

HOWELL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

DECEMBER CALENDAR

WIC: 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 29, 30, 31

Willow Springs WIC: 3

Mountain View WIC: 23

Family Planning: 4, 18

Immunizations: 2, 9, 16, 30

Food Handlers: 1st

Holiday's (closed): Christmas 25th & 26th.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Staying Safe & Active During Cold Weather 2

Safe Crib Program 2

Missouri Cottage Law 2

Mission 3

HCHD Staff and Email 3

Clinic Hours:

Monday-Friday 8-12 & 1-5, closed for lunch 12-1

Administration Hours

Monday-Friday 8-5

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Mental Health & the Holiday's from www.ncoa.org

During the holiday season, it is especially important to practice self-care and find ways to reduce stress when possible. Here are 9 self-care tips to support your mental well-being during the holidays.



1. Practice gratitude: Research shows that those who practice gratitude not only reduce their stress levels but also feel less pain, get better sleep, have stronger immune systems, experience healthier relationships, and perform better professionally.³ Gratitude has also been shown to motivate people to make healthier food choices.³ Gratitude can be practiced in a variety of ways.

Start a gratitude journal—every day write down at least 1 thing you were grateful for that day. It could be as simple as a beautiful flower, someone who smiled at you, or even getting out of bed.

2. Acknowledge your feelings: Every feeling you experience is valid. Give yourself permission to feel each feeling. You may experience opposing feelings, like grief and joy, during the holiday and that is okay. Using an [emotion checklist](#) can help you better identify you're feeling. You may find it helpful to write down your feelings in a journal or share them with someone you trust.

3. Learn to say "no": It can be tempting to say "yes" to everything, especially at the

holidays. If you say "yes" to something when you wanted to say "no" it can lead to feelings of resentment and being overwhelmed. Remember that "no" is a complete sentence and you do not have to explain your choice to other.

4. Be realistic: There are only 24 -hours in a day. Make a list of all the events and obligations you have during the holiday season and prioritize them. Know that it is okay to decline an invitation or make a conscious choice to only participate in a certain number of holiday events during a given timeframe. For example, you may decide to only participate in 1 event each weekend.

5. Stick to healthy habits: Here are some ways to make healthy habits a priority. **Diet**—Before attending a holiday gathering have a healthy snack. Fill your plate with fruits and vegetables, if possible use low fat and reduced sodium ingredients, enjoy small portions of higher calorie foods.⁷ **Sleep**—The [National Sleep Foundation](#) recommends sticking to a sleep schedule where you go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, creating a sleep-friendly bedroom that is dark, quiet, and a comfortable temperature, exercising daily, and avoid food and drinks 2-3 hours before bed. **Exercise**—visit your [local](#)

[senior center](#) and check out their physical activity offerings. Take a walk outside or have a dance party.

6. Get creative: Creativity comes in a variety of forms and the world is your oyster. Try coloring, painting or making a craft. Get creative with your holiday baking or try a new recipe. Write a poem or short story.

7. Give or serve others: Volunteering can [increase life satisfaction](#) and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Respondents of The [United Healthcare/Volunteer Match](#) study reported higher levels of life satisfaction, a higher sense of control over life, and feeling physically and emotionally healthier.

8. Journal: Write one sentence every day describing your day. Or try writing for a set amount of time (5-10 minutes) in a free-flowing stream-of-consciousness style. Write without censoring your feelings or judgment. You may also find it helpful to write down three things you're struggling with and one action step to relieve that concern.

9. Reach out: If you're feeling isolated or alone reach out to your support network. If you or someone you love is experiencing a mental health crisis, [call 988](#). You will be contacted to a trained crisis counselor who can provide free and confidential emotional support and connect you with local resources.

During the holidays, and throughout the year, give yourself grace as you navigate the joys and challenges of the holiday season. And remember the words of author L.R. Knost about self-care: Taking care of yourself doesn't mean 'me first', it means 'me too'."



*Tips to be safe
and active this
winter.*

Need a portable crib?



Staying Safe & Active During Cold Weather from Christina Parrish, LPN

Getting outside during the winter months is a fantastic way to stay active and recharge, but colder temperatures and icy conditions can quickly turn a simple outing into a safety risk. With a little planning and a few smart habits, you can continue enjoying the fresh air and keep yourself and your household comfortable and protected.

Dressing properly is the first line of defense against the cold. Layering clothing helps trap body heat, while a warm, wind-resistant coat, mittens, a hat, and a scarf guard against hypothermia and frostbite. Waterproof boots keep your feet warm

and dry, so you can focus on the fun instead of frozen toes. Smart preparation goes a long way when spending time outdoors. Carrying a fully charged cell phone ensures you can call for help if needed, and pacing yourself during chores helps prevent overexertion. Sprinkling sand or cat litter on slick areas provides traction, reducing your risk of slips and falls. And when possible, bring a friend or family member along, not only for safety, but for a little company. Keeping a basic emergency kit nearby is a bonus layer of protection. Carbon monoxide safety is another critical component of winter preparedness. Heating systems work overtime during

cold weather, increasing the potential for CO exposure, a colorless, odorless gas that can be deadly. Scheduling annual maintenance for your heating system, water heater, and other fuel-burning appliances is essential. Installing a battery-powered CO detector near sleeping areas provides early warning if dangerous levels develop.

The bottom line: with a little foresight and a commitment to safe practices, you can fully embrace your favorite winter activities while keeping your home warm, your body healthy, and your family protected all season long.

Safe Cribs Program from April Bridges, WIC Nutritionist

The "Safe Cribs for Missouri" program provides safe, portable cribs and safe sleep education to qualifying low-income families in Missouri. To be eligible, you must be a Missouri resident,

typically between 35 weeks pregnant and six months postpartum, and have no other safe sleep space for your infant. The program, administered by the Department of Health and Senior Services,

requires participation in safe sleep education sessions to receive a crib. WIC participants who meet these criteria, can mention to any WIC staff their need, and an order can be placed and education arranged.

Missouri Cottage Law from Curtis Beaulieu, EPHS

The Missouri Cottage Law is an exemption that allows Missouri residents to make specific kinds of non-potentially hazardous foods in their home kitchens, using common residential appliances, for sale to the public without being subject to routine inspection. Non-potentially hazardous foods allowed under the Missouri Cottage Law are: Baked goods, Canned jams or jellies, Dried herb and dried herb mixes.

However, there are stipulations that could cause an item to not

be classified under the Missouri Cottage Law. The term "Cottage Law" is not an umbrella or all-encompassing term to allow an individual to make any food item out of their home. The Missouri Cottage Law is very specific that baked goods, canned jams or jellies, and dried herb and dried herb mixes are the only items that can be prepared out of the individuals' home. If the food item does not fall under the list of items that can be sold under the Missouri Cottage Law, it

cannot be sold or claimed under the Missouri Cottage Law exemption.

A cottage food production operation is not a food service establishment and is not subject to any health or food code laws or regulations of the state or local health authorities. However, nothing prohibits authority of state or local health departments to conduct an investigation of a foodborne disease or outbreak. <https://health.mo.gov/safety/foodsafety/pdf/home-based->



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Public Health: Prevent. Promote. Protect.

The mission of the Howell County Health Department is to improve, promote and protect the health of Howell County through awareness, assessment, planning and assurance in order that our community may achieve their fullest health potential.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Howell County Health Department Staff & Email

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MERRY
Christmas!