the holiday season perfect, stress results.

What are the holiday blues?

For some of us, the holidays can be a depressing time when we get the holiday blues. Feelings of sadness, loneliness, and anger can intensify when contrasted with the joy expected of the holidays. Factors that can contribute to holiday depression include:

- Associating the holidays with unresolved family issues or a painful childhood.
- Ignoring feelings of sadness, loneliness, or depression in an effort to maintain "holiday cheer."

- Facing the loss of a loved one with whom you have shared the holidays.
- Having unrealistic expectations of family and friends.
- Having an expectation that you "should" feel good.
- Being away from family and friends.
- Feeling isolated from others.
- Reflecting on losses or disappointments over the past year.
- Coping with changes in family obligations, particularly after a recent marriage or divorce.
- Drinking more alcohol, which is often more readily available during the holidays. (Avoid drinking alcohol to ward off negative feelings. Alcohol often will make depression worse.)

How do I cope with the holiday blues?

- Try something new. Take a vacation with a family member or friend.
- Spend time with people who care about you.
- Volunteer your time to help others. Spending time with those in need can help you feel less isolated.
- If you are religious, take time to reflect on the spiritual significance of the holidays.
- Try to appreciate the good things you have now instead of focusing on the past.

- Stay active. Get out. Go for a walk. Window shop.
- Accept feelings of sadness or loneliness. These feelings might not go away just because it's the holidays.
- Get help if you need it. Don't be embarrassed to ask for help any time of the year.

How do I prevent holiday stress?

Are your expectations for the holidays realistic? Asking yourself this question is the first step to managing holiday stress. Make a list of what you expect from yourself and your family during the holidays. Hidden within these expectations you might find your potential holiday stressors – the things specific to you that can cause stress.

Under each item in the list, write down what changes you can make to prevent or defuse stress. Make the changes that will be most helpful to you. Do not hold on to unrealistic goals, such as creating the most enchanting holiday atmosphere. Remember to include your own needs.

Here is an example of a holiday stress prevention list:

- Ask people what they want instead of scouring the earth to find the "perfect" gifts.
- Shop early, when there is more of a selection.
- Stick to your gift budget.
- Simplify holiday commitments and traditions. Discuss with your family which traditions are most important to you and to them. It's okay to re-evaluate past traditions.
- Allow time for yourself. Remember to do things that you enjoy.
- Avoid time crunches by making plans to visit some friends and family soon after the holidays.
- Don't over-schedule yourself. Allow enough time to relax and recover after visiting with others.
- Tell family members about your commitments so you are not struggling against their expectations.
- Travel after rush hour. When driving long distances, give yourself time to stop and rest

RUNNING CLUB

COME JOIN YOUR FELLOW EXPLORER FAMILIES EVERY MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, AND FRIDAY AT 7:45AM FOR RUN CLUB ON THE WASHINGTON FIELD!

MEET NEW FAMILIES, ENGAGE IN A HEALTHY ACTIVITY, AND SET PERSONAL GOALS!

Blue Zones Recipe of the Week



No-Bake Cranberry Nut Energy Bites

Centenarians eat about a handful of nuts a day and their preferred snack provide healthy fats necessary for brain function. Naturally sweetened with dates, packed with fiber from both nuts and whole grains, these energy bites are perfect for snacking on the go or packing as a sweet post-lunch treat.

[CLICK HERE FOR THE RECIPE](#)

Upcoming Events in the Community

FREE MINDFULNESS WORKSHOP
12.15.18 - 11AM-1PM

REDONDO BEACH LIBRARY
EXPERIENCE HOW PRACTICING MINDFULNESS CAN HELP AT BEACH CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT'S (BCHD) FREE, INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP. PARTICIPANTS WILL LEARN EVIDENCE-BASED TECHNIQUES DESIGNED FOR ALL AGES AND EXPERIENCE LEVELS.

WINTER ADVENTURECAMP
12.24-12.28 - 9AM-4PM
ADVENTUREPLEX
ADVENTURECAMP KEEPS CHILDREN ACTIVE, ENGAGED AND LEARNING, WITH LOTS OF EXCITING RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FULLY CHAPERONED FIELD TRIPS TO PLACES LIKE AMUSEMENT PARKS AND THE BEACH.

TEEN WELLNESS WORKSHOP
12.13.18 - 730-830PM
FIT ON STUDIOS
THIS FREE WORKSHOP SERIES FOR TEENS IS PROVIDED BY FIT ON STUDIOS AND IS CO-SPONSORED BY SOUTH BAY FAMILIES CONNECTED. A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR TEENS TO UNPLUG AND LEARN HEALTHY WAYS TO DE-STRESS.

Love the giver more than the gift.
-Brigham Young