

# Student Mental Health and Well-Being



TCDSB Mental Health Services provided by **Psychology, Social Work, and Guidance** personnel

Wishing everyone a joyful Christmas!

## Setting Realistic Expectations at Christmas Time

Tips from St. Patrick's Hospital, Dublin, Ireland.

Christmas is often a very busy time of year with much planning and activities. While it's enjoyable, we may find ourselves rushing from one event to another without taking the time to enjoy each moment. We encourage you to consider the following tips so that you will enjoy a "well-paced" Christmas.

1. Decide which Christmas activities and traditions are most significant to you. Only participate in those activities that have significance for you and decline the activities which cause stress or are insignificant for you.
2. Christmas time tends to be a time when people spend more money than they can afford. Make a Christmas budget and stick with it.
3. Take care of yourself. Eat right, get enough sleep and exercise. As adults, control your alcohol consumption and limit your indulgence in high fat or sugary foods.
4. Recognize signs of stress and use relaxation techniques when you begin to get irritated or upset such taking a few deep breaths, going for a walk or taking a break.
5. Have realistic expectations of family and friends. Just because it is Christmas, does not mean the attitudes or behaviours of relatives and friends will change. Accept this and plan how you will respond to help keep the Christmas spirit.
6. Make time for yourself. This time does not need to cost anything and can include going for a walk or reading a book. Schedule time for yourself during the busy Christmas period.
7. Delegate Christmas tasks and ask for help. Communicate openly and remember it's ok to say "no". Don't carry the entire burden
8. If you experience persistent low mood or anxiety, consider professional help. There is a wealth of experience and expertise available to deal with mental health difficulties.



*The spirit of God made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life ~ Job 33:4*

## Fostering The Family:

### The TCDSB Pastoral Plan 2015-18 “ Together With one Voice: Harmonizing Our Faith Through Family, Parish, and School” 2017 focuses on the SCHOOL

Family, Parish and School – Unity in Diversity...

Though it is our goal to highlight in depth each community of faith from the educational “village” of family, parish and school every year, it is imperative for us to remember that each of these communities is not simply a discordant or isolated entity; instead, each with the richness of its diversity adds greatness to the harmony of God’s music of love. In other words, the unity of the whole (family, parish and school) does not and should not undermine the uniqueness of the individual. This relationship of unity in diversity reflects St. Paul’s notion of many parts, one body (1 Cor. 12:12-26). This present pastoral plan challenges us as a Board to continue to encourage this ‘symphony’ and build a harmony with ‘ONE VOICE’ in order to develop, celebrate and nurture the wholeness of the human person in our beautiful but sometimes discordant world.

A thought to ponder as an antidote to everyday anxiety during this busy holiday season:

**Philippians 4:6-7***New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

## Wishing you a Very Merry “Balanced” Christmas

Worried your teen would prefer to text her friends than trim the tree with you? Or FaceTime peers rather than faceoff in a family hockey game? Relax: your independent teen is probably more receptive to family holiday traditions than you think. Though peers become increasingly important in a teen’s life, family still matters.

### 1. Plan Ahead

Don’t wait ’til the first day of winter break to share holiday plans with your kids. “Often kids feel they get stuck doing too much family stuff when it hasn’t been discussed beforehand and it’s sprung upon them at the last minute,”

### 2. Hold a Family Meeting

A family meeting is one of the most efficient ways to get everyone on the same page. If your family doesn’t already hold regular meetings, prepare everyone for how this one will go down. “Let them know in advance, ‘We want to have a planning meeting to discuss family commitments for the holidays’. Get your gang to come prepared with things they already have scheduled and any key activities they hope to fit in over the coming days. Then find 30 minutes or so—post-dinner is often a great time—to strategize.

### 3. Prioritize Family Events

Some holiday events are more important than others, so establish priorities upfront. Family time as a non-negotiable, when balancing young people’s social needs is often at play. Parents should decide on their ‘deal breakers’ first, along with things that are optional. Then, approach the teens to determine how things can fit together

### 4. Don’t forget the power of compromise and flexibility( Canadianfamily.ca)

## Mental Health Initiatives 2017-2018

- Support for schools in developing a Mentally Healthy Classroom. See Supporting Minds ( 30 min presentation available to your school as SW or Psych) on the Ministry’s website and edugains.ca.
- Inclusion of mental health to school SLIPs
- Building partnerships with community agencies, families, and parishes.

safeTALK suicide awareness workshops for staff available via PAL



### Suggested Readings and Websites:

#### Websites:

[www.health.harvard.edu](http://www.health.harvard.edu)

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

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

#### Books :

***Because of Bethlehem: Love Is Born, Hope Is Here***

By: Max Lucado

### A Laugh A Day...



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