



FREE
your
FEELS™

**MANAGING
HOLIDAY
STRESS**
RESOURCE TOOLKIT



Table of Contents

MANAGING HOLIDAY STRESS

<u>Intro</u>	.....	3
<u>For Everyone</u>	.....	4
<u>For Youth</u>	.....	5
<u>For Parents/Caregivers</u>	.....	6
<u>For Educators & Professionals</u>	.....	7
<u>Additional Resources</u>	.....	8

*All data and links were accurate at the time of publication, but may change over time.



MANAGING HOLIDAY STRESS

INTRO



The holiday season often brings joy and connection, but it can also bring about more challenging feelings like stress and loneliness. According to recent U.S. reports, 54% of adults report feeling emotionally disconnected or isolated,¹ and 56% of teens report feeling pressured to have their future plans — like college, careers, and relationships — fully mapped out.² These insights highlight the need for proactive mental health support, and the holidays offer a timely opportunity to begin that journey.

It's also important to challenge the persistent myth that suicide rates spike during the winter holidays. In reality, December consistently records the lowest average daily suicide rates of the year.³ Dispelling this myth allows us to focus on seasonal challenges like loneliness, grief, and financial stress, and offer meaningful support.

***All data and links were accurate at the time of publication, but may change over time.**

FOR URGENT SUPPORT TEXT OR CALL 988

FOR EVERYONE



Take time to check in with yourself this holiday season. Stress can build quickly during the holidays, so it's important to prioritize emotional regulation and self-care. Save 988 in your phone for 24/7 support via call or text.

A promotional graphic for the 988 Lifeline. It features a woman with short, reddish-brown hair looking upwards and to the right. The background is a gradient of blue and green. The text 'Text, Call, Chat 988.' is at the top left. Below it is the large number '988' followed by 'SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE'. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'Self-Care During the Holidays' with a paragraph of text and a small 988 Lifeline logo.

Text, Call, Chat 988.

988
SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

Self-Care During the Holidays

The holiday season can be a difficult and stressful time for many. That's why it's so important to stop and listen to your own needs, too. Here are some self-care ideas for December and beyond.

988 Lifeline

ACTION:

Explore the 988 Lifeline's Self-Care During the Holidays guide, which includes tips like creating playlists, journaling, planning social breaks, and building a DIY self-care kit.



FOR YOUTH



Journaling and structured activities can help you process emotions and reduce anxiety. These tools are especially useful during the holiday season when routines shift, and social pressures may rise.

ACTION:

Use the Pacific Southwest
MHTTC's Holiday Stress
Management Worksheet
to help reflect on
expectations, set
boundaries, and build
coping strategies.

A stack of several 'Holiday Stress Management Worksheet' forms. The top form is clearly visible, showing the title, logo, and numbered sections for reflection on expectations and coping strategies. The forms are slightly offset to show multiple copies.

FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS



From Thanksgiving through the New Year, the holiday season can feel overstimulating and stressful for some children – particularly those with autism, ADHD, sensory sensitivities, or anxiety. To help make the holidays more enjoyable for everyone, it's important to maintain familiar routines and prepare children for upcoming transitions.



24 Ways to Make the Holidays Kid-Friendly

Learn about how to cope with holiday stress by making activities more kid-friendly — especially for children with autism, ADHD, anxiety, and sensory processing issues.

 Child Mind Institute / Feb 27

ACTION:

The Child Mind Institute's article "24 Ways to Make the Holidays Kid-Friendly" offers practical strategies for travel, gatherings, and sensory management.



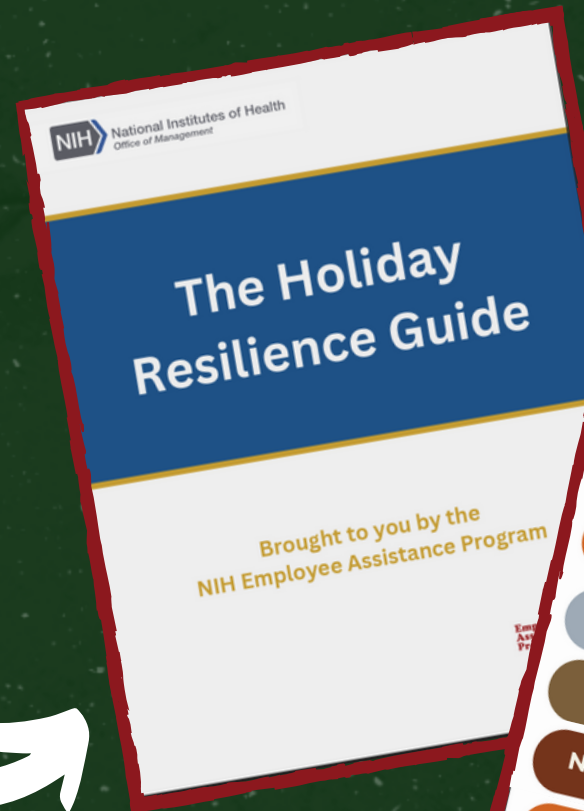
FOR EDUCATORS & PROFESSIONALS



Holidays can stir up stress, grief, or emotional fatigue in adults. Recognizing your limits and practicing self-compassion are key. Building resilience starts with small, intentional steps.

ACTION:

Use the NIH Holiday Resilience Guide for strategies to manage stress, reframe negative thoughts, and support your own mental well-being.



FOR URGENT SUPPORT TEXT OR CALL 988

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Check out these additional resources that help support you or a young person in your life this holiday season. Remember if you need urgent support in a mental health crisis; 988 is available 24/7 via phone, text, or chat.



Managing Your Mental Wellbeing During the Holiday Season

From family gatherings to financial pressures, the holiday season can take a toll on your mental health.

Mental Health First Aid: Oct 13

SAMHSA

Support During the Holidays

The holiday season can be filled with joy and celebrations. This time of year can also trigger difficult emotions, thoughts, or behaviors—which...

samhsagov

FOR URGENT SUPPORT TEXT OR CALL 988



QUESTIONS? CONTACT

Porshia Hartel
Digital Media Specialist
Voices for Georgia's Children
freeyourfeels@gmail.com