



Keeping Safe over the Christmas Holidays

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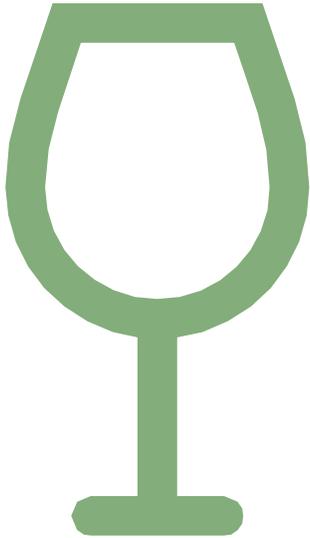


Christmas Parties

Christmas is a time to spend with family and friends. Being off school often means there are lots of parties to attend. If you are going to a party, stop and have a think to make sure you are keeping yourself safe:

- Tell someone where you are at all times.
- Make sure your phone is fully charged and it can be located through a phone tracking device, like find my iPhone. Give someone you trust the password to this.
- Make sure you have a way home planned before you go to the party, for example a lift from parents/carers or a taxi that is pre-booked.
- Ensure you have enough money with you to cover the cost of a taxi if you need to get one.
- December is cold so if you are going out, make sure you have a warm coat/clothing in case you need to wait around for a lift home.

Alcohol



When you are at parties at a venue or even friends' houses, alcohol may be on offer. It might be tempting as a teenager to try this. Remember;

- You are not old enough to consume alcohol and by doing so at a venue, you are breaking the law. The venue is also breaking the law and will be prosecuted if caught. If it is at a private house, the person who supplied the alcohol is breaking the law.
- If you do have a drink, make sure you know where it came from and you are present when it is opened and poured. Never let the bottle or glass out of your sight.
- Never consume alcohol in excess.
- If you are out with friends and one or more of them appear drunk, never leave them. Seek help and make sure they are safe, even if this means calling their parents/carers or an ambulance.
- If you feel your drink has been spiked, seek emergency medical help straight away, even if you feel fine.
- Your inhibitions decrease when you drink alcohol, meaning you are more likely to do things that you wouldn't normally, so make sure you are with people you trust who will look after you.
- Drinking alcohol may make you more vulnerable. People may take advantage of that vulnerability. You may not be able to give consent if you are intoxicated. That decision is yours and only yours – it is not right for someone to take advantage of you if you are drunk. If someone gets you drunk to get your consent – this is NOT consent.



Drugs

You may be offered drugs when out over the Christmas Holidays. Always say no. You do not know what is in that drug or where it came from. The person you got it from will have sourced their drugs from a larger criminal network, who will add poisons and chemicals which can be fatal. If you do take something, remember;

- Never be on your own – always make sure there is a friend with you and you have told them what you have or think you have taken. Do not go with strangers or people you barely know. Stay with people you trust.
- Seek emergency medical help if you start to feel sick or funny.
- If you are with friends who have taken something, do not leave them. Get them help straight away, even if that means calling their parents/carers or an ambulance.
- Always ensure you have a way home planned.



Relationships

Christmas is a time when you are off school and you have more free time. You may choose to spend this time with friends or someone you are in a relationship with. Make sure you are in a healthy relationship and you are treated with respect and as an equal. Remember;

- You are your own person in a relationship and nobody should force you to do things you do not want to do.
- No means no. If you do not want to do something sexually with a partner, that is your choice and they must respect that. If they are coercive or forcing you to do something you do not want to do, leave immediately. Contact someone you trust and get out of the situation. If you cannot get out and you are forced to do something you do not want to do, tell someone or contact a support service. You may also want to report this to the police and seek medical advice at a hospital. You have done nothing wrong and you will not be in any trouble.
- If a partner is constantly putting you down and making you feel worthless, this is not acceptable and may be a form of emotional abuse, which is a criminal offence. It is called 'gaslighting' and can adversely impact on your mental health. Look after yourself first and foremost. You are worth it.
- If a relationship does end, it will be difficult and you may be upset. Your friends and family will be there to support you. In time, you will reflect that it was not right for you and you will move on.



Stay Safe

Over the holidays, we want you to have a good rest and enjoy yourself. Just remember to take precautions to ensure you are safe. There is always people around to help if you do find yourself in a situation you struggle with. Below is a list of numbers/organisations you can put in your phone in case you might need them;

- Talk to Frank – www.talktofrank.com or text 82111 or call 0300 1236600. This will offer support and advice on drugs.
- NHS – call 111 to speak to a nurse or call 999 in an emergency.
- Women's Aid – www.womensaid.org.uk – this is a live instant messaging service who will offer support and guidance if you are in a physically or emotionally abusive relationship.
- Shout – mental health support service. Text SHOUT to 85258. Will not show on phone bill. Offer support for relationship challenges, suicidal thoughts, abuse, self harm and bullying.
- KOOTH – can download the app on your phone. Mental Health and wellbeing platform for young people.
- Police – call 999 in an emergency.