



Level 5, 80 William St.
East Sydney NSW 2011
Australia

Tel 02 9339 6000
Fax 02 9339 6066

mha@mentalhealth.asn.au
www.mentalhealth.asn.au

ABN 11 326 005 224

Vice-Regal Patron
Her Excellency
Professor
Marie Bashir AC CVO
Governor of NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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Stress less tips to help manage relationships during the festive season

Christmas is marketed as the season of goodwill and festiveness, but for many people it can be a really tough time and a source of 'festive stress' rather than 'festive cheer.' Relationships are a large factor of festive stress.

Some experience relationship stress because they feel strain at spending too much time with relatives. Many others do not have someone to spend Christmas Day with and find the festive season to be lonely and depressing.

NSW Minister Assisting on Health (Mental Health) Barbara Perry provides a number of helpful tips on dealing with festive stress:

"The festive season can be incredibly chaotic and stressful, so it's important that we look after ourselves and avoid triggers for poor mental health. There are simple things we can do to build our resilience.

"We can't necessarily avoid stressful situations altogether but it's important to respond to what is in our control, such as limiting alcohol consumption and remembering to take some quiet time out for yourself," says Ms Perry.

Christmas Day isn't a day to resolve long-standing problems. Let people know you value them, focus on reducing your stress and remember there are 364 other days in the year where you can address relationships issues.

If you are having a hard time managing feelings of stress, anxiety or depression, talk to someone you trust or contact a telephone helpline service like Lifeline on 13 11 14.

These tips and more can be found at www.stresslesstips.org.au

Managing relationship stress during the festive season is the December focus for the Mental Health Association NSW's current social media campaign '*10 Tips to Stress Less*'.

Running until July 2010, the campaign features monthly tips on managing seasonal stresses, as well as postcards, facebook competitions, articles and e-cards.

For further media information please contact:

Nataly Bovopoulos, Mental Health Promotion Manager,
Mob 0412 205860
promo@mentalhealth.asn.au

Mental Health
Information Service
and Resource Centre
1300 794 991
info@mentalhealth.asn.au

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Mental Health
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