

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH TIPS TO

HELP YOUR FAMILY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



DO WHAT WORKS FOR YOUR FAMILY

The holidays can be an especially challenging time of year for many families. Expectations of the holidays can be hard on children – and, let's face it, it's not 'the happiest time' for all of us. **It's ok to prioritize mental health over holiday commitments.**



PLAN EARLY

Routines and predictability are often beneficial (within reason) for children and youth with mental health challenges. **It's a good time to start having conversations with children about what the holidays may look like so that they know what to expect**



FIND A QUIET PLACE IN A BUSY SPACE

If you're planning to see family for the holidays, **consider finding a spot** during a holiday gathering where your child (or you) can go for a break if they need it.



MANAGING DISAPPOINTMENT

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- › **While we are all doing our part to manage the pandemic**, so much of what is happening in the province – and the world – is out of our control right now.
- › **This is a good time to focus on the things that are in your control.**
- › When it comes to traditions of the holiday season, consider **how you can incorporate the traditions**, or at least parts of those traditions, that are most important to your family. It could be something as simple as baking or planning for a fun family movie night.



SUPPORTING CHILDREN THROUGH GRIEF

The holidays can be especially hard for families who are grieving. **Remembering your loved one, telling stories, and laughing about good times together** are all ok to do, and can provide comfort to your child.



TAKE CARE OF YOU

The holidays can be a stressful and anxious time for parents, too. **Make sure that you are eating, sleeping and enjoying the holidays as well. Take time when you need it, don't feel guilty saying no when you need to.**

- › When **your child is struggling with mental health** challenges, the holidays are not always easy.

With **so many expectations about what the holidays should be like** or who we should be spending our time with, it can be very difficult to make it all work.

Our child and youth mental health **experts have rounded up some tips and ideas to help your family this holiday season.**

- › If your child (or you) needs mental health support, reach out for help.

Find a child and youth mental health in your area at

[CMHO.org/FindHelp](https://www.cmho.org/FindHelp)