ASAP SPEAKS

ARMY SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM
"THE ARMY'S HELPER"

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O Christmas tree
How are thy

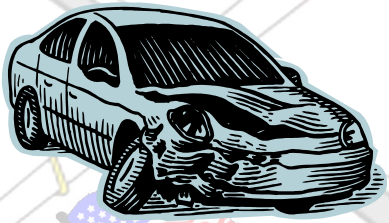
O Christmas tree
Leaves so verdant

O Christmas tree
Thy candles

O Christmas tree
Shine out brightly

The holiday season is just around the corner and many of you will begin to buy trees, shop for present, and hang lights and wreath on the doors. Every year more than 400 million people celebrate the Christmas holiday around the world -- that makes Christmas one of the world's biggest religious and commercial festivities. The holiday Christmas was officially acknowledged in 1870 when the United States Congress made it a federal holiday. Federal and state employees and most private businesses observe December 25 by not working. Many of you will be celebrating throughout the upcoming holiday season. Our Staff wants to remind you that being safe is the number one thing during these festive times.

SoberRide 2011



In supporting of the President' national initiatives **Drunk, Drugged and Driving (3D) Month** starts on December 1 until December 31, 2011. Washington Regional Alcohol Program will again be hosting their annual Sober Ride Program in the National Capital Region. This program is a popular cab service for would-be-drunk drivers. This public safety initiative since 1993 alone has provided 22,000 no-cost or low cost cab ride home to Greater Washington area residents who otherwise may have driven drunk. If you chose to celebrate with alcohol this holiday season, Designate a driver or call WRAP's SoberRide at 1-800-200- TAXI (you must be 21 or older to use this service). AT&T Customer Dial #TAXI (# 8294) For a **FREE** ride **HOME** (up to a $30 fare) from 10:00 pm, to 6:00am nightly Dec 16, 2011 through Jan 1, 2012. Check with your Unit Prevent Leaders for more information.

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"The Holidays Are Here!"

Stress Management and the Holidays

The Holidays are a wonderful, fun, exciting time of the year. Time is spent in planning, decorating, making special foods and finding the perfect gift, not to mention the family get-togethers, the parties and travel. We can't forget the weather and all the fury Mother Nature can throw at us. Just keeping up with the latest toys and this week's wish list is a full time job. We also try to include the real meaning of the holiday we celebrate. Whether we light candles and have special rituals that include the written word and music, games or exchanging presents, we can sometimes find ourselves overwhelmed. We become stressed out, even though some of the stress is good stress.

So what do we do? We could stay in bed and just ignore the whole month but that's not very practical. We need to find something more useful. One idea is to try some stress management techniques.

When we are getting really tense, one recommendation is to do deep breathing exercises. They are easy to do and can be done discretely. Make yourself comfortable by sitting in a chair or lying down. Take a slow, deep breath in through your nose, breathing deep into your diaphragm. You should be able to feel your diaphragm expand. You could put a hand over your diaphragm to feel it moving up and down. Hold your breath for a few seconds and slowly release your breath through your mouth. Do this several times. If you have thoughts that are interrupting your relaxation, just breathe out and think that they are going away when you exhale. Don't do this too quickly or you may end up feeling light headed. Repeat several times.
A second recommendation is progressive relaxation. Tighten your muscles, hold for 10 seconds or as long as you are comfortable then relax them. Start wherever you feel tension or start at your feet and work your way up your body. With you feet, tense them hold the tension for a few seconds and then relax them. Go to your ankles and do the same thing; continue up your legs, to your stomach, to your arms, your neck and your head. Don't forget to do your face. It's a law of nature- you can't be tense and relaxed at the same time.

A third suggestion is to create a special place that you can think about and be safe. Think of someplace you like to go or think you would like to go. It doesn't have to be real. It can be someplace you make up. Some people like the beach; some people like the snow and some people like being on the water to name a few. It can be any place that you feel safe and comfortable. Doing the breathing exercise as suggested above, close your eyes and think about all the things that you like about the place. Picture it in your mind. For instance if you're at the beach, do you hear and see the sea gulls? Can you hear the water lapping on the shore? Can you smell the salt water spray? Can you feel the spray? Can you feel the sunshine beaming down on you? Can you taste your favorite drink? Do you feel the sand under your feet? Remember this is your place. Involve all your senses. Let the tension just disappear as you think about it. When you are ready open your eyes and gently come back into the room.

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There are many other easy things that you can do that don't involve elaborate equipment or much time to help you relax. The holidays will always have some stress, but we don't have to let it overwhelm us. Try some of these techniques. If you have difficulty with them or would like additional suggestions, **call Carol Frazelle, JBM-HH's Employee Assistance Program Coordinator (703) 696-3787** and we can explore some additional techniques.

Holiday Decoration Safety Tips from CPSC

Trees, lights, and fireplaces a festive mix for disaster

Before crawling up on the roof to string the Christmas lights, you need to know that every year, hospital emergency rooms treat about 12,500 people for injuries, such as falls, cuts and shocks, related to holiday lights, decorations and Christmas trees, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

In addition, warns CPSC, candles start about 11,600 each year, resulting in 150 deaths, 1,200 injuries and $173 million in property loss. Christmas trees are involved in about 300 fires annually, resulting in 10 deaths, 30 injuries and an average of more than $10 million in property loss and damage.

"Sometimes people are having such a nice time during the holidays that they forget to extinguish candles," said CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton. "Always put out lit candles before leaving a room or going to bed. Always keep burning candles within sight. Also, make sure your holiday lights bear the mark of a recognized testing lab to show they meet safety standards."

Since CPSC started monitoring holiday lights and decorations sold at stores nationwide, inspectors have prevented the import of 116,500 units of holiday lights that did not meet safety standards.

CPSC tips to make your holiday a safe one:

Trees:

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant." Although this label does not mean the tree won't catch fire, it does indicate the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and do not break when bent between your fingers. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.
- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces and radiators. Because heated rooms dry live trees out rapidly, be sure to keep the stand filled with water. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.

Lights:

- Indoors or outside, use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory, which indicates conformance with safety standards. Use only lights that have fused plugs.
- Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections, and throw out damaged sets. Always replace burned-out bulbs promptly with the same wattage bulbs.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord. Make sure the extension cord is rated for the intended use.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.
- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use.
- Stay away from power or feeder lines leading from utility poles into older homes.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. Or, run strings of lights through hooks (available at hardware stores).
- Turn off all holiday lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.
- Use caution when removing outdoor holiday lights. Never pull or tug on lights - they could unravel and inadvertently wrap around power lines.
- Outdoor electric lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold. GFCIs can be installed permanently to household circuits by a qualified electrician.

Decorations:

- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by children.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked down.
- In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid the child swallowing or inhaling small pieces, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them.
- Wear gloves to avoid eye and skin irritation while decorating with spun glass "angel hair."
- Follow container directions carefully to avoid lung irritation while decorating with artificial snow sprays.

Fireplaces:

- Use care with "fire salts," which produce colored flames when thrown on wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten. Keep them away from children.
- Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.

Non-alcoholic Holiday Party Drink Recipes

Celebrate the holidays with tasty drinks everyone will enjoy. Your party won't be complete without these alcohol-free alternatives. Be sure to serve these in pretty, holiday glasses. Use the juice from each of the recipes to make "ice" cubes: keep your beverages cold without diluting them!

Spiced Lemonade

- 9 cups water
- 1 cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 cups orange juice
- 1 cup raw sugar
- 1tbs. vanilla
- 1/2tsp. ground cloves
- Lemon slices

Combine all of the ingredients in large saucepan. Heat over medium heat stirring occasionally. When the sugar has dissolved, reduce the heat to a simmer. Allow lemonade to simmer until fragrant. Serve with lemon slices

Apple Spitzer

- 10 Cups apple juice (look for a naturally sweetened juice)
- 5 cups mineral water (carbonate water)
- Lime slices as garnish
- Apple juice ice cubes

Pour apple juice over the apple ice cubes
Stir in mineral water
Garnish with slices of lime
Serve in glasses or punch bowl

Cranberry Spritzer

- 10 Cups Cranberry juice
- 5 cups mineral water
- Lemon slices as garnish
- Cranberry juice ice cube

Pour cranberry juice over the cranberry ice cubes. Stir in the mineral water. Garnish with lemon

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