



TDCJ Risk Management's Training Circular

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December Holiday Safety and Stress



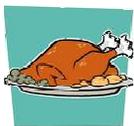
Deck the halls with boughs of holly, fa la la la la, la la la la. Tis the season to be jolly, fa la la la la, la la la la.



your family and friends the following are a few guidelines that will help keep you safe during the holidays.

lights off the house and tree and place them ever so gently in a box for the next year, only to discover the following

Do you get that warm fuzzy feeling when you think about winter and the holidays fast approaching? I often wondered what my parents meant by "How time flies". Where did the year go? This time of year is so busy, we don't know if



we are coming, going or if we have already been there. The holidays are a great time for family gatherings, cooking, home and office decorating. We want to make this holiday season joyous and safe for



- ⌘ Never use candles on a tree or near evergreens.
- ⌘ Keep candles in a sturdy holder and away from combustible materials such as curtains.
- ⌘ Never leave a candle unattended and always keep out of reach of children.
- ⌘ Candles or any other open flame device is prohibited from being used in TDCJ areas.
- ⌘ Extinguish candles before going to bed or leaving the house.



CANDLES

SAFE LIGHTING

Each year we carefully take the



year that the little light elf has been in your box playing and the lights are all tangled up. That has to be the only explanation because you know you didn't leave them like that. So here you go, untangling lights, **AGAIN!**



- * When you get ready to hang your lights, take a minute to check the bulbs, sockets, cords for nicks, cuts, broken insulation or exposed wires. **DO NOT** use damaged lights or cords.
- * When you are selecting lights, extension cords and outside decorations, ensure that they are designed for outdoor use.

- * Most extension cords have three - prong (grounded) male and female plugs. **DO NOT** use the cord if the grounding leg has been removed or damaged.



- * If using outdoor spot lights for illumination, use a approved lamp holder to hold the bulb, a gasket for sealing the bulb in the socket, and some have a metal or plastic spike attached to stake it into the ground. Ensure you turn off all the lights when leaving the house or going to bed.



STRESS

The holidays can be fun, but they also can be a source of great stress - and no wonder. The holidays are often depicted as a magical time when dreams come true.



Do Financial Pressures Stress People Out to the Point of Ruining the Holiday Spirit?

Knowing your spending limit is also a way to relieve holiday stress. People believe that they

have to go out and buy gifts because it's the holidays, even if they can't afford to do so. Not only is it stressful to feel that you have to buy everyone an expensive gift, but you'll be stressed for the rest of the year trying to pay off your bills. You can show love and caring by getting something that you know is meaningful and personal for that person that doesn't have to cost a lot.



How Do Time Pressures Affect People Around the Holidays?

People shouldn't have to put their lives on pause or totally rearrange their schedules because of the holidays. Learn to prioritize the invitations you accept and don't feel that you have to go to every holiday gathering.



How Do You Cope With Kids Who Want Everything For The Holidays and Have No Sense of What Things Cost?



Parents need to tell their children to be realistic. It is OK to say to your child that a cer-

tain toy is too expensive. And even Santa Claus has limited funds and has to choose what to give because he has a very long list. You can also tell your children that Mom and Dad and Santa Claus will try to choose the most suitable present for the child. Children have to learn that their wish is not someone's command and to curb their desires for instant gratification



Suicide Prevention

According to the Mayo Clinic in the United States, suicide is the 11th-leading cause of death, with 32,000 suicides a year, or about 89 a day.

Among Americans ages 10 to 24, it's the third-leading cause of death, accounting for about 4,600 deaths a year. Thousands of people ask the same age old question "Why would someone want to kill themselves". You can put it into three words: ***"To stop pain"***. Often those left behind wonder why and could I have stopped it, if I would have only known the warning signs.

Would you know the warning signs?

Warning Signs:

- Someone threatening to hurt or kill him/herself.
- Someone looking for ways to harm or kill him/herself by seeking access to firearms, pills or other means.
- Someone talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide.
- Can't get out of this depression
- Can't make the sadness go away
- Can't see themselves as being worthwhile
- Can't get someone's attention
- Can't seem to get control

Warning Emotions:

- Hopelessness
- Rage, uncontrollable anger, seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking
- Feeling trapped
- Increase alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from family, friends and society
- Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Dramatic mood changes
- No reason to for living; no sense of purpose in life

Suicidal Thoughts and Feelings:

- Can't stop the pain
- Can't think clearly
- Can't make decisions
- Can't see a way out
- Can't sleep
- Can't eat
- Can't work

Individuals with suicidal thoughts need to understand that with help comes hope.

If you notice any of these suicidal signs in family or friends call the **National Suicide Prevention Hotline immediately. 1-800-273 TALK (8255)**. For staff and offenders, contact Medical Staff or Mental Health Professional immediately.



Suicide is never the answer, but getting help is the answer.

Please take time out of your busy holiday season to remember our troops who will be spending the holidays away from their families and friends

From all of us here in the Risk Management Department we would like to say:

MERRY CHRISTMAS.



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