

Wellbeing through the Festive Season

A self-help resource

A resource from
Hearing Voices Network of Western Australia
A program of Richmond Wellbeing

How to use this resource

This is a resource compiled by The Hearing Voices Network of Western Australia. It is designed to be used as a self-help workbook to assist you in trying to understand why holidays may be a time of added stress or struggle and to provide some time to reflect on ways in which to address this.

Regardless of religion or faith, the Christmas period is not only the season for giving to others but also a time to be kind to ourselves, and this is even more important for those that experience voice hearing or other distress around our mental health.

Whilst all the preparations can be fun, they can also be a catalyst for stress and triggers. We can go a long way however to avoid these triggers if we do some forward planning and employ some well thought out practices in the lead up.

In creating this resource, we hope to provide an opportunity for people to reflect on past experiences and plans for this holiday period and the coming year in a way that proves helpful and also gives a genuine sense that you are not alone. With warmest wishes for the festive season and the coming year from the team at Hearing Voices Network of Western Australia and Richmond Wellbeing.



What are some things that make Christmas so difficult for us?

This is by no means a comprehensive list and we ask that you take time to write down some of your own thoughts in the spaces provided.

Financial Pressure

Christmas can prove to be a very costly time when we factor in gifts, decorations, food etc. Try to keep shopping simple by planning ahead, finding just the right gift can create undue pressure so utilise gift cards which can be purchased from most supermarkets and stores. Try to budget ahead so as not to over stretch yourself financially, there is nothing worse than finding ourselves penniless in the new year when all the excitement of Christmas has passed.

One strategy is to open a Christmas bank account and limit spending only the amount that has been saved, avoiding the use of credit cards is wise also. Homemade gifts are also an ideal way of keeping costs down and show thought and love has gone into making them. Later in this booklet there are some suggestions for handmade gifts.

How will you minimise financial pressure on yourself this Christmas?

Social Pressure

Choosing which social gatherings if any to attend is a great strategy to avoid extra stress. Whilst we don't like to disappoint people it is often the case that others are time poor and stressed in the build up to Christmas and may be relieved that you choose not to visit.



Don't be afraid to tell people that you are having a quiet Christmas and stick to your guns, even if they try to convince you that you can fit in a visit. If you feel that you cannot excuse yourself from these situations, at least set some time aside for yourself to do something you enjoy which will reduce stress levels.

Can you think of ways to reduce social pressure on yourself?

Expectations of others

Try to stop worrying about the needs and expectations of others and put yours first and foremost. Minimise the time spent in stressful situations such as visiting family and friends or doing Christmas shopping. We often feel the need for everything to be perfect on Christmas day, the meal the presents and the visits, but in reality, this is needless pressure we impose on ourselves. In the big scheme of things if the meal isn't cooked to perfection or the visit doesn't go to plan, no one but us will dwell on it. Don't feel that you need to appear to be the coper if you're not, we all have vulnerabilities and shouldn't be ashamed to show it.

How will you prepare yourself for the expectations of others?

Painful Memories

Memories of past hurts, losses and struggles can become very prominent at various times throughout the year and Christmas is one in of them. For some the fun festive season is not their reality and can be quite the opposite leaving them feeling alone and isolated. Christmas in particular is a time of celebration for a lot of people who hold religion at the core of this celebration, this may not be the case for you and may in fact trigger past traumas that you may have experienced. In these instances, forward planning is very important and having contact details of support services or people you can call on is very important especially as a large number of support services close down over the Christmas period.

What may prove most painful or difficult for you at Christmas?

Support

Christmas is an excellent time to reach out for the support of others if you feel able. This may feel like a daunting experience but letting family and friends know that this is



a particularly hard time for you can bear many rewards for all. Another option is to try to be of support to others, there are many community events looking for volunteers which gives a great sense of inclusion and ensures that you will be surrounded by like-minded people. You can also choose to attend one of these events as a guest which may prove less stressful and will again ensure you are in the company of others. Later in this booklet there is information on free community events.

Some examples of supports that you may wish to call upon are Friends, Family, Support Workers, Neighbors, Pets and Yourself.

Who would you call on for support or friendship?



Can you think of ways in which you can support yourself?



What supports have you drawn on in the past that can support you this Christmas, this could include memories, friendships, holidays Etc.?

Stay Connected and Enjoy

The last couple of years may have proven to be a little easier for some of us with Covid19 restrictions being relaxed meaning we are free to connect with our families and loved ones in the usual way. Many of us may have learnt to use technology such as Skype or Zoom to make contact and stay connected with others and we would encourage you to do this more than ever during the holiday period when some of our other regular supports may be closed over the holiday period. We would invite you to think about what you enjoy about this time of year or things that you would like to see or experience this Christmas; this may include things like connecting with family taking time out to travel or joining in a community event. Although travel and visiting family is possible for some, others may find this difficult. It is good to remember there are lots of community events happening this Christmas and we have included a list of some of these most of which are free of charge or low cost.

What are you looking forward to or what would you like to happen?

Photos with Santa

One fun and traditional part of Christmas time is getting your annual photo with Santa! There are plenty of opportunities in Perth to get photos taken at shopping centres, markets, events, and you can even get your pets in on the action at some pet stores.

Meeting Santa for most kids is exciting but if you or your child has a sensory process disorder like autism, it can be a challenging experience. Some shopping centres are now offering 'Sensory Santa'. They create a calm and sensory-friendly photo session with dim lights and no music or loud noises.

Where to get free Santa photos in Perth

Looking to save money this Christmas? We know the costs can mount up before you know it. One way to save a bit of money is to find somewhere that does free Santa photos. It is possible! We have rounded up a list for you.

- Your local Christmas Markets
- Santa Selfies at Dog Swamp Shopping Centre
- Take your own Santa photo at Forest Lakes Shopping Centre
- Local Christmas event

Sensitive Santa photography Westfield Inaloo Shopping Center

Santa is setting aside some time to create a sensory-friendly environment, so that families can visit our Christmas wonderland and have their photo with Santa in a

relaxed environment.

These sessions are run before stores are open

Westfield Innaloo Sensitive Santa photography bookings only. Sensitive Santa sessions are limited and are available for families of children with special needs. Each booking allows for a 10-minute session.

Only 1 family permitted per booking. A small booking fee applies. Delays may be experienced if arrive outside of your appointment time.

Pet Santa Photos

Karrinyup Shopping Centre pet Santa photos

Frosty the Snowman and Rudolf have flown in from the North Pole and are coming to Karrinyup! They are looking forward to meeting you and your pets and taking your pet family photos. Make sure you book in time that you do not miss out.



When: 2 November – 8 December

Cost: See website for cost details

Lakeside Joondalup pet Santa photos

Show your pets just how much you love them and capture the purr-fect photo with Santa this Christmas! They have dedicated timeslots for your furry friend to join you in the family photo.

When: 20 November – 1 December

Cost: See website for cost details

Westfield Carousel

Make it a very furry Christmas at Westfield Carousel. After a year like no other, we could all use another reason to smile – and a photo with Santa and your furry family member is the perfect opportunity. Hurry to book your spot as they fill up very quickly.

When: 20 November – 6 December

Cost: See website for cost details

Westfield Booragoon

End the year with puppy smiles and whispers to Santa at Westfield Booragoon. Santa is waiting to greet the furry members of your family and create gorgeous Christmas photos with dogs. Bookings are essential.

When: 27 November – 13 December

Cost: See website for cost detail

Pan Pacific Perth

Bark! The Herald Angels will sing this Christmas when Santa Claus visits Pan Pacific Perth for a one-day only pet photography event.

Bring your four-legged friend(s), smile for the camera and receive a special pet treat with your digital Christmas photo. Reservations are available for up to two pets per photo, with room to invite the rest of the family too. Photos will take place on the grassed area outside The Lobby Cafe at Pan Pacific Perth, where delicious coffee, flaky pastries and indulgent (human) treats are available for purchase.

When: Sat. 25 November

Cost: See website for cost details

Christmas Events

City of Perth Christmas Light Trail

Everyone's favourite Christmas tradition is back and bigger than ever! The Christmas Lights Trail has cemented itself as City of Perth's signature event, attracting families every year to marvel at the magical spectacle of light.

Now in its sixth year, the Christmas Lights Trail 2022 covers 6km across the City of Light, over 46 summer evenings. Showcasing 35 unique large-scale light installations ranging from traditional Christmas icons and loveable Australian animals, to immersive projections on historic buildings. Enjoy festive entertainment and performances throughout the city every Friday and Saturday night. Santa appearances

Murray and Hay St Mall | Every Friday | 6pm to 9pm

Council House | Every Saturday | 6pm to 8pm

Northbridge | Every Saturday | 8pm to 9pm

Look out for Santa who will be spreading Christmas cheer every Friday night in the Malls. Visit Council House Foyer on Saturday nights for a Christmas photo and meet Santa before he's whisked away on a magical rickshaw tour of Northbridge.

Christmas Nativity

Brought back by popular demand, the Christmas Nativity is returning to Forrest Place and will retell the much-loved traditional story of Christmas. Brought to life on stage

with a stunning backdrop of colour and visual effects, this performance is led by festive performers, young talent, community choirs and professional acts. It's a show for everyone and a chance to sing-along to your favourite Christmas carols.

Tickets are not required for this event.

Stick around for a bite to eat and explore the City's iconic Christmas Lights Trail.

Where: Forrest Place Perth 6000

When: Saturday 17th and Tuesday 20th December

Time: 7:00pm - 8.30pm

Santa's Symphony in the Park, a FREE community carols event featuring the amazing Perth Symphony Orchestra and talented vocalists, is back in 2022, in an all-new Burswood Park location!

Sing along to your favourite classic, traditional and modern Christmas songs with family and friends as you soak up the summer evening atmosphere on the old Burswood Park golf course, a more spacious location that is closer to the Stadium Station for ease of access.

There will be activities to keep the kids entertained before the main show starts at 6.30pm - including giant bubbles, lawn games, animal experience, airbrush tattooists, and plenty more. This year's performance will also be broadcast to THREE large screens, so everyone has a great view.

Bring your picnic (rugs/low chairs only) or grab a bite from one of the plentiful food trucks. The event will be licenced, so no BYO. Please also leave your furry friends at home.

**Children under the age of 3 do not require a ticket.

Carols in the park Claremont

Join us for an evening of carols and family fun at Claremont Park. When the sun sets, the live entertainment begins, with carols performed by West Australian Symphony Orchestra!

There are plenty of fun and festive activities for everyone including a silent disco, face painting, roving Christmas characters as well as a land train and an inflatable obstacle

course for the little ones. And if you keep your eyes peeled you might spot a certain someone with a white beard and a red suit!

We'll have a fantastic selection of food stalls to feast on, so bring along a picnic basket (with responsible BYO allowed), grab a bite, and settle in for a festive evening under the stars.

This is a free event for the whole community to enjoy.

Date: 16 DEC 2022

Time: 4:30 PM TO 8:00 PM

Address: Cnr Stirling Hwy and Bay View Tce, Claremont WA 6010

Facilities: Playground, public toilets

Carols by Candlelight – Armadale

In an annual Christmas tradition, the City of Armadale invites you to join in the festive spirit of the holiday season with Carols by Candlelight Perth, led by the award-winning Armadale City Concert Band. This family friendly Christmas event is bursting with community pride and celebration as it showcases some of the incredible talent from the Armadale area.

When: 2 December – 5:30 – 8pm

Where: Memorial Park, Armadale

Carols by the Jetty

A whole community experience – enjoy an evening of carols, family fun and celebrating Christmas – presented by the churches of Busselton.

When: Saturday 8th December

Time: 6pm – 7.30pm

Where: Busselton Foreshore Amphitheatre & Stage

Carols by Candlelight – Canning

Featuring the Canning City Brass Band, Rossmoyne Community Choir and Avenue Jazz Band along with a host of other special guests, attendees can sing along to carols and Christmas classics, amidst the magical setting of our Civic Amphitheatre and Gardens. This year's free event will be extended to incorporate even more NEW entertainment and performances, as well as a very special twist that the audience will love! So, attendees should bring their best singing voice and join the rest of the community to celebrate the silly season. With roving entertainment, kid's craft activities and delicious food trucks as well, this event will deliver all the festive feels and keep the kids entertained too!

When: Saturday 2 December
Time: 5:30pm – 8pm
Where: Civic Amphitheater

[Santa's Symphony in the Park | 2022](#)

Santa's Symphony in the Park, a FREE community carols event featuring the amazing Perth Symphony Orchestra and talented vocalists, is back in 2022, in an all-new Burswood Park location!

Sing along to your favourite classic, traditional and modern Christmas songs with family and friends as you soak up the summer evening atmosphere on the old Burswood Park golf course, a more spacious location that is closer to the Stadium Station for ease of access.

There will be activities to keep the kids entertained before the main show starts at 6.30pm – including giant bubbles, lawn games, animal experience, airbrush tattooists, and plenty more. This year's performance will also be broadcast to THREE large screens, so everyone has a great view.

When: Saturday 2nd December, 2022
Where: Burswood Park, Roger Mackay Drive

[South Perth Carols](#)

Get ready to jingle those bells because the City is again partnering with [South Perth Lions Club](#) to present Carols at Sunset.

Enjoy the [South Perth Lions Big Band](#), sing along to your favourite Christmas carols, and soak up a summer evening with family and friends. Better still, this is a free community event – everyone is welcome!

The South Perth Lions Club will be collecting gold coin donations at the event, with profits going towards supporting the charitable and community services of the Club.

Schedule

5.30pm Pre-show entertainment, Children's activities

6.30pm Christmas Carols by the South Perth Lions Big Band

7–7.30pm Intermission and Santa's appearance on stage

7.30–8.30pm Christmas Carols by the South Perth Lions Big Band

Claremont Carols in the Park

Join Claremont for an evening Christmas Carols and family fun. When the sun sets, light up a candle as we sing carols performed by Western Australia Symphony Orchestra. There will be a fantastic selection of food stalls to stop your bellies from rumbling, so bring along a picnic basket, grab a bite, and settle in for a festive evening under the stars. And if you keep your eyes peeled you might spot Santa!! This is a free event for the whole community.

When: 16 December

Time: 4:30 – 10.30pm (carols starting at 6.30pm)

Where: Claremont Park

Cooby Carols by Candlelight

Sing for Santa!

It's Christmas time and the Christmas festivities always demand that you sing terrible Christmas carols with a group of people that you don't know. But you know even if you do complain about how cheesy the songs are, you will still want to take the family with you to sing along. There is no point trying to deny it. You can fight it if you want, but when it comes down to it, you will end up wanting to head to your local carols festival and singing along. You don't have to live in Coolbellup, but if you do or you are willing to travel, then you will be able to attend the Cooby Christmas Carols .

5.30–7.00pm Hargreaves Park, Counsell Avenue Coolbellup

Carols by Candlelight Bayswater

Community members are invited to share in the magic of Christmas and take part in a sing-along under the stars as part of the City's Carols by Candlelight event on Saturday 16 December.

From 5 to 9pm, families and friends can gather at Riverside Gardens West in Bayswater for a heart-warming concert of classic Christmas tunes, with performances

by the West Australian Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Baysie Providence Christmas Choir and The Christmas Special party band.

Concert-goers can browse Christmas markets for last-minute gifts and pick up a delicious dinner from a food truck or pack a picnic to enjoy under the stars. Craft activities, face painting and rides will keep the little ones entertained before a special appearance from Santa.

Programs will be available for a gold coin donation, with all proceeds going to Perth Homeless Support Group.

The City is working with vendors to reduce single-use plastics at this event. Concert-goers are encouraged to bring their own reusable water bottles to fill at the water station, and make use of their own reusable containers and cups

When: Saturday 16 December

5pm – 9pm

Where: Riverside Gardens

[West Australian Symphony Orchestra LotteryWest Christmas Spectacular](#)

A free ticketed event for the whole family!

The Christmas Spectacular returns! Presented by the West Australian Symphony Orchestra with support from Lotterywest and City of Perth, the sing-a-long extravaganza will bring festive cheer for the whole family with classical music, seasonal hits and songs from some of WASO's favourite Christmas movies.

Over 150 performers will take to the stage for two magical shows, bringing alive all your favourite festive classics such as All I Want For Christmas is You, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Aussie Jingle Bells.

Perth's most popular end of year concert event is free for West Aussies to enjoy, and it may even include a special visit from Santa himself.

www.waso.com.au

[Christmas on the coast](#)

A festive wonderland

Head down to Coogee Beach Reserve to experience a festive wonderland by the shore. It's the perfect way to get into the Christmas spirit, with carollers, entertainment, dazzling light displays, roving Christmas characters, Christmas craft

activities and more.

Enjoy a bite to eat at one of the food trucks before settling down to the sounds of the Murphy Brothers band for a family-friendly concert to round off the day.

Fun for the whole family

The interactive Christmas trail includes the following and more:

Inflatable Christmas characters

Dazzling Christmas light displays and projections

The chance to snap a pic with roving Christmas characters, including Jack Frost, reindeer and a snowman

Meet and greet with the Snow Queen

Christmas-themed photo booth

A variety of food trucks

Christmas craft activities

Stage performances (5pm – 7pm) from local community groups, dance schools, and church choirs

Community concert at 7.15pm with the Murphy Brothers band.

Take a long a picnic rug and some chairs and settle in for an afternoon and evening of holiday magic!

Our Christmas on the Coast event is carbon neutral! What does that mean?

The carbon emissions released by this event (such as attendee travel and food consumed and onsite generators) the City has offset through investing in planting mixed native trees and shrubs in Western Australia and permanently cancelling international carbon credits.

Food and drink vendors on site:

- Master Panda
- El Aleman Loco
- Juice Station
- Porta Pizza
- Milky Monster
- Silvercloud 1950
- Gift of Taste Hot Donuts
- Minis Pancake Van
- Barista on Wheels

- Street Food Lab
- Nidev's Food Factory
- Unicone
- Rock N Rolls

Bring in the festive season at our well-loved event - Christmas on the Coast, and it's free for the whole family.

These activities take place 17th December from 5pm- 9pm.

[Ellenbrook Community Collective](#) & Hills Symphony Orchestra warmly invite you to Aveley Carols. Join us for all things Christmas and community!

A **free** family-friendly event.

Food vendors, Christmas market & community stalls, activities, face painting, Lions train, and more!

Turkich Parade Oval commences 4pm carols 7pm

[The Magic of Christmas](#)

There's no place like The Wanneroo Botanic Gardens to spend the festive season with your friends, colleagues, and loved ones! Experience the Botanic Gardens as they are transformed into a Christmas wonderland. From late November to mid-January each Christmas don't miss the chance to visit the iconic Botanic Gardens, just 5 minutes from Joondalup.

Wind your way through 5 acres of stunning gardens and more sparkly trees than ever! Each year immerse yourself in a truly unique Christmas light event in the heart of Perth's Northern suburbs. Guests can visit the Gardens at any time during opening hours, with 7pm onward being the best time for viewing the lights.

Free Admission For all mini golf players and Leapfrog's dining Guests

\$5 Admission For all spectator and/or sightseeing Guests

'Tis the season for the markets! Whether it's to grab some hawker-style street eats or find the perfect unique gift in time for Christmas, here's our list of the best markets around Perth.

[Nov 23 2023 | 6:30pm - Jan 15 2024 | 9:00pm](#)

Stadium Park Christmas Festival

Free Christmas Festival is back and better than ever!

Stadium Park will be packed to the brim with market stalls, food trucks and roving entertainment. Get your last-minute Christmas gifts, have an “elfie” with special guest Santa, or bring the fam to watch a classic Christmas movie on the big screen in the BHP Amphitheatre. The Jingle Bar will serving ice-cold beverages, perfect for relaxing and soaking up those summer vibes. Why not book in for a festive tour of the Stadium and experience our world-class sound & light show! Yule be sorry if you miss out! Each Christmas Festival will feature two Christmas Movies on the BHP Amphitheatre screen.

Sunday 3rd December 3-8pm

Christmas Markets

Fremantle Arts Centre's Bazaar

Western Australia's most loved Christmas market returns for 2023 from December 1 to 3. Bazaar is a celebration of handmade, quality craftsmanship, showcasing the work of 50 local designers, artists and makers.

Now in its 44th year, Bazaar brings together nearly 50 of Perth's premium artisans who are producing the highest calibre of WA-designed wares, from crafts and homewares to fashion, jewellery, textiles, ceramics, woodwork, toys, prints, stationary, and more.

Bazaar will take over the front garden of the Fremantle Arts Centre beneath the sweeping plane trees. In addition to the selection of market stalls, Bazaar will feature festive performances by local group FAC Yeah! Community Choir, along with delicious bites and refreshments from a host of local food vendors and a bar, open all weekend.

Taking place over the first weekend in December, Bazaar will run from December 1 to 3, opening with a 5-9 PM twilight session on Friday, and continuing 9 AM – 5 PM Saturday and Sunday

Christmas Markets at Valley Social (formerly Elmars)

Come and join us for a great day out at one of our FAVOURITE and most popular venues.

There will be lots of market stalls, with fantastic Christmas Gift ideas, Live music, Kids entertainment, a visit by Santa, great American BBQ food and the bar and Spirit Lounge will be open - Don't forget to book your table for lunch.

Market parking is at the rear of the restaurant - Please follow the signs.

November 26th 11.00am-3.30pm Where: 8731 W Swan Rd, Henley Brook.

Summer X Salt Beachside Christmas Market

Market goers are in for a festive treat in December, with not one but THREE huge markets taking place on December DEC – 2nd, 16th + 23rd (Xmas Pop Up) in the lead up to Christmas. The Christmas Pop Up event on December 23rd will be an opportunity for shoppers to find a unique, locally sourced gift for friends and family.

Perth Hills Artisan Market

Kicking off bright at 9.30 am, this market is held indoors and proudly showcases WA's finest woodworkers, potters, jewellers and gourmets under one roof, mixed in with wine, gin, artists, painters, clothing and toymakers! Come meet them all.

Immerse yourself in the vibrant community atmosphere and show some love to local creatives by perusing and purchasing the curated selection of great art for your walls, jewellery for special wear and every day, handmade clothing & accessories for the family, beautiful woodwork and amazing pottery! You are sure to find great birthday/anniversary gift ideas for friends and family too.

PLUS there is 'MINI PHAMs', an exciting selection of youth vendors aged 18 years and under! Look out for their special logo and support these fabulous up and comers! Adding to the fun is music all day long, the chance to chat with neighbours, friendly volunteers and local business owners, indulge in a delicious meal or sweet treat from the food trucks on site.

Perth Hills Events supports – independent artists, crafters, makers, producers and creatives who take pride in what they make and share their passion with the wider community.

Cool in summer in the airconditioned comfort.

Perth Hills' #1 choice for high-quality artisan buyers and sellers. Come and see what makes them so special for yourself.

Dec 16 2023 | 9:30am - Dec 17 2023 | 3:00pm

Festive Flicks

The City's popular free outdoor movie season is back, with festive films for all ages. Bring the family to Free Flicks for Kids on weekends, or bring that special someone to cuddle up under the stars with at Date Night each Wednesday. Arrive early to nab a beanbag and enjoy some seasonal pre-film entertainment with your BYO picnic, or grab dinner from the plethora of nearby dining options. [Click here to see what's showing.](#)

Proudly supported by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.

Free, no booking required.

Various dates & times until 21 Dec

City of Perth Northbridge Piazza, cnr Lake & James Streets, Northbridge

FREE FLICKS FOR KIDS

The ever popular **Free Flicks for Kids** returns to City of Perth Northbridge Piazza this spring and summer. Nab one of the comfy Piazza bean bags and settle in for some pre-film entertainment ahead of this season's selection of festive family films on the outdoor Superscreen at Perth's own free community cinema. BYO picnic or take advantage of Northbridge's wide array of kid-friendly casual dining or takeaway options

- there's something to suit every appetite!

- Sunday 27 November – Ron's Gone Wrong
- Saturday 3 December – Abominable
- Sunday 11 December – Shaun the Sheep
- Saturday 17 December – Arthur Christmas

Film starts 6pm. Pre-film entertainment from 5pm.

[Mandurah New Year's Eve Celebrations](#)

Celebrate New Year's with a touch of fireworks and fun on the Mandurah foreshore.

Join us along the foreshore this New Year's Eve with a spectacular fireworks display as we welcome in 2024. There will be two displays for you to enjoy at 9pm and midnight.

This year we have [Coast FM](#) on board bringing an epic soundtrack to go with the fireworks show. Tune in via Coast FM. We'll also have carnival rides along the Eastern Foreshore for everyone to enjoy.

Bring along your picnic rugs and deck chairs, or find a nice spot to sit along the water, for a great night out with family and friends. See the fireworks in all their glory from some of the best viewing spots around town including:

- Eastern Foreshore
- Stingray Point (under the fig tree)
- Henry Sutton Grove
- Mandurah Bridge pedestrian walkway

Dec 31 2023 | 9:00pm - Jan 1 2024 | 12:30am

Which of the community events appeal to you?

Gifts

Money can be tight throughout the year but more so at Christmas, gifts don't have to cost large amounts and a personal touch from a handmade gift can mean more than something shop bought. There are so many resources available now that we can access for creative ideas and we have included some suggestions here:

www.pinterest.com/homemade-christmasgifts/

www.wikihow.com/make-your-own-christmas-gifts

www.getrichslowly.org/blog/2008/11/13/a-do-it-yourself-christmas-34-great-gifts-you-can-make-yourself



Gifts may include handmade wooden or soft toys, gift cards, baked goods, potpourri or freshener sachets, photographs in frames and pickles. You may also want to re-gift something that you have no use for, or donate some of your time to help someone, a nice way to do this is in the form of a work voucher/coupon that can be redeemed at a later date.



You can get as creative as you like with this idea and either make and decorate your own or use a readymade template from the internet.

Second-hand charity shops are always a great source of unusual bargains or even factory outlets for discounted goods as opposed to the usual retail stores.

DIY GIFT IDEAS ON A BUDGET

Loaded Spoons



These spoons are perfect for a mug of hot milk and make a delicious easy and budget friendly gift.

All you need to do is pour melted chocolate onto the spoon and top with delicious treats. Some ideas are nuts, sprinkles, or mini marshmallows.

Let the chocolate set and wrap in cellophane.

These are perfect partnered with a mug and both the spoons and mugs can be purchased from either charity shops or your local Kmart.

Homemade Peppermint Milk Bath

2 Cups whole powdered milk (higher fat content the better)

3-4 teaspoons peppermint tea (or about 10 drops of essential oil of your choice)

Homemade bath milk is super easy and only requires 2 ingredients and 2 steps to make!



STEP 1

Combine ingredients in a tin or bowl and whisk together until well combined.

STEP 2

Store milk bath in a cool dark place in a tin or jar for a day or two to infuse milk with peppermint fragrance.

TO USE:

Add a few tablespoons or as much as 1 cup of milk bath under hot running water.

Lie back and relax.

After soaking, drain tub and rinse off in clean water

How will you be creative with your gifts this year?

If you find the idea of visiting the shops at all stressful during this busy period, make good use of the online shopping services both for day-to-day items such as groceries and for other items such as gifts and decorations. Both Coles and Woolworths have delivery services 7 days a week the websites are:

Woolworths <https://goo.gljM5pdiZ> and Coles <https://goo.gljp8f0Rr>

Many people feel the financial pressure at Christmas time to provide gifts for their children and there are several charities that will happily provide gifts for those needy families. These are generally donated by the public and distributed to those requesting assistance some useful contacts are:

The Smith Family: 1800 024 069

Mission Australia: 08 9225 0400

Salvation Army 1800 223 191

Anglicare 089 263 2000

Some other major charities also provide this service please contact them direct to enquire.

The Advent of Wellness

1

Don't do everything yourself

Enlist the help of family and friends, ask for help and remember, it's ok to say no.

2

Make a budget and stick to it

It's easy to get caught up in the excitement of the season and overspend, but a financial burden can create more stress. Sticking to a budget can feel satisfying too.

3

You can only do so much

Choose which activities and traditions are most important to you and which may be triggering. Only participate in the ones that make you feel good.

4

Be mindful of your triggers

Find coping strategies that work for you, like breathing, meditation or music and use them to cope with anything that might be triggering for you over the festive season.

5

Keep moving

We all know the science between a healthy body/healthy mind so be sure to find time to incorporate daily exercise into your routine by setting small goals over the festive season.

6

Plan for all eventualities

Many support services close over the festive season so discuss and plan alternatives in advance, in case of crisis.

7

Try something new

If your regular supports are not available during the festive season, give something else a go. Many people learn new hobbies like art or journaling as ways to express their feelings.

8

Keep in touch

We don't always have to be social but it is a good idea to stay in daily contact with others either on the phone or face-to-face.

9

Don't be overwhelmed by expectations

We sometimes imagine people to have greater expectations of us than they do so ask others what their expectations of you are over the festive season and don't be afraid to say no.

10

Keep in touch

We don't always have to be social but it is a good idea to stay in daily contact with others either on the phone or face-to-face.

11

Practice self-care

To give others our best self we need to be looking after our own self-care. Be compassionate to yourself.

12

Don't overdo it

It may be the season of excess but pace yourself and enjoy a little of everything in moderation.

13

Conflicts are possible

We can encounter people over the festive season we don't see often and this can cause conflicts. If you are unable to avoid these triggers, create a safety plan in advance.

14

Limit the Christmas spirit

Alcohol can have a very negative impact on mental wellbeing. Remember, it's completely ok to say no to alcohol if you know this will adversely affect you.

15

Don't be too hard on yourself

We often gauge our performance on how others appear to be doing but things are not always as they seem. Take comfort in knowing you are doing your best.

16

Think of others

Focusing on others over the festive season can bring a sense of achievement and a feeling of connection with community. There are many ways to give back to those who may be struggling too.

17

Recharge your batteries

This time of year can be exhausting so slow down and breathe. Try to do something nice for yourself each day.

18 Make an appointment with your worries

Set a specific time to work through your stresses and set a time limit to try and find solutions within this time frame so you can see things more clearly and find productive ways to cope.

19

Get enough sleep

Sleep deprivation is a big contributor to mental health distress, so try to create a good sleep routine to ensure you don't become exhausted or burnt out.

20

Eat something healthy

If you've overindulged in the turkey plan some healthy alternatives into your day. Meal preparation in advance can be a welcome relief if you're too tired to cook a healthy meal.

21

Find time to relax

The festive season can leave us feeling worn-out so try not to feel guilty for putting yourself first. It could be as simple as reading a book or watching your favourite movie.

22

It's only Christmas after all

Don't put too much focus on one day of the year, treat it like any other day. Know that it's ok to be you, whatever that looks like.

23

You are not alone

There are others out there feeling the same or similar as you this festive season and reaching out to others to ask for support is crucial.

24

It's ok to say no

Set boundaries and stick to them. If you feel you cannot say no, plan for all eventualities and have safety plans in place. Stay positive – you may not need to implement your plans and may thoroughly enjoy yourself.

25

Today's the day!! So much build up what will you choose to do?

If you are spending time with loved ones have a wonderful time. If you choose to spend the day alone look after yourself and do something nice for yourself.

If you would like company but have no one, consider taking part in one of the free Christmas breakfasts or lunches around Perth (see our free events section).

Remember its ok to do something completely left field for Christmas day, how about skydiving? However, you decide to spend the day have a happy and safe Christmas.

Please tell someone if you're not ok. People will be honoured and thankful that you have spoken up and called on them for support.

During the Christmas period our office will close down from December 24th until January 4th. There is a list of useful numbers for crisis and emergency at the back of this book.

Christmas Dinner

In most Australian cities and regional areas there will be several free community Christmas breakfast or lunches taking place. These are fantastic opportunities to connect with others whilst capturing the true spirit of Christmas, remember it's the company that makes the day not how fancy the food is. We have listed below some of the events being held this year, if you don't want to attend as a guest, consider attending as a volunteer.

Mission Australia- Christmas Lunch in the Park

Bringing hope, compassion, and celebration to Perth's most marginalised and disadvantaged people this Christmas. Join us for the 2022 event in Wellington Square, Wellington Square, East Perth, as we celebrate the 47th annual Christmas Lunch in the Park event.

About:

While families across Perth come together to celebrate, smile and enjoy each other's company this Christmas Day, we must not forget those who are experiencing homelessness, are alone or disadvantaged. For these people in our community, Christmas can be an extremely difficult time of year.

Now in its 47th year, Christmas Lunch in the Park is designed to reach these individuals and offer them hope, compassion and celebration on Christmas day. Centred around a traditional shared Christmas lunch, the event it is designed to provide individuals with support both on the day and into the future.

Event wristbands:

In the weeks leading up to Christmas, we will be distributing event wristbands to most support service providers within the Perth city area. You can collect yours from the nearest community support agency in December, then wear it on the day to streamline entry to the event. This event is for people most in need who may be experiencing homelessness, disadvantage, or marginalisation. If this isn't you but you would still like to support the event, you can donate or get involved as a volunteer. Mission Australia's Christmas Lunch in the park is Australia's biggest Christmas Day charity event so don't be alone this Christmas, it's not just for people that are down on their luck but for anyone wanting to share community.

Cost: Free

Where: Wellington Square Park East Perth

Time: 11.00 am - 2.00 pm

Free busses will transport people to and from Wellington Street Bus Station from 10.30 am onwards. Information can be obtained from their Facebook page: Christmas Lunch in the Park

Joondalup Christmas Lunch

This event provides a sit-down meal for those from the local community who are alone or isolated at Christmas, who may not have family around them or who are struggling financially. Guests are seated at beautifully presented tables decked out with white linen tablecloths and shiny cutlery and served a meal whilst they enjoy the company of others and share in the community Christmas spirit. There is no alcohol permitted at this event and it is a smoke free venue.

Where: Central Park Joondalup 187 Grand Boulevard Joondalup

Time: 11.30 am - 2.30 pm

To register go to <http://www.joondalupchristmaslunch.com/index.php>

Longing For Hope: Christmas Carols & Free Dinner

[Free Family-friendly Christmas Carols, Message of Hope and Dinner at St. Luke's Anglican Church](#)

13 George Street Maylands, WA 6051

Starts on Sun, 17 Dec 2023 5:00 PM

Come along and celebrate Christmas with C3 Church North Perth as we journey through the long awaited birth of Christ. There's be plenty of festive fun, carols, free dinner and words to encourage us all this Christmas.

Please reserve a ticket for you and your family/friends for catering purposes, and feel free to dress festive!

Wanneroo Christmas Day Lunch

Did you know there are only 55 sleeps until Christmas!!

No one should be alone at Christmas!

Since 2012 a dedicated group of volunteers have come together to put on a wonderful Christmas Day lunch for those who are alone or in need.

Once again we pleased to invite you to share the Christmas Spirit with us in 2023. Join us for a delicious Christmas Day Lunch, entertainment and gifts for the children. This is a FREE ticketed event.

Date: Monday 25 December 2023

Venue: Irene McCormack Catholic College, 18 Bradman Drive, Butlet

Time: 11.30am - 2.30pm

For more information please go to our website at

<https://wanneroochristmasdaylunch.org.au/>

Salvation Army

Every year, the Salvos host Christmas lunches, and other meals across the country, at no cost to you. If you are feeling lonely and have no one to share Christmas with, or are unable to prepare your own Christmas meal, you are invited.

Together we will celebrate Christmas with decorations, music, a delicious meal and great conversation.

To join us, please search for your closest event below and contact us ASAP to register your interest. These events can book out quickly. Not all Salvation Army locations offer Christmas meals, but many do host Christmas church services or carols events. Use the form below to find your nearest suburb.

If you are struggling and could do with some help to celebrate Christmas with your loved ones, please contact your local Salvos who may be able to support you with food hampers and gift assistance.

For more information contact your local Salvos.

Food Hampers

Anglican Church/ Church of Ascension

For ongoing assistance with food, the Anglican church offers support:

Where: Anglican Church. 8 Spring Park Road, Midland

When: Fridays 10 am to 12 noon

Serving people primarily in the Midland area but no one in need is turned away. If they have a pension card that is helpful but not necessary. One hamper per family. Hamper

consists of bread and other bakery products, fruit and vegetables and assorted groceries plus a frozen meal. Hot and cold drinks are available and a free sausage sizzle at Christmas there will be an additional festive hamper.

Salvation Army

Salvos Assistance Line on 1300 371 288.

We offer emergency food hampers throughout the year and other assistance programs.

AYLA INC

Our food hamper system provides food assistance those in need via our Food Bank and Low- Cost Food Centre, providing many essential foods people require.

Our workers fill out hampers and make sure our stock is going to good use. In addition to these food hampers, we also provide emergency relief in the form of clothing, furniture and electronics to disadvantaged members of the community.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 10:00am - 2:00pm (by appointment only).

We know that the festive time of year can be tough on low-income households, we here at AYLA Inc aim to bring that special cheer to the holiday season.

Full of food and other goods, we aim to help struggling families bring the magic of the holidays with our hampers. Available for registration late November and for pickup closer to the holidays.

We understand that sending children to school can be financially challenging when on a limited income. We aim to ensure that our leaders of tomorrow are being provided with the essentials to be able to learn in an environment and not feel isolated and/or singled out due to not having basic school essentials.

AYLA Inc. continues to distribute Back to School Packs helping to reduce the cost of the start of school for many families within our community. Various nurseries, primary and high schools access our service as well as many other services, companies, and organisations such as the Department of Communities, Partners in Recovery, Fremantle Family Support Network and Cockburn Financial Counselling Service. We have exceeded the number of children aided every year since 2015 and continue to do so.

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a limited income. We aim to ensure that our leaders of tomorrow are being provided with the basic essentials to be able to learn in an environment and not feel isolated and/or singled out due to not having basic school essentials.

We have exceeded the number of children aided every year since 2015 and continue to do so.

Address: 10 McKinnon Street, Cockburn Central, WA 6164

Phone Number: (08) 9414 7286

The Haven Centre: 879 Albany Highway, East Victoria Park

Fresh food hampers: Tuesday- Saturday 8am-1pm

Take away meals: Tuesday- Saturday 8-9.30am and 11am-1pm

[St Mary's Outreach Service](#)

Victoria Park Community Centre, Crn Kent and Gloucester Streets, East Victoria Park

Take away meals: Monday 6-8pm

[Star St Uniting Church](#)

Cnr Star and Archer Streets, Carlisle

Food hampers: Wednesday, 9am-12noon

[Manna Inc.](#)

Weld Square, Beauford Street, Perth

Take away meals: Monday- Friday 1.30pm

[Communicare](#)

Emergency assistance including digital food vouchers

Call 63701000

Monday- Friday 8-11am for an appointment

[Sussex Street Community Law Services](#)

Food vouchers and Foodbank referrals

Call 6253 9500 for an appointment

[St Vincent de Paul](#)

Emergency relief including digital food vouchers and bill assistance

Call 1300 794 054

Monday- Friday 9am-1pm

Uniting WA

Emergency relief including digital food vouchers

Call 92201255 on Tuesday 11am for an appointment on Wednesday or Thursday

Riverview Community Services

Food vouchers, overdue bill assistance, rent assistance, fuel vouchers

Call 9416 0000 Monday- Thursday 8.30am-5pm for an appointment

Financial Advice

National Debt Helpline

Phone counselling

Call 1800 007 007 Monday - Friday 9.30am-4.30pm

Sussex Street Community Law Services, East Victoria Park

Phone counselling incl. assistance with Centrelink matters

Call 6253 9500 for an appointment

Communicare, Cannington

Phone counselling

Call 9458 2611 for an appointment

Uniting WA, Perth

Phone counselling

Call 92201255 on Monday at 8.30am for an appointment the following week

Jacaranda Community Centre, Belmont

Call 9477 4346 for an appointment

Riverview Community Services

Financial counselling, information, support and referrals

Call 9416 0000 Monday- Thursday 8.30am-5pm for an appointment

Social settings

Ok so the thought of the family Christmas get together fills you with dread, but you just can't get out of it. Forward planning for some of the situations that may occur is an effective strategy for some of those awkward questions that you just know you will be faced with from relatives that you may not see from one year to the next.

What are some of the questions that you know you will face e.g. what have you been doing with yourself this year?

People often feel that their recovery is not a worthwhile topic of conversation however in reality people are usually genuinely interested to hear how your year has been going, including the ups and downs. Only discuss what is comfortable for you and don't be afraid to excuse yourself from conversations should they become hard. It is a great idea to have some responses ready for those questions that you may have listed above, which may include relationships careers weight gain/loss etc.

What are some responses that you would be happy to share?

Not all of us are lucky enough to have great relatives who are supportive and kind. As the old saying goes "we can't choose our family", and however well-intentioned their comments, they can sometimes seem quite hurtful or critical, often leaving us feeling quite inadequate. Pre planning some responses allows us the luxury of being creative and a satisfaction with our answers.

Sarcasm and humour are just two creative methods that could be used and then there is the option of straightforward honesty.

In most social gatherings there will be someone we can look to as support or a wing person, this might be someone that has insight to your recovery, someone that has had contact with you through the year or simply someone that has taken the time to say "hello".

Remember you can take time out and simply go for a walk take time out in the toilet or simply excuse yourself and leave if things become too hard.

Are you going to be alone at Christmas?

Some people relish the idea of having a quiet uninterrupted Christmas whilst others dread the thought of isolation. This time of year in particular can heighten feelings of loneliness as others seem to be surrounded by family and friends. Many of us find that the support services we use have closed over the Christmas period and can lead to even more feelings of being on our own. If you feel apprehension at the thought of being alone, it is a good idea to find out just what support services will be available to you and any events that may appeal to you. Please refer to the list of events provided. Some suggestions of activities could be:

- Going to a community meal
- Volunteering at an event,
- Do something completely unrelated to Christmas

What can you think of that you may do if you don't want to be alone?

What about if you would like to be alone?

Preparing a Comfort Box

This is a concept which aims to relieve a little of the distress that we often find ourselves in and that can become more pronounced at stressful times. Christmas is one such time that we may find the benefits of a comfort box relieve some of that anxiety.

The idea is to put together a collection of things that are meaningful and or bring comfort. The box can be decorated bringing more therapeutic benefits and may contain things such as:

- Beauty products/toiletries
- Food
- Magazines/books
- Perfume or other aromatherapy products
- Photographs or memories

It is even more beneficial to include items that evoke sensory responses such as touch smell etc. and to note our feelings and reactions reminders of coping strategies are also great to keep on hand.

What are some items that would bring comfort to you?

Memories

Christmas can be a time of both good and bad memories, yet it is the most troublesome ones that tend to stay with us and resurface at this time of year. If this rings true for you, it is important to put some strategies in place to help with things that may occur especially if our usual support networks are closed over Christmas.

Journaling is a very effective way to express our feelings as they are right now with the purpose of revisiting them at a later date if we choose to.

Arts and Crafts is not for everyone but if you have never tried it what better time to give it a go. Expressing emotions through creative medium sometimes feels safer than using language

Memory jars or boxes can be a way of expressing what we are feeling but a means of putting them to one side to revisit if and when we feel able to.

Remember there are always some support services available throughout Christmas and some are listed below, you may have others that you know you can call on. It is a great strategy to have an idea which services you would feel comfortable using should the need arise and have their contact details at hand.

What might you do should difficult memories arise for you this year?

Joy to You

We hope you have a happy holiday and not a hectic Christmas. What would you be doing on any given Sunday? There are 52 of them in the year and this one will pass as the others have and you can choose to put as much or as little emphasis and meaning on to it as you feel comfortable with.

Another alternative could be to do something completely un-Christmas like, an activity left field which takes the spotlight away from traditions and ceremony that can be stressful.

In summary, anything that feels ok for you is ok. Self-care is paramount and you deserve it. Wishing you all a safe happy and peaceful holiday season and New Year.

For immediate assistance, all hours:

Ambulance Police and Fire	000
Police Assistance Non-Urgent	131444
Kids Helpline	1800551800
Men's Line Aus.	1300789978
Alcohol and Drug Info Service	94425000
Lifeline	131144
Suicide Call Back Service	1300659467
Crisis Care	92231111
Samaritans	1800198313 or 9388 2500
Poisons Line	131326
Health Direct Aus.	1800022222

Family Help Line	1800643000
Sexual Assault Resource Centre	93401828
Beyond Blue	1300224636
MHERL (Mental Health Emergency Response Line)	1300555788

**For Urgent medical care you can also visit your nearest
Public Hospital Emergency Department:**

- Armadale - Kelmscott Memorial Hospital 3056 Albany Highway, Mount Nasura WA6112Tel: 93912000
- Fremantle Hospital South Terrace Fremantle WA 6160 Tel: 94313333
- Fiona Stanley Hospital 11 Robin Warren Drive Murdoch WA 6150 Tel: 61524013
- Joondalup Health Campus Cnr. Grand Boulevard & Shenton Ave Joondalup WA 6027 Tel:94009400
- Rockingham General Hospital Elanora Drive Cooloongup WA 6168 Tel: 95994000
- Royal Perth Hospital Wellington Street Perth WA 6000 Tel: 92242244
- Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital Avenue Nedlands WA 6009 Tel: 93463333
- St John of God Hospital Midland 1 Clayton Street Midland WA 6056 Tel: 94624000