

# PENNINGTON & RED LAKE COUNTIES WELLNESS COALITION NEWSLETTER December 2014

## Holiday Stress Relief

Information from Mayo Clinic Staff: **“Stress and depression can ruin your holidays and hurt your health. Being realistic, planning ahead and seeking support can help ward off stress and depression.**

The holiday season often brings unwelcome guests — stress and depression. And it's no wonder. The holidays present a dizzying array of demands — parties, shopping, baking, cleaning and entertaining, to name a few. But with some tips, you can minimize the stress that accompanies the holidays. You may even end up enjoying the holidays more than you thought you would.

### **Tips to prevent holiday stress and depression ...**

1. **Acknowledge your feelings.** ...If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief...
2. **Reach out.** If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship...
3. **Be realistic.** The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to, and be open to creating new ones.
4. **Set aside differences.** Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time. ...
5. **Stick to a budget.** Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts. ...
6. **Plan ahead.** Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities. ...
7. **Learn to say no.** Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or activity. ...
8. **Don't abandon healthy habits.** ... Have a healthy snack before holiday parties so that you don't go overboard on unhealthy foods. Get plenty of sleep. Incorporate regular physical activity into each day.
9. **Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. ...



**10. Seek professional help if you need it.** Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious, plagued by physical complaints, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless, and unable to face routine chores. If these feelings last for a while, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.

### **Take control of the holidays**

Don't let the holidays become something you dread. Instead, take steps to prevent the stress and depression that can descend during the holidays. Learn to recognize your holiday triggers so you can combat them before they lead to a meltdown. With a little planning and some positive thinking, you can find peace and joy during the holidays.”

For the complete article please see:

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544>

*“If you ask what is the single most important key to longevity, I would have to say it is avoiding worry, stress and tension. And if you didn't ask me, I'd have to say it anyway.”* -George Burns

## **Why Children Need to Play Outside – Even in the Winter Months**

We all know that playing outside is good for our kids—even in the winter months. There are a lot of benefits for your children when they play outside. Here are several of them.

1. **Builds Up their Immune System:** When your children come into contact with the typical bacteria found outdoors in a natural way and on a regular basis, they are less likely to develop autoimmune disorders and allergies.
2. **Provides Exercise:** Exercising while having fun is the best kind of exercise, and that's exactly what playing outside does. Building a snowman, sledding, having snowball fights and other outside activities get our children's bodies moving.
3. **Stimulates the Imagination:** Sadly, this is one of the things that today's children are lacking.
4. **It Promotes Problem Solving Skills:** they're learning how to get along with friends or trying to figure out the best way to build a fort – they're problem solving.
5. **It Provides Vitamin D:** which is provided by the sun. Vitamin D helps promote better moods, energy Continued

levels, memory, overall health and more.  
If it's nice outside, bundle the kids up and let them play for half an hour or so.

Source: <http://mommiesmagazine.com/10580/children-play-outside-winte>

### Tweets from our Teens

Twitter address: @RedPennWellness

- \* About 2/3 of teen smokers say they want to quit smoking
- \* 70% of teen smokers say they would not have started if they could choose again.

### Don't Fall For Tobacco Industry E-cigarette Smokescreen

By Michaeline Fedder, Deborah P. Brown and Bonita Pennino

With all that is still unknown about the dangers of e-cigarette use, we must put public health first and prohibit the use of these unregulated products in all workplaces, including restaurants, bars and casinos. Allowing the use of e-cigarettes in public places could create a host of new problems — encouraging new tobacco users, reversing efforts that have made smoking socially unacceptable, creating enforcement confusion for business owners and the public, and potentially putting the patrons at risk.

While e-cigarette manufacturers may make unverified claims that the ingredients are just "water vapor" or "safe," without further research and federal regulation there is no sure way for e-cigarette users to know what they are consuming.

The public should know more about e-cigarettes before allowing users to expose others to potential dangers. Studies have shown that the use of e-cigarettes can cause short-term lung changes and irritations, while the long-term health effects are unknown. Both exposure to and health effects of secondhand aerosol from e-cigarettes require further research, but preliminary studies indicate nonusers can be exposed to the same potentially harmful chemicals as users, including nicotine, ultrafine particles and volatile organic compounds. This exposure could be especially problematic for vulnerable populations such as children, pregnant women and people with heart disease.

Everyone has the right to breathe safe smoke-free and aerosol-free air in their place of work or leisure.

*Michaeline Fedder- Government Relations with the Maryland American Heart Association; Deborah P. Brown- President and CEO of the American Lung Association of the Mid-Atlantic; Bonita Pennino*

### Parenting Tips – Bullying continued

#### What is Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology - cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media, text messages, chat, and websites.

Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

#### Why Cyberbullying is Different

Kids who are being cyberbullied are often bullied in person as well. Additionally, kids who are cyberbullied have a harder time getting away from the behavior. Cyberbullying can happen 24/7, and reach a kid even when he or she is alone.

Cyberbullying messages and images can be posted anonymously and distributed quickly to a very wide audience. It can be difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the source. Deleting inappropriate or harassing messages, texts, and pictures is extremely difficult after they have been posted or sent.

#### Effects of Cyberbullying

Cell phones and computers themselves are not to blame for cyberbullying. Social media sites can be used for positive activities, like connecting kids with friends and family, helping students with school, and for entertainment. But these tools can also be used to hurt other people. Whether done in person or through technology, the effects of bullying are similar.

Kids who are cyberbullied are more likely to:

- Use alcohol and drugs
- Skip school
- Experience in-person bullying
- Be unwilling to attend school
- Receive poor grades
- Have lower self-esteem
- Have more health problems



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