COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

WINTER 2026

HOLIDAY GUIDE

COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Take care of your mental and physical health this holiday season.



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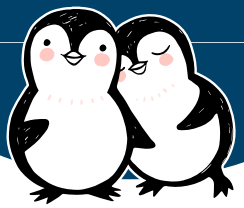

HOW TO MANAGE

HOLIDAY STRESS

Holiday stress can stem from many things including worrying about finances, work deadlines, family, health, grieving loved ones or missed gatherings, and more. Physical stressors, such as losing sleep, an increased busy schedule, poor eating and drinking, and seasonal illnesses can contribute to mental stress as well.

Recognizing Stress

Common signs you may be experiencing stress can include:

- Increased blood pressure or heart rate, backaches, headaches, muscle spasms, heartburn, chest pain, nausea
- Excess anxiety, worry, guilt, nervousness, racing thoughts, forgetfulness, feeling overwhelmed, increased frustration and annoyance, mood swings, social withdrawal, and depression

Managing Stress

Managing stress levels is easier when you start small. Practice the tips below to start reducing stress in your life:

- **Set boundaries:** Say no to people or situations that increase your stress levels
- **Practice self-care:** Meditate, read, turn off screens, connect with others, or get exercise for at least 20 minutes a day
- **Reach out:** Talk to family and friends so they can offer support
- **Plan ahead:** Plan out your social calendar ahead of time, make a list of meal plans, and set goals and intentions about how you will manage finances or holiday shopping
- **Avoid drugs and alcohol:** Substance use can increase the stress you already feel



COPING WITH

GRIEF

The holiday season can be extremely hard if you are grieving the loss of a loved one, a pet, lost relationships, or traditions. No matter what loss you are grieving, the tips below can help you cope and support your well-being during this difficult time:

Feel your grief

You may hesitate to feel grief during the "jolliest" time of year, but you should recognize your emotions. Do not hide or fight feelings out of fear of affecting others' joy. Your grief is valid; to heal, you must express your emotions.

Manage your plans

Do not feel pressured to attend every event you are invited to after your loss. Communicate with family and friends about what activities you want to do. It is ok to say no to an event, but a social balance is important, so you do not isolate yourself.

Acknowledge change but preserve the past

Recognize the holidays may look different since your loss. Do not try and force old ways. Instead, create ways to merge past traditions with new ones. doing this will allow you to honor those you miss while also moving forward in the healing process.

Ask for support when you need it

Communicate with friends and family when you are struggling. Let your support system know about changes in your holiday routine and do not be afraid to ask others to accompany you to events, ceremonies, or plans so you are not alone. If you are needing additional support, consider reaching out to the resource below:

Hospice SLO
(805) 544-2266; hospiceslo@hospiceslo.org
1304 Pacific Street, SLO; www.hospiceslo.org

Adapted from Hospice SLO





CONQUERING THE HOLIDAY BLUES

64% of people say they are affected by the holiday blues

Not to be confused with a clinical mental health diagnosis, the holiday blues are **temporary** feelings of anxiety, depression, sadness, fatigue, loss, and/or loneliness that surround the holiday season. Holiday blues can affect anyone but are especially triggered when someone experiences increased stress levels, expectations, and pressures of the holiday season.

Avoiding the "blues":

- **Stick to normal:** Rely on your everyday routines, plans, and lists to keep you organized and focused.
- **Get enough sleep:** A good night's rest decreases symptoms of fatigue and tension
- **Do not isolate:** Surround yourself with supportive friends and family.
- **Practice self-care:** Reading, music, meditating, cooking - the opportunities to recharge your emotional wellness are endless!
- **Get physical:** Exercise has been proven to help reduce anxiety and depression.
- **Don't overextend or overschedule:** Set reasonable expectations for yourself when it comes to cooking, shopping, social gatherings, holiday cards, etc.
- **Set a budget:** Financial stress may worsen feelings of anxiety.
- **Eat healthy and limit your alcohol intake:** Consume nutritious food, eat consistently, and avoid excessive drinking to decrease the chances of negative moods and low energy levels.

Adapted from NAMI

SOBRIETY

TIPS FOR STAYING SOBER DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Have a plan

Plan ahead for gatherings that serve alcohol. What will you do or say if you are feeling triggered or if someone offers you an alcoholic drink? If you are not ready to talk about your sobriety, that's ok! When you arrive at a gathering look for non-alcoholic beverage options. People will feel less inclined to offer you an alcoholic drink if you are already enjoying a beverage.



Have a backup plan

It is possible you may find yourself in a situation where you feel the urge to drink or use drugs. Having an "escape" plan can ensure you maintain sobriety. Find a sober friend to accompany you to gatherings. If they cannot be there for you in person, ask if you can call or text them in case you need support.



Volunteer

Serving others during the holiday season can help you get outside of your head, increase your sense of worth, and build positive connections and relationships into your life. Look for regular opportunities to volunteer like serving meals at a shelter, visiting the animal shelter, or spending time with an elderly neighbor in need.



Take care of yourself

As simple as it sounds, taking good care of yourself can make a huge difference in maintaining your sobriety. Get enough sleep, eat regularly and nutritiously, partake in physical exercise, and practice self-care. When basic needs are being met, you will feel less irritable, tired, and anxious and more likely to think clearly about staying sober.

SUBSTANCE USE

HOW TO REGULATE ALCOHOL AND DRUG INTAKE

Holiday stress can be made worse by using alcohol and/or drugs. Being aware of your own substance use, as well as others, can ensure that everyone has an enjoyable season.

Remember the reason for the season

The holidays do not revolve around alcohol or drugs. They are about spending time with loved ones. Focus your party on something other than substances like good conversation, food, gingerbread building, cooking decorating, reindeer games, movies, or a gift exchange.

Provide options and respect boundaries

If you are hosting a party, offer a variety of nonalcoholic drinks like water, juices, or sodas as well as low-alcohol alternatives for guests. Never pressure someone into drinking alcohol; if they say no, respect their decision.

Know your limit

Make sure you are self-aware of your own substance limits. Do not try and "keep up" with others when drinking and avoid binge drinking by sticking to the one-in-one rule: one drink per hour. If you plan on drinking more than that, make sure you are eating and drinking plenty of water.

Check IDs and plan for Designated Drivers

The holidays can be ruined quickly by underage drinking and drunk driving. If you are hosting a party, do not serve persons under age 21 or allow guests to drive home after drinking too much. Provide designated drivers or offer to call a transportation service like Uber or Lyft so everyone can get home safely.



SAFE STORAGE
OF HOUSEHOLD MEDICATIONS AND SUBSTANCES

Keep your household safe

- Keep substances in child-resistant packaging and fully reseal them after each use
- Store and dispose of cannabis products and wrappers in areas not easily seen or accessible to children or pets
- Store substances & prescription medications in a lock box to prevent family members and/or visitors from taking them
- Do not share your medications
- Dispose of all expired, unwanted, and unused medications at your local pharmacy or “take back” event



In pets: Watch for stumbling, urinary problems, lack of energy, drooling, vomiting, and/or agitation

How to dispose of medications

- Pharmacies offer free medication disposal services both in person and through the mail
- Before disposing of your medication, remove the label or scratch off or scribble over personal information
- Do not flush unwanted medications down the toilet! Drugs poured down the sink or flushed down the toilet can seep into groundwater, pass through treatment systems, or enter rivers and lakes



In children: Watch for loss of coordination, sleepiness and/or difficulty with breathing

In case of emergency...

- Call California Poison Control at 800-222-1222 if you suspect a potential poisoning
- If the individual collapses, has a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened call 911 right away
- Call your pet's local veterinarian or the Animal Poison Control Center at 888-426-4435 if your pet consumes substances

SLO COUNTY RESOURCES

Aegis Treatment Center: 805-461-5212
Al-Anon Central Coast: 628-400-3033
Alcoholics Anonymous Central Coast Intergroup: 805-541-3211
Aspire Counseling Services: 805-329-5595
Cal Poly Health Services: (Students): 805-756-1211
CenCal Health for Medi-Cal members: 800-421-2560
Center for Family Strengthening (CFS): 805-543-6216
Central Coast Area Narcotics Anonymous: 800-549-7730
Community Action Partnership (CAPSLO): 805-544-4355
Community Counseling Center: 805-543-7969
Community Health Centers of the Central Coast (CHC): 866-614-4636
County of SLO Public Health: 805-781-5500
County of SLO Social Services: 805-781-1600
Cuesta College Health Services (Students): 805-546-3171
Family Care Network, Inc.: 805-781-3535
Gala Pride and Diversity Center: 805-541-4252
Hospice of SLO County: 805-544-2266
The LINK Family Resource Center: 805-466-5404
Nar-Anon Central CA: 800-477-6291
Restorative Partners: 805-242-1272
SLO Bangers: 805-458-0123
Sobering Center SLO: 820-280-0415 call for bed availability.
Therapy Era SLO: 805-395-8360
Transitions-Mental Health Association (TMHA): 805-540-6500



FOOD ASSISTANCE

SLO Food Bank
805-238-4664; slofoodbank.org

CalFresh- Department of Social Services
877-847-3663; cdss.ca.gov/food

211 California – Community Resources
Dial 2-1-1; 211ca.org

TOY DRIVES

Toy Bank of Greater Paso Robles
Serving Paso Robles, San Miguel, Shandon, Bradley, and Heritage Ranch
805-674-3022; prtoybank.org

Toys for Tots
Serving Atascadero, Templeton, Santa Margarita, Cambria, San Simeon, and nearby communities.
805-391-4430; atascadero-ca.toysfortots.org

The Salvation Army – San Luis Obispo
805-544-2401; saangeltree.org

SLO Sheriff– Children's Bicycle Giveaway
safslo.org/childrens-bike-giveaway

SHELTERS

ECHO Shelters:
630 Atascadero Avenue
Atascadero, CA
and
134 Black Oak Drive
Paso Robles, CA
805-462-3663; echoshelter.org

40 Prado Homeless Services Center
40 Prado Road
San Luis Obispo, CA
805-544-4004; capslo.org/40-prado

5 Cities Homeless Coalition
100 S. 4th St.
Grover Beach, CA
805-574-1638; info@5CHC.org

If you or someone you know is currently homeless, or at risk of losing their housing, please visit the County of SLO Social Services Housing Assistance website.

OVERDOSE SAFETY AND NALOXONE

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges people to carry naloxone, the overdose reversal medication, if they use opioids or spend time with someone who does. Naloxone (also known by its brand name Narcan) is a medicine that can reverse an opioid overdose. It is non-addictive, has virtually no side effects, and has no potential for abuse as it does not produce any high effect. It comes in the form of a nasal spray and is safe to give to anyone suspected of experiencing an overdose. Naloxone works within minutes by temporarily removing opioids from brain receptors, allowing the person to breathe again.

Visit **NaloxoneNowSLO.org** to find more information on Naloxone, overdose education, and to order an overdose safety kit for your home today.

WHERE TO FIND FREE NALOXONE IN SLO COUNTY

ORDER BY MAIL:

Did you know you can order Naloxone by mail directly for free to any SLO County residents Complete the safe and secure order form online at **NaloxoneNowSLO.org** to order an overdose prevention kit to your home.

COMMUNITY ACCESS SITES:

NaloxBoxes

NaloxBoxes are free to use in SLO County at local parks, trails, libraries, health centers, city and County buildings, and more! All boxes include naloxone nasal spray, CPR face shields, gloves, and usage instructions. Check out the 23 locations online at **www.slocounty.ca.gov/NaloxBox**

Naloxone Vending Machines

Naloxone is free at health and wellness vending machines at the following Behavioral Health Campuses:

- Paso Robles (805 4th Street) inside the first floor lobby
- San Luis Obispo (2180 Johnson Ave) outside the SLO Sobering Center

County of San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health Clinics

Walk-in pickup available Monday – Friday, 8am-5pm. View clinic locations on page 12 of this guide and online at **www.SLOBehavioralHealth.org**.

Cal Poly Campus Health and Wellbeing (for students, staff & faculty)

Walk-in pickup available Thursdays, 11-1pm on the Health Center lawn, or 2-4pm in Cerro Vista Community Center.

Pharmacy Access

Naloxone is sold over the counter at any retail pharmacy. CalRx® naloxone can be purchased for just $19 at the CalRx® naloxone online store.

No-cost CalRx naloxoneis also available through the Naloxone Distribution Project.



24/7 HOTLINE NUMBERS

CRISIS LINES

Central Coast Hotline
1-800-783-0607 (text or call)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
988 (text or call)

Friendship Line (People Aged 60+)
1-888-670-1360

Crisis Text Line
Text 'HOME' to 741-741

LGBTQ+

Trevor Lifeline 24/7 (LGBTQ+ Youth)
1-866-488-7386
TrevorText: Text 'START' to 678-678

Sage LGBTQ Elder Hotline
1-877-360-5428

The LGBTQ National Hotline
1-888-843-4564

Trans Lifeline
1-877-565-8860

MILITARY & VETERANS

Military & Veterans 24/7
Dial 988 and press 1
Text 838255 and chat online at veteranscrisisline.net.

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors
1-800-959-8277

Vets 4 Warriors: 24/7 Peer Support Network
1-855-838-8255

Military OneSource
1-800-342-9647

InTransition Psychological Health Resources Center
1-866-966-1020



SLO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINICS

SAN LUIS OBISPO

24/7 SLO Sobering Center
2180 Johnson Avenue
1-820-280-0145

Adult Drug and Alcohol Services
2180 Johnson Avenue
805-781-4275

Youth Drug and Alcohol Services
2975 McMillan Avenue, Suite 108
805-781-4754

Martha's Place Children's Center
(Youth 0-5 years old)
2925 McMillan Avenue, Suite 108
805-781-4948

Youth Mental Health Services
2975 McMillan Suite 160
805-781-4179

Adult Mental Health Services
2178 Johnson Avenue
805-781-4700

Prevention and Outreach Services
2975 McMillan Avenue, Suite 108
805-781-4754

GROVER BEACH

Youth Mental Health Services
1666 Ramona Ave
805-473-7060

Youth and Adult Drug and Alcohol Services
1523 Longbranch Avenue
805-473-7080

ARROYO GRANDE

Mental Health (Adult)
1350 East Grand Avenue
805-474-2154

Services Affirming Family Empowerment (SAFE)
1666 Ramona Ave
805-474-2105

ATASCADERO HEALTH CAMPUS

5575 Hospital Drive
Adult Mental Health Services: 805-461-6060
Youth Mental Health Services: 805-461-6113
Adult Drug and Alcohol Services: 805-461-6080

PASO ROBLES HEALTH CAMPUS

805 4th Street
Adult Drug and Alcohol Services: 805-226-3200
Youth Mental Health Services: 805-237-3070
Adult Mental Health Services: 805-237-3090



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

SLOBEHAVIORALHEALTH.ORG
1-800-838-1381

FROM ALL OF US AT
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH,

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!